

UNCLASSIFIED

EZ

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

<<<<.>>>>

RELEASED IN FULL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 04835 01 OF 05 032312Z  
ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	SS-00	OIC-02	H-01
	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	CTME-00	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-07	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	TB-01	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02
	P-02	T-01	/076 W				

-----075277 040709Z /24

R 032324Z APR 89  
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4423  
 INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY LIMA  
 AMEMBASSY QUITO  
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM  
 DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC  
 USMISSION GENEVA  
 SECDEF WASHDC  
 DIA WASHDC  
 CIA WASHDC  
 DEA HQS WASHDC

SECTION 01 OF 05 BOGOTA 04835

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
 TAGS: KPRP, PHUM, KJUS, PTER, SNAR, CO  
 SUBJECT: PRIVATE JUSTICE--PRIVATE VIOLENCE: ARMED GROUPS  
 AND THE SETTling OF ACCOUNTS IN COLOMBIA

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 04835 01 OF 05 032312Z

2. WHEN TWELVE JUDICIAL OFFICIALS WERE MASSACRED AT LA

Page - 1  
 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M. BOUTON  
 DATE/CASE ID: 25 JAN 2002 200103492

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

ROCHELA JANUARY 18 BY AN UNKNOWN GROUP OF GUNMEN FOR UNKNOWN REASONS, "PARAMILITARY" GROUPS SUDDENLY BECAME MORE THAN A HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM -- THEY BECAME ANOTHER ENEMY OF THE STATE, ALONG WITH THE NARCOS AND THE GUERRILLAS. THIS CABLE LOOKS AT WHAT IS KNOWN OF THE EMERGENCE, MOTIVATIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THESE GROUPS. WHAT WE HAVE FOUND IS THAT:

-- THE MAJORITY OF THE 140 SO-CALLED PARAMILITARY GROUPS LISTED BY THE MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT IN OCTOBER 1987 ARE SIMPLY VIOLENCE-FOR-HIRE BUSINESSES OR NON-POLITICAL "CLEAN UP" ORGANIZATIONS;

-- MOST OF THE REST ARE RIGHT AND LEFT-WING HIT SQUADS;

-- LEFTIST GUERRILLAS HAVE GENERALLY TAKEN ON THE CHARACTER OF CRIMINAL BANDITS WHO PRACTICE EXTORTION, KIDNAPPING, ROBBERY, AND ARE OFTEN INVOLVED IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING TO FINANCE THEIR OPERATIONS. SOME SPLINTER GROUPS HAVE FORSAKEN IDEOLOGY ALTOGETHER;

-- PRIVATE RIGHT-WING GROUPS, ORIGINALLY ORGANIZED TO FIGHT LEFTIST GUERRILLA BANDITS AND OPPOSE COMMUNISM, HAVE IN MANY CASES DEGENERATED INTO BANDITRY, WHILE OTHERS HAVE ASSUMED THE CHARACTER OF REBEL FORCES WHO WANT TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE ONGOING PEACE PROCESS.

-- MANY GROUPS, ESPECIALLY THOSE FINANCED BY NARCOTICS (AND PERHAPS EMERALD) MONEY, USE SOPHISTICATED INTELLIGENCE SYSTEMS AND OPERATIONAL METHODS.

PAGE 03            BOGOTA 04835 01 OF 05 032312Z

-- THE GOVERNMENT, WHILE INCREASINGLY WORRIED ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF PRIVATE ARMED GROUPS, HAS THUS FAR BEEN ABLE TO DO LITTLE MORE THAN HARASS THEM, OCCASIONALLY MAKING ARRESTS AND, RARELY, DESTROYING AN ORGANIZATION.

A THREAT TO THE STATE

3. PRIOR TO THE LA ROCHELA INCIDENT, VICTIMS OF MASSACRES WERE BELIEVED TO BE MOSTLY GUERRILLA SYMPATHIZERS, LEFT WING POLITICIANS, GROUPS OF EMERALD MINERS, NARCO-HITMEN, OR "UNDESIRABLES." THE WEAK COLOMBIAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM HAD MADE ONLY FEEBLE STABS AT

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

BRINGING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE. UNTIL JANUARY 18, MANY HAD ACTUALLY CONSIDERED THE KILLERS AS "VIGILANTES," DOING THE JUDICIAL WORK THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT COULD NOT DO. WITH LA ROCHELA, THE USURPATION OF DULY CONSTITUTED LAW WAS TOTAL. THE MESSAGE WAS SENT THAT OFFICIAL COLOMBIA, HAVING SHIRKED ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR SO LONG, SHOULD NOT INTERFERE IN PRIVATE WARS AND VENDETTAS. 88 BOGOTA 18290 NOTED THAT IN DECEMBER 1988 FIVE DAS AGENTS WERE MURDERED BY UNKNOWN GUNMEN FOR UNKNOWN REASONS IN CORDOBA WHILE INVESTIGATING CATTLE RUSTLING. THE PREVAILING ASSUMPTION NOW IS THAT THEY WERE ALSO KILLED FOR THEIR PART IN INVESTIGATING MASSACRES IN THAT AREA.

THE USUAL SUSPECTS MULTIPLY LIKE RABBITS

4. THE NUMBER OF GROUPS, VARIETY OF MOTIVATIONS, AND LACK OF HARD INTELLIGENCE CONTRIBUTE TO AN OBSCURITY WHERE, FOR ANY ONE MAJOR INCIDENT, THERE MAY BE FIVE OR SIX "USUAL SUSPECTS." GUERRILLA AND RIGHT WING GROUPS, NARCOTICS AND EMERALD TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS FIGHT EACH OTHER AND FIGHT AMONG THEMSELVES. AN ENTIRE

NNNN

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 04835 02 OF 05 032313Z  
ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	SS-00	OIC-02	H-01
	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	CTME-00	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-07	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	TB-01	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02
	P-02	T-01	/076 W				

-----075303 040710Z /24

R 032324Z APR 89  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4424  
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM  
DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

USMISSION GENEVA  
SECDEF WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
CIA WASHDC  
DEA HQS WASHDC

SECTION 02 OF 05 BOGOTA 04835

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: KPRP, PHUM, KJUS, PTER, SNAR, CO  
SUBJECT: PRIVATE JUSTICE--PRIVATE VIOLENCE: ARMED GROUPS

INDUSTRY HAS GROWN UP TO PROVIDE VIOLENCE ON DEMAND.  
GUERRILLAS BLAME THE GOVERNMENT, THE GOVERNMENT BLAMES  
THE GUERRILLAS, AND EVERYBODY BLAMES THE NARCOS. A  
COMMON TACTIC IS TO COMMIT AN ACT AND IMMEDIATELY CALL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 04835 02 OF 05 032313Z

THE NEWSPAPERS CLAIMING TO BE SOMEBODY ELSE. THE REAL  
SOMEBODY ELSE CALLS BACK WITH A DISCLAIMER AND THE  
PRESIDENT PROMISES A FULL INVESTIGATION. IT IS ALL  
FORGOTTEN WHEN THE NEXT MAJOR INCIDENT OCCURS.

HAVE GUN, MOTORCYCLE, WILL TRAVEL

5. IN OCTOBER 1987 THEN MINGOV GAVIRIA PRESENTED HIS  
FAMOUS LIST OF 140 "PARAMILITARY" GROUPS TO THE  
CONGRESS. THE REPORT LISTED ALL THE VIOLENT GROUPS IN  
COLOMBIA TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT COULD ATTACH A NAME.  
ONLY A FEW WERE WELL KNOWN, SUCH AS MAS (DEATH TO  
KIDNAPPERS) AND LOS PRISCOS (A GROUP OF ASSASSINS FOR  
HIRE).

6. AN ANALYSIS OF THE NAMES REVEALS FIVE MAJOR  
CATEGORIES OF VIOLENT GROUPS, AS FOLLOWS:

-- 53 VIOLENCE-FOR-HIRE ORGANIZATIONS, (E.G. THE BAD  
ONES, THE CRICKETS, THE FALCONS);

-- 31 "CLEAN UP" SQUADS, NOTABLY IN SOME OF THE LARGER  
PROVINCIAL CITIES, WHICH KILL UNDESIRABLES (E.G. LOVE  
FOR MEDELLIN, THE BLACK HAND) OR GROUPS DIRECTED AGAINST  
A PARTICULAR NON-POLITICAL GROUP (E.G. DEATH TO

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

HOMOSEXUALS, DEATH TO CRIMINALS, SELF DEFENSE OF THE  
PROPERTY OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS);

-- 24 LEFTIST HIT SQUADS, (E.G. REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDOS  
OF COLOMBIA, STUDENT COMMITTEE OF REVOLUTIONARY UNION);

-- 20 HIT SQUADS OF INDETERMINATE POLITICAL ORIENTATION,  
(NAMES USUALLY CONTAIN THE WORD "DEMOCRATIC" WHICH COULD  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED])

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 04835 02 OF 05 032313Z

PLACE THEM EITHER LEFT, RIGHT, OR CENTER);

-- 12 ANTI-LEFTIST HIT SQUADS, (E.G. MAS, COLOMBIAN  
ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLIANCE, COUNTER REVOLUTIONARY  
ORGANIZATION).

7. IT SHOULD NOT BE ASSUMED THAT THESE ARE ALL  
STRUCTURED ORGANIZATIONS. RATHER, THEY COME AND GO,  
SHARE MEMBERS, SOMETIMES ORGANIZE FOR POLITICAL REASONS  
AND OFTEN END UP AS COMMON CRIMINALS. MANY MAY HAVE  
NEVER COMMITTED A VIOLENT ACT BUT THEIR NAMES BECAME  
KNOWN TO GOVERNMENT INTELLIGENCE SERVICES ANYWAY. MANY  
OF THE ASSASSIN-FOR-HIRE GROUPS WORK PRINCIPALLY FOR  
NARCOS BUT HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO KILL POLITICIANS OF ALL  
STRIPES AND ENGAGE IN BANK ROBBERY AND EXTORTION. ON  
JANUARY 26 AN ENTIRE SIX MAN GROUP KNOWN AS "LOS TESOS"  
(THE ROUGH SPOTS) WAS CAPTURED IN BOGOTA. PRESS  
ACCOUNTS SAID THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR BETWEEN 20 AND  
30 MURDERS OF RANCHERS, BUSINESSMEN AND POLITICIANS,  
PLUS THE KILLING OF A DAS AGENT. POLICE CLAIMED THEY  
WERE IN THE CAPITAL TO KILL AN IMPORTANT POLITICIAN  
WHOSE SECURITY WAS UPGRADED. THE POLICE ARE STILL  
UNSURE WHO WAS PAYING THEM, BUT THEY WERE CAUGHT WITH  
TELEPHONE NUMBERS FROM EVERY MAJOR COLOMBIAN CITY PLUS  
SPAIN, THE UNITED STATES, AND URUGUAY. IT IS POSSIBLE  
THAT AS THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE HEATS UP, THESE GROUPS  
WILL BECOME MORE AND MORE ACTIVE.

THE REAL "SELF DEFENSE" GROUPS

8. THE PHRASE "SELF DEFENSE" GROUP, LIKE "PARAMILITARY"  
HAS BEEN MUCH ABUSED IN COLOMBIA. THE FARC GUERRILLA  
ORGANIZATION ORIGINALLY BEGAN AS A LIBERAL SELF DEFENSE  
GROUP AT WAR WITH THE CONSERVATIVES DURING "LA  
VIOLENCIA" OF THE 1950'S. SELF DEFENSE IN THE EIGHTIES

Page - 5

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

HAS COME TO MEAN DEFENSE AGAINST WHAT DAS COMMANDER

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 04835 .02 OF 05 032313Z

NNNN

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 04835 03 OF 05 032314Z  
ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	SS-00	OIC-02	H-01
	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	CTME-00	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-07	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	TB-01	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02
	P-02	T-01	/076 W				

-----075304 040710Z /24

R 032324Z APR 89  
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4425  
 INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY LIMA  
 AMEMBASSY QUITO  
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM  
 DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC  
 USMISSION GENEVA  
 SECDEF WASHDC  
 DIA WASHDC  
 CIA WASHDC  
 DEA HQS WASHDC

SECTION 03 OF 05 BOGOTA 04835

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
 TAGS: KPRP, PHUM, KJUS, PTER, SNAR, CO  
 SUBJECT: PRIVATE JUSTICE--PRIVATE VIOLENCE: ARMED GROUPS

GENERAL MAZA DESCRIBES AS "PARA-GUERRILLA" GROUPS.  
 THESE ARE THE GUERRILLA AGENTS WHO EXTORT, KIDNAP, AND

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

ASSASSINATE. THEY INFILTRATE UNIONS AND CAMPESINO GROUPS, SOWING DISCONTENT, AND "TAXING" THE MEMBERS.

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 04835 03 OF 05 032314Z

THE GOC, LACKING A WORKING JUDICIAL SYSTEM, AND UNWILLING TO OPERATE BEYOND THE LAW, PROVIDES LITTLE PROTECTION AGAINST THIS ACTIVITY. ALTHOUGH THE CURRENT LAW HAS PROVISIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SELF DEFENSE GROUPS UNDER CERTAIN STRICT PROCEDURES, ACCORDING TO THE VICE PROCURADOR, OMAR HENRY VELASCO, THERE ARE NO/NO LEGALLY CONSTITUTED SELF DEFENSE GROUPS.

9. DESPITE THIS, IN TOWNS LIKE SAIZA, CORDOBA, SELF DEFENSE GROUPS CAME INTO BEING WITH THE COOPERATION OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL MILITARY (AND OUTSIDE THE LAW). THE SAIZA VILLAGERS SUPPLIED INTELLIGENCE ON GUERRILLA MOVEMENTS IN THE AREA AND IN TURN RECEIVED SOME TRAINING AND A FEW OLD FIREARMS FROM THE LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDER. THE FARC BEGAN ASSASSINATING THE LEADERS OF THE SELF-DEFENSE FORCE, AND THEN ON AUGUST 24, 1988 ATTACKED AND KILLED 12 SOLDIERS PROTECTING THE TOWN, ALONG WITH 12 VILLAGERS. THE FARC CLAIMED THE ACTION WAS IN REPRISAL FOR THE VILLAGER'S COOPERATION WITH THE MILITARY (SEE 88 BOGOTA 14203).

10. IN AT LEAST ONE CASE, A LOCAL ARMY COMMANDER HELPED ORGANIZE A CIVILIAN ARMED GROUP WITH OFFENSIVE CAPABILITIES. THE PREVIOUS COMMANDER OF THE MONTERIA, CORDOBA REGION TOLD EMBOFF IN MARCH 1988 THAT HE RELIED ON THE COOPERATION OF LOCAL RANCHERS (SOME OF WHOM ARE NARCOS) FOR INTELLIGENCE ON GUERRILLA MOVEMENTS. A LOCAL RANCHER CONFIRMED THIS TO A BARRANQUILLA CONSULAR OFFICER THIS JANUARY. HE SAID THE RANCHERS HAVE ORGANIZED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AS THEY TRAVEL AROUND THE COUNTRYSIDE. ARMED ARMY RESERVISTS OFTEN SUPPLY SECURITY FOR THEM. THE RANCHER OPENLY ADMITTED THAT THE ARMY AND THE DAS (CIVILIAN INVESTIGATIVE ORGANIZATION)

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 04835 03 OF 05 032314Z

HELPED ORGANIZE AND TRAIN CIVILIAN ARMED GROUPS WHO HAVE CONDUCTED RAIDS AGAINST GUERRILLAS AND HAVE DRIVEN THEM

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

OUT OF SOME AREAS. THE SOURCE COMPLAINED THAT THE NEW ARMY COMMANDER IS NO LONGER COOPERATING (SEE BELOW). THIS MAY HAVE PROMPTED THE HEAD OF THE MONTERIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION TO SEVERELY AND PUBLICLY CRITICIZE THE MILITARY FOR ITS INABILITY TO BRING SECURITY TO THE REGION (BOGOTA 1662).

COMMUNIST HATERS

11. IN THE APRIL 1988 MEJOR ESQUINAS, CORDOBA MASSACRE 38 ELN MEMBERS WERE KILLED BY A GROUP OF ASSASSINS APPARENTLY PAID WITH NARCO MONEY FROM VICTOR CARRANZA. WHEN CARRANZA WAS 18, HIS FATHER DIED OF HEART ATTACK AFTER BEING KIDNAPPED BY THE FARC. (ANOTHER VERSION SAYS THAT CARRANZA WAS AN APOSTATE OF A COMMUNIST GROUP KNOWN AS MOEC -- MOVEMENT OF WORKERS, STUDENTS, AND FARMERS. WHEN HE LEFT THE GROUP, MEMBERS OF THE ELN MURDERED HIS FATHER AND BROTHERS.) THE SON, SINCE MADE WEALTHY THROUGH NARCOTICS ACTIVITIES, REPORTEDLY SWORE TO AVENGE THE DEATH BY KILLING AS MANY COMMUNISTS AS POSSIBLE. THE MEJOR ESQUINAS SITE WHERE THE KILLINGS TOOK PLACE WAS ALSO THE SITE WHERE THE ELN MET TO GO OVER ITS BOOKS AFTER COLLECTING TAXES FROM LOCAL RANCHERS. CARRANZA IS ALSO A PRIME SUSPECT FOR ORGANIZING AND FINANCING THE RAMPAGE WHICH TOOK THE LIVES OF 41 INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF SEGOVIA, ANTIOQUIA, A LEFTIST STRONGHOLD, ON NOVEMBER 11, 1988.

NARCO-FINANCED ANTI-GUERRILLA SQUADS

12. THE MOST POWERFUL PRIVATE ARMED GROUPS ARE IN THE MIDDLE MAGDALENA RIVER REGION CENTERED ON THE TOWN OF PUERTO BOYACA. A MAJOR CATTLE RANCHING INDUSTRY HAS DEVELOPED THERE IN THE LAST 30 YEARS. THE FARC, FLUSH  
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 04835 03 OF 05 032314Z

NNNN

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 04835 04 OF 05 032315Z  
ACTION ARA-00



UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:

27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a

HANDLING: n/a

2

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	SS-00	OIC-02	H-01
	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	CTME-00	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-07	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	TB-01	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02
	P-02	T-01	/076 W				

-----075311 040711Z /24

R 032324Z APR 89

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4426

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC

USMISSION GENEVA

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

DEA HQS WASHDC

SECTION 04 OF 05 BOGOTA 04835

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: KPRP, PHUM, KJUS, PTER, SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: PRIVATE JUSTICE--PRIVATE VIOLENCE: ARMED GROUPS

WITH NEW NARCOTICS MONEY, BEGAN POLITICAL AND CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA DURING THE EARLY EIGHTIES, THE SAME TIME THAT MAJOR NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS BEGAN BUYING VACATION HOMES IN THE AREA. THE RANCHERS, LOCAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 04835 04 OF 05 032315Z

POLITICIANS, AND LOCAL MILITARY AND POLICE COMMANDERS BANDED TOGETHER WITH THEIR NARCO NEIGHBORS. LEFTISTS OF ALL STRIPES WERE WIPED OUT DURING THE MID EIGHTIES. BY 1987, ALL OBSERVERS AGREED THAT THE AREA AROUND PUERTO BOYACA HAD BEEN "PACIFIED," AND WAS ONE OF THE SAFEST AREAS IN THE COUNTRY, UNLIKE THE REGION TO THE NORTH, CENTERED ON BARANCABERMEJA, WHICH IS STILL CONVULSED BY GUERRILLA ACTIVITY.

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

13. WHEN THE VIOLENCE LEVEL IN COLOMBIA ESCALATED FROM INDIVIDUAL ASSASSINATIONS TO MASSACRES IN EARLY 1987, GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATORS TRACED SOME OF THE PERPETRATORS TO THE PUERTO BOYACA REGION. EMBASSY HAS SEEN UNCONFIRMED REPORTS OF PERMANENT ARMED TRAINING CAMPS WITH FOREIGN TRAINERS IN THE REGION. CERTAINLY, PRIVATE GROUPS HAVE BEEN CREATED WHICH HAVE THE ABILITY TO TRAVEL LONG DISTANCES, HEAVILY ARMED, WITH EXCELLENT INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY (SEE BOGOTA 16741). A SURPRISE INDICTMENT WAS HANDED DOWN BY A BOGOTA JUDGE LINKING MEDELLIN CAPO PABLO ESCOBAR (WHO OWNS A MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTION NEAR PUERTO BOYACA), TWO MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS, AND THE MAYOR OF PUERTO BOYACA, TO THE FINANCING AND PLANNING OF THE MASSACRE OF OVER 40 SUSPECTED GUERRILLA SUPPORTERS IN THE URABA REGION IN MARCH 1988. WHEN BOGOTA POLICE ATTEMPTED TO ARREST THE MAYOR THERE WERE RIOTS IN THE STREETS OF PUERTO BOYACA AND THE POLICE BACKED OFF. THE MAYOR, WHO HAS SINCE RESIGNED, IS STILL A FUGITIVE.

THE EMERALD WARS  
-----

14. ALMOST FORGOTTEN IN THE NARCO-GUERRILLA-DEATH SQUAD TANGLE IS THE VIOLENCE IN THE EMERALD MINING REGION OF

PAGE 03            BOGOTA 04835 04 OF 05 032315Z

SOUTHERN BOYACA AND NORTHERN CUNDINAMARCA. THIS VIOLENCE HAS SPAWNED ARMED GROUPS EVERY BIT AS RUTHLESS AND SOPHISTICATED AS THOSE FUNDED BY NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS. IN FACT, IT LOOKS LIKE MANY OF THE SAME PEOPLE ARE INVOLVED. THE LA ROCHELA MASSACRE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN PART OF THIS. THE JUDGES WERE INVESTIGATING MURDERS OF EMERALD TRAFFICKERS. A GROUP OF SIXTEEN ARMED MEN KNEW EXACTLY WHERE AND WHEN THEY WOULD ARRIVE; THEY LULLED THE OFFICIALS INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY BY CLAIMING TO BE GUERRILLAS (ONE GROUP OF ARMED MEN LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE ANOTHER IN COLOMBIA), AND MURDERED ALL EXCEPT THREE OF THE 15 PERSON INVESTIGATIVE FORCE. THE THREE WOUNDED SURVIVORS WERE ABLE TO LEAD DAS INVESTIGATORS TO SOME OF THE PERPETRATORS. THE LEADER IS THOUGHT TO BE A FORMER GUERRILLA WHO SUBSEQUENTLY WENT TO WORK FOR NARCO DEATH SQUADS IN THE NEARBY MAGDALENA MEDIO AREA.

UNCLASSIFIED



Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

15. THE RECENT KILLING OF EMERALD KINGPIN AND MEDELLIN CARTEL ASSOCIATE GILBERTO MOLINA (BOGOTA 3223) WAS BREATHTAKING IN ITS SCOPE AND AUDACITY. MOLINA WAS THE ULTIMATE CRIMINAL GODFATHER WHO KILLED HIS ENEMIES AND LAVISHLY REWARDED HIS FRIENDS. HIS FUNERAL WAS THAT OF THE TRUE RULER OF THE EMERALD REGION WITH LOCAL MAYORS AND POLICE INSPECTORS PAYING HOMAGE. DESPITE HIS POWER, A GROUP OF ABOUT 20 HEAVILY ARMED MEN SURPRISED HIM AT HIS COUNTRY HOME ONLY 50 MILES FROM BOGOTA. THEY MURDERED MOLINA AND 18 OF HIS FRIENDS AND BODYGUARDS BEFORE DISAPPEARING WITHOUT A TRACE. THEORIES ABOUND AS TO WHO CARRIED OUT THE ACT: THE GUERRILLA'S KILLED HIM BECAUSE HE WAS RUMORED TO BE INVOLVED WITH ANTI-LEFTIST DEATH SQUADS; OTHER EMERALD TRAFFICKERS KILLED HIM FOR TRYING TO MONOPOLIZE THE BUSINESS; HIS NARCO FRIENDS (RODRIGUEZ GACHA) TURNED ON HIM BECAUSE OF SOME SLIGHT; THE COLOMBIAN ARMY KILLED HIM BECAUSE THE PRESS HAD GOT WIND OF HIS LINKS TO SOME HIGH OFFICIALS. NOBODY

PAGE 04 BOGOTA 04835 04 OF 05 032315Z

NNNN

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 04835 05 OF 05 032315Z

ACTION ARA-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	SS-00	OIC-02	H-01
	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	HA-09	L-03	CTME-00	TRSE-00
	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	INM-07	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02
	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	TB-01	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02
	P-02	T-01	/076 W				

-----075312 040711Z /24

R 032324Z APR 89  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4427  
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:  
27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a  
HANDLING: n/a

2

DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC  
USMISSION GENEVA  
SECDEF WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
CIA WASHDC  
DEA HQS WASHDC

SECTION 05 OF 05 BOGOTA 04835

SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: KPRP, PHUM, KJUS, PTER, SNAR, CO  
SUBJECT: PRIVATE JUSTICE--PRIVATE VIOLENCE: ARMED GROUPS

CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE ATTACK, AND THE GOC HAS NOT  
ANNOUNCED ANY SERIOUS LEADS.

GOVERNMENT REACTION

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 04835 05 OF 05 032315Z

16. PEACE COUNSELOR RAFAEL PARDO RUEDA HAS TOLD US OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INCREASING CONCERN REGARDING THE STRENGTH OF THESE ARMED VIGILANTE GROUPS. EMBOFFS HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT NEW CHIEF OF THE ARMY, GENERAL NELSON MEJIA, HAS ISSUED STRONG WARNINGS TO LOCAL COMMANDERS TO AVOID ALL COOPERATION WITH THESE GROUPS. THE NEW COMMANDER IN MONTERIA, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS REFUSED TO CONTINUE COOPERATION WITH THE LOCAL RANCHERS, AS HIS PREDECESSOR HAD, ACCORDING TO WHAT ONE RANCHER TOLD A CONSULAR OFFICER. DAO REPORTING HAS VERIFIED THE STORY. PRESIDENT BARCO AND FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL SERPA URIBE HAVE STRONGLY CONDEMNED THE KILLERS, WHETHER FROM THE RIGHT OR THE LEFT. GENERAL MAZA OF DAS CONTINUES TO PRESS HIS INVESTIGATIONS.

OUTLOOK

17. JAWBONING FROM BOGOTA WILL NOT END THE VIOLENCE IN THE RURAL AREAS. THE GOC KNOWS THIS AND IS DEVOTING INCREASING TIME AND RESOURCES TO REFORM THE RULES AND STRENGTHEN THE SECURITY FORCES. IMPROVING THE OUTMODED AND OUTGUNNED JUDICIAL SYSTEM WOULD MAKE PRIVATE JUSTICE LESS NECESSARY. THE GOVERNMENT IS CURRENTLY EMBARKED ON

UNCLASSIFIED

Date Printed:

27-Sep-2001

DOC\_NBR: 1989BOGOTA04835

CHANNEL: n/a

HANDLING: n/a

2

A REFORM PROGRAM. WHERE IT HAS BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT GOVERNMENT/SECURITY FORCE PRESENCE IN AN AREA (THE GUAVIARE AND OTHER AREAS OF THE EASTERN PLAINS) VIOLENCE HAS BEEN MARKEDLY REDUCED. WHERE INGRAINED INTERESTS (RANCHERS, GUERRILLAS, UNIONS AND FARM WORKERS) DO BATTLE, EVEN AN INCREASED SECURITY PRESENCE HAS NOT NOTICEABLY HELPED, AS IN THE URABA REGION. IN AREAS LIKE MONTERIA AND THE MID MAGDELENA RIVER AREA (FROM ROUGHLY AGUACHICA IN SOUTHERN CESAR DEPARTMENT TO

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 04835 05 OF 05 032315Z

PUERTO BOYACA AND PUERTO SALGAR IN WESTERN BOYACA AND CUNDINAMARCA DEPARTMENTS) THE MILITARY IS LIKELY TO REMAIN A PART OF THE PROBLEM UNTIL LOCAL COMMANDERS HAVE BOTH THE WHEREWITHAL TO CARRY OUT THEIR DUTIES AND THE CERTAINTY THAT COOPERATION WITH EXTRA LEGAL GROUPS WILL RESULT IN PUNISHMENT.

MCLEAN

NNNN