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(b)(2),(b)(3):10 USC-424

TEXT

(b)(2)

COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJ (b)(2),(b)(3):10 USC 424 /COLOMBIAN ARMY REPORTS EXPOSE THE
HYPE AND DISINFORMATION OF EARLIER MEDIA ACCOUNTS OF JUL 97
MAPIRIPAN MASSACRE (U)

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT. (b)(2)

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

(b)(1),(b)(2),(b)(3):10 USC 424,1.4 (c)

(b)(2)

SUMMARY: (S) COLOMBIAN ARMY INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS REVEAL THE KNOWN FACTS, AND EXPOSE THE DISINFORMATION GENERATED BY THE NEWS MEDIA, NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE GUERRILLAS CONCERNING THE NOW-INFAMOUS "MAPIRIPAN MASSACRE." (b)(2)

TEXT. 1. (S) IN A REPORT DATED 7 NOV 97 (b)(2) 1), COLOMBIAN ARMY (COLAR) (b)(1),1.4 (c)

REVEALS THE DETAILS AND CONCLUSIONS OF HIS EXTENSIVE INVESTIGATION OF THE 16-20 JUL 97 MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT.

2. (S) (b)(1),1.4 (c) DESCRIBES SIGNIFICANT EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE 16-20 JUL INCIDENT:

A. 19 MAY 97: THE "JUEZ PROMISCO" (CIRCUIT JUDGE) OF MAPIRIPAN (b)(1),1.4 (c) SENT A FAX

TO PRESIDENT OF THE SUPERIOR COURT IN VILLAVICENCIO (b)(1),1.4 (c) IN THIS FAX (b)(2) (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORTS BEING SUBMITTED TO A "JUICIO POPULAR" (POPULAR JUSTICE OR A PEOPLE'S COURT) IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY. (b)(1),1.4 (c) "VARIOUS ARMED SUBJECTS" CONVENED THE JUICIO POPULAR TO PASS JUDGMENT ON ALL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE IN MAPIRIPAN. THE PEOPLE'S COURT "ABSOLVED OUR JUDICIAL SYSTEM," AND PROCEEDED TO JUDGE THE OTHER STATE AUTHORITIES

(b)(1),1.4 (c),1.4 (d)

B. 5 JUL 97: (b)(1),1.4 (c) RECEIVED (b)(1),1.4 (c) FAX VIA THE FOURTH DIVISION, AND FORWARDED IT TO THE 19TH "JOAQUIN PARIS" INFANTRY BATTALION ON 8 JUL. TASKING THE UNIT TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION (b)(2)

C. 15 JUL 97: (b)(1),1.4 (c) COMMANDER OF THE "JOAQUIN PARIS" BATTALION (BIPAR), COMMUNICATED WITH (b)(1),1.4 (c) BY TELEPHONE IN ORDER TO CLARIFY THE EVENTS OF 19 MAY. (b)(1),1.4 (c) ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE 19 4 (c)

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MAY JUICIO POPULAR WAS STAGED BY THE GUERRILLAS, AND THAT THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM HAD BEEN ABSOLVED. (b)(1),1.4 (c) TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY (b)(1),1.4 (c) ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF "PERSONAL ARMADO AL MARGEN DE LA LEY" (PRESUMABLY ILLEGAL PARAMILITARIES) IN THE MAPIRIPAN AREA. (b)(1),1.4 (c) INFORMED (b)(1),1.4 (c) OF THE JUDGE'S REPORT THAT SAME DAY.

D. 16 JUL 97: (b)(1),1.4 (c) SENT (b)(1),1.4 (c) A FAX (OFICIO NO. 2919-IVDIV-BR7-BIPAR-S2-256, DATED 15 JUL 97), WHICH CONTAINED THE SAME INFORMATION HE HAD PREVIOUSLY REPORTED BY TELEPHONE (b)(2).

(b)(1),1.4 (c) E. 16-20 JUL 97: (b)(1),1.4 (c) DID NOT SPEAK (b)(1),1.4 (c) (b)(1) CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN MAPIRIPAN. DURING THAT WEEK, (b)(1),1.4 (c) AND THE COMMANDERS OF ALL THE TACTICAL UNITS (BATTALIONS) OF THE 7TH BRIGADE ANALYZED INTELLIGENCE REPORTS CONCERNING THREATS IN ALL THE MUNICIPALITIES OF META, GUAVIARE, AND VAUPES DEPARTMENTS, IN ANTICIPATION OF PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE 20 JUL NATIONAL CELEBRATION. INDEED, ON 19 JUL THE HIGHWAY TOLL BOOTH BETWEEN SAN MARTIN AND GRANADA (META) WAS ATTACKED, RESULTING IN NUMEROUS CIVILIAN AND MILITARY CASUALTIES. THE TROOPS OF THE 7TH BRIGADE WERE TIED DOWN COVERING ALL THE MOST CRITICAL POINTS. MAPIRIPAN WAS NOT COVERED BECAUSE IN THE PREVIOUS TWO-YEAR PERIOD THERE HAD NOT BEEN A SINGLE MURDER THERE, IN CONTRAST TO THE TOWNS OF CALAMAR, EL RETORNO, MIRAFLORES, AND OTHERS, WHERE SUCH VIOLENCE WAS FREQUENT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF (b)(1),1.4 (c) 15 JUL TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE MAPIRIPAN JUDGE, (b)(1),1.4 (c) RECEIVED NO INFORMATION CONCERNING EVENTS IN MAPIRIPAN. NEITHER CIVIL NOR RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES, NOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY, REPORTED INCIDENTS IN THAT LOCALITY BETWEEN 13 AND 20 JUL 97.

F. 18 OCT 97: THREE MONTHS AFTER THE FACT, (b)(1),1.4 (c) LEARNED FROM A JOURNALIST, MARIA CRISTINA ((CABALLERO)), THAT BETWEEN 16 AND 18 JUL JUDGE CORTES HAD SENT A FAX TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC) IN VILLAVICENCIO, AND THE VILLAVICENCIO SUPERIOR COURT. (b)(1),1.4 (c) (AS OF 7 NOV 97), NONE OF THESE ENTITIES HAD ALLOWED THE GENERAL TO REVIEW (b)(1),1.4 (c) FAXES.

G. BETWEEN 16 AND 19 JUL 97, (b)(1),1.4 (c) HAD OTHER (INDIRECT) COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE MAPIRIPAN JUDGE, BUT DID NOT INFORM (b)(1),1.4 (c) BECAUSE THE CONVERSATIONS WERE CONFUSED AND UNCLEAR.

H. 20 JUL 97: AT 1800 HOURS (LOCAL), (b)(1),1.4 (c) WAS TOLD BY A JOURNALIST IN VILLAVICENCIO THAT SOME KIND OF A "MASSACRE" HAD OCCURRED IN MAPIRIPAN, AND THAT THERE WAS AN EXODUS OF REFUGEES HEADED FOR VILLAVICENCIO.

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1. 21 JUL 97: (b)(1),1.4 (c) CONVENED A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IN THE OFFICES OF THE GOVERNOR OF META, WITH ALL THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORITIES. THAT SAME DAY GOC SECURITY FORCES ARRIVED IN MAPIRIPAN, ALONG WITH FOURTH DIVISION (b)(1),1.4 (c) URIBE AND THE DEPARTMENTAL POLICE COMMANDER, (b)(1),1.4 (c) (b)(1),1.4 (c)

3. (S) (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT DETAILS THE FOLLOWING TESTIMONY CONCERNING THE MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT:

A. THE MAPIRIPAN JUDGE, (b)(1),1.4 (c), HAS BEEN A CIRCUIT JUDGE IN THE AREA FOR SEVERAL YEARS, AND HAS NOT ONLY ACCUSED GOC SECURITY FORCES OF ACTS OF "OMISSION," BUT HAS MADE FALSE STATEMENTS TO THE MEDIA AND INVESTIGATIVE UNITS ABOUT SUCH ASPECTS AS THE NUMBER OF PERSONS KILLED AT MAPIRIPAN. ACCORDING TO THE CHIEF OF THE GUAVIARE JUDICIAL POLICE (SIJIN--SECTIONAL UNIT) (b)(1),1.4 (c) (b)(1),1.4 (c) AND POLICE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES, (b)(1),1.4 (c) MAINTAINED SOME KIND OF RELATIONSHIP WITH THE "COMANDANTES SUBVERSIVOS" (SUBVERSIVE COMMANDERS) WHO FREQUENTLY VISITED THE TOWN. (b)(1),1.4 (c)

B. THE FARC DID NOT ACCUSE THE "AUTODEFENSAS UNIDAS DE COLOMBIA" (AUC--UNITED COLOMBIAN SELF-DEFENSES) OF COMMITTING THE KILLINGS AT MAPIRIPAN BUT RATHER BLAMED THE KILLINGS ON TROOPS OF THE COLAR FOURTH DIVISION DISGUISED AS PARAMILITARIES. IN ALL THE FARC'S RADIO PROGRAMS AND PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS, THE GUERRILLAS REPEATED A COMMON THEME WITH THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS:

(1) ON 21 JUL, WITH FIREARMS, MACHETES, AND CHAINSAWS, 35 HUMBLE, DEFENSELESS PEASANTS WERE MASSACRED; THE MAJORITY OF WHOM WERE DISEMBOWELED AND THROWN INTO THE RIVER.

(2) WE CALL ON THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO RESTRICT THE SALE OF ARMS TO THE COLOMBIAN SECURITY FORCES.

(3) IT IS NECESSARY TO GIVE THE INFORMATION MAXIMUM DISSEMINATION.

(4) OFFICIAL TROOPS, DISGUISED AS PARAMILITARIES, ARE MOVING FROM TOWN TO TOWN IN META, GUAVIARE, AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS WITH THE MISSION OF EXECUTING CIVILIANS, FOR WHICH THEY (GOC SECURITY FORCES) HAVE WITHDRAWN FROM VARIOUS TOWNS IN ORDER TO LEAVE THEM AT THE MERCY OF THE ARMY.

4. (S) (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT STATES THAT, AT THE PRESENT

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TIME (NOV 97), THE FARC IS USING VARIOUS MEANS TO INFORM THE CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES AND THE DEFENSORIA REGIONAL DEL PUEBLO (REGIONAL PEOPLE'S DEFENDER OR HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN) ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF "PARAMILITARIES" IN VARIOUS TOWNS AND VILLAGES. IMMEDIATELY, THESE AUTHORITIES INFORM THE 7TH BRIGADE. IN THIS WAY, IF SOMETHING ACTUALLY HAPPENS, THEY CAN BLAME THE ARMY FOR ACTS OF OMISSION (FAILING TO RESPOND). THE FARC'S INTENT IS FOR THE SECURITY FORCES TO REACT TO ALL THESE PLEAS FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE PHANTOM PARAMILITARIES, LEAVING THE REST OF THE COMMUNITIES UNPROTECTED.

5. (S) (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT REVEALS THE FOLLOWING DETAILS CONCERNING THE AIRCRAFT THAT ALLEGEDLY FLEW PARAMILITARY FIGHTERS FROM LOS CEDROS AIRPORT IN THE URABA REGION (ANTIOQUIA) TO SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE (SJG) ON 12 JUL 97:

A. FLIGHT PLANS FROM THE CONTROL TOWER AT THE SJG AIRPORT CONFIRM THAT TWO AIRCRAFT FROM LOS CEDROS LANDED AT SJG ON 12 JUL 97:

(1) AN "ANTONOV" AIRCRAFT BELONGING TO THE COMPANY "SELVA," REGISTRATION NO. HK4009.

(2) A PRIVATELY-OWNED DC-3 AIRCRAFT, REGISTRATION NO. 3993.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS FROM THE SJG AIRPORT (PLANILLA 3214, DATED 12 JUL), AND RECEIPTS FROM THE CASHIER (NO. 31197 AND 31198), CONFIRM THAT THE ABOVE AIRCRAFT LANDED AT THE SJG AIRPORT.

C. THE AIRCRAFT IN QUESTION DO NOT APPEAR IN THE REGISTRY OF AIRCRAFT AND PERSONNEL MAINTAINED AT THE SJG AIRPORT BY BIPAR PERSONNEL. ON 12 JUL 97, THE REGISTRY WAS BEING MAINTAINED BY (b)(1),1.4 (c) AND (b)(1),1.4 (c) BACHILLERES (CONSCRIPT SOLDIERS ASSIGNED TO ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES) (b)(1),1.4 (c) AND (b)(1),1.4 (c) THESE SOLDIERS CLAIM TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE AIRCRAFT IN QUESTION.

D.

(b)(1),1.4
(c)

6. (S) ATTACHED TO (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT ARE A NUMBER OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

A. 7TH BRIGADE DIRECTIVE 4222, DATED 14 JUL 97
(b)(2), ORDERS THE BIPAR COMMANDER TO COORDINATE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN MAPIRIPAN TO TAKE NECESSARY

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ACTION TO GUARANTEE THE PROTECTION OF THE CIVILIAN
POPULATION. THE ORDER IS SIGNED BY

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

B. THE 19 MAY 97 FAX (b)(1),1.4 (c) TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SUPERIOR COURT IN VILLAVICENCIO (b)(2)

(b)(2)

C. A "REVISTA SINTESIS DEL GUAVIARE, LTDA" MESSAGE,
DATED 15 JUL 97 (ENCLOSURE 5), IN WHICH THE LOCAL SJG
REPORTER JAIME EDUARDO ((PRADO)) INFORMS THE AGENCY
CHIEFS OF A REPORT CLAIMING THAT A GROUP OF 70 ARMED MEN
ENTERED MAPIRIPAN AT 0500 HOURS (LOCAL), IDENTIFYING
THEMSELVES AS PARAMILITARIES.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

THE PARAMILITARIES ORDERED
ALL INSTALLATIONS WITH COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES TO BE
CLOSED

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

D. BIPAR PUBLIC ORDER REPORT NO. 2919, DATED 15 JUL 97

(b)(2)

(1) THE BIPAR COMMANDER, (b)(1),1.4 (c), REPORTS THAT A
PERSONAL INFORMANT TALKED WITH THE JUDGE IN MAPIRIPAN
(b)(1),1.4 (c) AT 1430 HOURS (LOCAL) ON 15 JUL, AND THE JUDGE
CONFIRMED THE DETAILS OF THE 19 MAY JUICIO POPULAR
(PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED IN DETAIL). (b)(1),1.4 (c) INFORMANT
NOTED THAT EVERY TIME THE GUERRILLAS VISIT MAPIRIPAN, THE
MAYOR, (b)(1),1.4 (c), AND THE "PERSONERO" (GOC
REPRESENTATIVE), (b)(1),1.4 (c), ARE
COINCIDENTALLY ABSENT.

(2) THE INFORMANT REPORTS THE JUDGE'S CLAIM THAT A
GROUP OF ARMED MEN POUNDED ON THE DOOR OF HIS HOUSE AT
0600 HOURS (LOCAL), FORCED THEIR WAY IN AND SEARCHED THE
HOUSE, TOOK THE KEYS TO THE JUDGE'S OFFICE, AND ORDERED
HIM NOT TO GO TO WORK THAT DAY (15 JUL).

(3) ACCORDING TO THE INFORMANT, THE JUDGE CLAIMED
THAT THERE WERE 60 MEN IN THE TOWN ARMED WITH AK-47 AND
FAL RIFLES, WITH "COSTENO" AND "PAISA" (NORTH COAST AND
ANTIOQUIA) ACCENTS, FROM WHICH THE JUDGE CONCLUDED THAT
THEY WERE FROM URABA. THE JUDGE BELIEVED (b)(1),1.4 (c)
(b)(1),1.4 (c) WAS PRESENT IN MAPIRIPAN. ALTHOUGH HE ACTUALLY
SAID, (b)(1),1.4 (c) THE
JUDGE BELIEVED THIS BECAUSE, DURING THE SEARCH OF HIS
HOUSE, ONE OF THE MEN WAS BEING EXCESSIVE. THIS
INDIVIDUAL (b)(1),1.4 (c) INTERVENED, AND THE JUDGE
THOUGHT HE RECOGNIZED HIM.

(4) THE JUDGE REPORTED (VIA THE INFORMANT) THAT THE

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INTRUDERS SLEPT OUTSIDE THE HOUSES IN MAPIRIPAN, AND THAT A LIGHT AIRCRAFT HAD ARRIVED THAT MORNING (15 JUL). THE GUNMEN FORCED THE FIVE PASSENGERS TO DISEMBARK FROM THE AIRCRAFT, AND SOME SAY THREE OF THE PASSENGERS WERE KILLED. HOWEVER, THE JUDGE CONFIRMED THAT, AS OF THAT TIME, NO "LAMENTABLE ACTS" HAD YET OCCURRED.

(5) THE PARAMILITARIES APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN IN THE AREA FOR ABOUT A WEEK, FIRST APPEARING AT THE VILLAGE OF CHARRAS (SOME 20 MINUTES BY BOAT TO THE SOUTHEAST OF MAPIRIPAN IN GUAVIARE DEPARTMENT). IN CHARRAS, THE PARAMILITARIES SUSPENDED ALL RIVER TRAFFIC FOR A PERIOD OF FOUR DAYS AND, TODAY (15 JUL), THEY CAME UP TO MAPIRIPAN TO TAKE OVER THE TOWN AND LEAVE THE POPULATION

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

(6) THE PARAMILITARIES HAD DETAINED A MAN NAMED CATUMARE, THE OWNER OF A HOUSE AND A LOCAL BILLIARD PARLOR, WHOM THEY ACCUSED OF BEING A GUERRILLA AUXILIARY. THE JUDGE CLAIMED THAT THIS CHARGE WAS FALSE, AND SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN DEFENDING CATUMARE ("ABOGANDO"-- LITERALLY, LAWYERING) IN AN EFFORT TO SAVE HIM FROM EXECUTION. THE INFORMANT BELIEVED THAT, IF THE PARAMILITARIES HAD COME SO FAR (FROM URABA), IT WAS NOT JUST TO DELIGHT THEMSELVES WITH THE LOCAL SCENERY. HE PREDICTED A SERIES OF KILLINGS IN THE FOLLOWING DAYS.

(7) (b)(1), 1.4 (c) THERE HAD TO BE SOME SPECIAL REASON FOR THE PARAMILITARIES TO HAVE MOVED INTO THE JURISDICTION OF THE 7TH BRIGADE. HE ASSERTED THAT HE DID NOT CONDONE OR JUSTIFY THE ACTIONS OF THE PARAMILITARIES. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) CLAIMED THAT HE WAS APPROACHED SOME FOUR MONTHS EARLIER BY A PARAMILITARY AGENT, WHO CLAIMED THAT THEY (PARAMILITARIES) WERE INTERESTED IN DOING A "CLEANSING" IN TOMACHIPAN (GUAVIARE). THE AGENT ASKED FOR SUPPORT AND THE PRESENCE OF COLAR TROOPS TO "LEGALIZE" THE DEATHS. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) SAYS THAT THIS AGENT DID NOT HAVE A NORTH COAST ACCENT BUT RATHER SAID HE WAS FROM THE "VICTOR CARRANZA" GROUP. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) REPORTS THAT "THIS TIME" (MAPIRIPAN), NO ONE HAD APPROACHED HIM, AND HE ASSUMED THAT, BECAUSE THESE PARAMILITARIES HAD COME

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FROM ANOTHER REGION, THOSE WHO HAD APPROACHED HIM EARLIER PROBABLY TOLD THIS GROUP THAT IT COULD NOT COUNT ON ANY SUPPORT FROM HIM.

(8) (b)(1),1.4 (c) RECOMMENDED TO (b)(1),1.4 (c) THAT ELEMENTS OF THE SECOND MOBILE BRIGADE (BRIM 2--WITH THREE BATTALIONS AND THREE HELICOPTERS AT NEARBY BARRANCON) MIGHT BE MOBILIZED FOR A RAPID SURPRISE ATTACK ON MAPIRIPAN, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DANTI. (b)(1),1.4 (c) NOTES THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, THE "PIRANAS" (COLOMBIAN MARINE PATROL BOATS) WERE PRESENTLY OUT OF SERVICE FOR ENGINE MAINTENANCE

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(9) (b)(1),1.4 (c) THE MAPIRIPAN JUDGE DID NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE THE OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO LAUNCH A MILITARY OPERATION IN MAPIRIPAN, FOR FEAR OF THE REPRISALS THAT MIGHT FOLLOW AFTER THE COLAR TROOPS PULLED OUT. CONSIDERING THAT THE GOC PRESENCE HAD BEEN SCARCE, AND THE GUERRILLA PRESENCE CONSTANT, (b)(1) BELIEVED THAT THE COLAR COULD EXPLOIT THE CURRENT INFORMATION BY LAUNCHING A RAPID, SURPRISE ASSAULT ON MAPIRIPAN-- ASSUMING THAT OTHER, MORE DANGEROUS THREATS DID NOT MANIFEST THEMSELVES ELSEWHERE WITHIN THE 7TH BRIGADE'S EXTENSIVE AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

THROUGHOUT THE 16-20 JUL PERIOD, AND THAT HE HAD BEGGED THE ACTING BIPAR COMMANDER FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION TO NO EFFECT. IT IS CLEAR THAT (b)(1),1.4 (c) AND THE BIPAR ITSELF DID NOT HAVE THE TROOPS OR THE TRANSPORT TO EFFECTIVELY INTERVENE. BUT EVEN WITH THE SKETCHIEST OF UNCORROBORATED INFORMATION AVAILABLE, AND NOTWITHSTANDING (b)(1),1.4 (c) RESERVATIONS, (b)(1),1.4 (c) RECOMMENDED THAT A SURPRISE MILITARY OPERATION BE CONSIDERED. (b)(1),1.4 (c) SUGGESTED THAT SUCH AN OPERATION MIGHT BE MOUNTED WITH BRIM 2 ASSETS AT BARRANCON, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT HAVE SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING

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THE AVAILABILITY OF THOSE ASSETS--BRIM 2 WAS NOT UNDER THE COMMAND OF (b)(1),1.4 (c). INDEED, ACCORDING TO BRIM 2 OPERATIONS REPORTS, THE (b)(1),1.4 (c) COMMANDER AND MOST OF HIS COMBAT TROOPS WERE IN THE PROCESS OF MOVING TO SAN VICENTE DEL CAGUAN, FAR TO THE SOUTH, IN PREPARATION FOR PLANNED OPERATIONS IN THE LLANOS DEL YARI.)

7. (S) COLAR REPORT NO. 21150, DATED 23 JUL 97 (ENCLOSURE 6), ADDRESSED TO THE ARMED FORCES COMMANDING GENERAL, SIGNED BY THEN-(b)(1),1.4 (c) (BEFORE HE ASSUMED DUTIES AS ARMED FORCES COMMANDER), IS ALSO ATTACHED TO (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT, AND REVEALS THE FOLLOWING:

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

C. FROM QE TESTIMONY, THE FOLLOWING FACTS COULD BE ESTABLISHED:

(1) UNTIL 18 MONTHS EARLIER, MAPIRIPAN HAD A CNP. POST, WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY A FARC ATTACK ON 16 JAN 96. SINCE THAT TIME, THE TOWN HAS NOT HAD A PERMANENT SECURITY FORCE PRESENCE, AND THE GUERRILLAS, IN LEAGUE WITH NARCOTRAFFICKERS, INSTALLED LABORATORIES IN THE AREA OF PUERTO ALVIRA (CANO JABON). THROUGH INTIMIDATION AND MURDER, THE GUERRILLAS GAINED CONTROL OVER THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF THE REGION.

(2) ON 19 MAY 97, THE FARC'S 44TH FRONT CARRIED OUT A "JUICIO POPULAR" IN MAPIRIPAN TO EVALUATE THE BEHAVIOR OF LOCAL OFFICIALS.

(3) APPROXIMATELY FOUR MONTHS EARLIER (MAR 97), RUMORS BEGAN TO CIRCULATE CONCERNING THE PRESENCE OF ARMED ELEMENTS, APPEARING TO BE "GRUPOS DE JUSTICIA

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PRIVADA" (PRIVATE JUSTICE GROUPS--PARAMILITARIES).

(4) DURING THE LAST FEW WEEKS (JUN-JUL) VARIOUS BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS PRODUCED BY PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS WERE DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE TOWN OF SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE.

(5) ON 12 JUL, SOME INHABITANTS OF THE REGION REPORTED TO HAVE SEEN TWO TRUCKS LOADED WITH STRANGERS PASS DOWN THE "TROCHA GANADERA" (CATTLE TRAIL), WHICH LEADS WEST FROM SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE TOWARD THE VILLAGE OF AGUA BONITA. (FIELD COMMENT--THERE IS AN OBVIOUS MISTAKE HERE. AGUA BONITA IS LOCATED TO THE EAST OF SJG). LATER, AT A SITE CALLED SANTA ROSITA, THE OCCUPANTS OF THE TRUCKS REPORTEDLY CHANGED INTO CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORMS AND HEADED TOWARD THE VILLAGE OF LAS CHARRAS, TO THE SOUTHEAST OF MAPIRIPAN.

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

FROM LAS CHARRAS THE SUBJECTS DEPARTED BY MOTORIZED LAUNCH (PRESUMABLY TRAVELING UP (WEST) THE GUAVIARE RIVER TO MAPIRIPAN ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE RIVER IN META DEPARTMENT).

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

(7) A GROUP OF ARMED MEN SPENT APPROXIMATELY A WEEK IN MAPIRIPAN AND ITS IMMEDIATE AREA AND, ON 18 JUL, BEGAN DETAINING LOCAL INHABITANTS. THE TESTIMONY OF PEOPLE WHO

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FLED THE AREA INDICATES THAT MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE WERE KILLED OR OTHERWISE DISAPPEARED.

(b)(1),1.4(c)

(8) ON 21 JUL 97, THE COMMANDER OF THE FOURTH DIVISION, THE DANTI COMMANDER AT SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE, THE BRIM 2 CHIEF OF STAFF, THE BIPAR COMMANDER, AND THE SIJIN COMMANDER FROM SJG TRAVELED TO MAPIRIPAN. THERE, THEY MADE CONTACT WITH (b)(1),1.4(c), THE MAYOR, AND LOCAL INHABITANTS, OBTAINING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

(A) APPROXIMATELY 70 TO 80 ARMED MEN ARRIVED AT THE TOWN, DRESSED IN CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORMS, AND OPENLY DECLARED THAT THEY BELONGED TO THE "AUTODEFENSAS CAMPEASINAS UNIDAS DE COLOMBIA" (UNITED PEASANT SELF-DEFENSES OF COLOMBIA OR AUC).

(B) THE GUNMEN KILLED VARIOUS PEOPLE,

(b)(1),1.4
(c)

TWO UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS WHOSE BODIES WERE THROWN IN THE RIVER, AND ANOTHER UNIDENTIFIED PERSON AT THE VILLAGE OF LA COOPERATIVA.

(C) THE ASSUMED PARAMILITARIES DETAINED OR CARRIED OFF AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF OTHER PEOPLE.

(9) THE INVESTIGATIVE COMMISSION FOUND NO BODIES, AND THE LOCALS INTERVIEWED DECLARED THAT THEY HAD SEEN ONLY TWO BODIES, (b)(1),1.4(c)

(b)(1),1.4(c) SOME OF THE PRESUMED "DESAPARECIDOS" (DISAPPEARED) BEGAN TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THEIR FAMILIES AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF COLAR TROOPS ON THE AFTERNOON OF 21 JUL 97.

OF THE MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT (b)(1),1.4(c)

(10) ON 23 JUL 97, A COMMISSION COMPOSED OF THE PRESIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATE, AND EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE (META AND GUAVIARE), TRAVELED TO MAPIRIPAN, WITH ASSISTANCE AND SECURITY PROVIDED BY THE FOURTH DIVISION.

D. (b)(1),1.4(c) REPORT OFFERS TWO HYPOTHESES TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY:

(1) MAPIRIPAN AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ARE PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCED BY (b)(1),1.4(c) AND ALLIED NARCOTRAFFICKERS, WHO HAVE ESTABLISHED COCA PLANTATIONS AND LABORATORIES IN THE CANO JABON AREA. THESE CRIMINAL

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GROUPS HAVE PERMANENTLY INTIMIDATED THE LOCAL POPULATION, TO INCLUDE MURDERING THOSE WHO REFUSE TO COLLABORATE. THIS MAY HAVE GENERATED A REACTION WITHIN THE INHABITANTS, WHO COULD HAVE FACILITATED THE ENTRY OF PARAMILITARIES INTO THE AREA.

(2) EVEN THOUGH THE PROPAGANDA, VERBAL COMMENTS OF THE GUNMEN, AND GRAFFITI LEFT IN THE AREA OPENLY DECLARE THE PERPETRATORS TO BE MEMBERS OF THE AUC, ONE CANNOT DISCARD THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS (MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT) WAS A STRATAGEM OF THE FARC FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

(A) IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR AN ARMED ORGANIZATION FROM ANOTHER REGION TO PENETRATE WITHOUT RESISTANCE INTO AN AREA STRICTLY CONTROLLED BY THE GUERRILLAS, ESPECIALLY ONE IN WHICH THE GUERRILLAS HAVE A LARGE NUMBER OF MILITIAS AND AUXILIARIES.

(B) THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT POLITICALLY SUPPORTS THE ACCUSATIONS OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS DENOUNCING THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY PARAMILITARIES, UNDERMINING THE CONVIVIRS (LEGAL RURAL SECURITY COOPERATIVES) AT PRECISELY THE MOMENT WHEN THE SUPREME COURT IS STUDYING THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS, AND WHICH COULD POWERFULLY INFLUENCE PROPOSALS TO REFORM THE MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM AND NEGOTIATE PEACE WITH THE GUERRILLAS. IN SUMMARY, THE MASSACRE POLITICALLY BENEFITS ONLY THE GUERRILLAS.

E. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) REPORT OFFERS THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

(1) THERE WAS A MASSACRE IN THE MAPIRIPAN REGION, PRODUCED BY AN ILLEGAL ARMED GROUP. HOWEVER, THE NUMBER OF ACTUAL VICTIMS DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THAT REPORTED BY THE NEWS MEDIA, AND CANNOT YET BE ESTABLISHED WITH CERTAINTY. THERE IS ONLY EVIDENCE OF SIX VICTIMS.

(2) NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROPAGANDA DISTRIBUTED IN THE AREA, GRAFFITI LEFT ON WALLS, AND THE VERBAL COMMENTS OF THE PERPETRATORS, IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS "AUTODEFENSAS," THE FARC'S CONTROL OF THE REGION, ITS ALLIANCE WITH NARCOTRAFFICKERS, THE STRONG PRESENCE OF GUERRILLA MILITIAS, AND THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF ACCESS TO THE AREA BY A LAQ GROUP WITHOUT BEING DETECTED OR ENCOUNTERING RESISTANCE IS INEXPLICABLE. THIS INDICATES THAT THE CRIMES COULD VERY WELL HAVE BEEN COMMITTED BY THE FARC WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF GAINING POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES.

F. FINALLY, (b)(1), 1.4 (c) ORDERS THE (b)(1), 1.4 (c) BRIGADE TO CARRY OUT SPECIFIC MISSIONS TO DETERMINE THE ACTUAL AUTHORS OF THE MAPIRIPAN MASSACRE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. THE UNITS ARE FURTHER TASKED TO CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE OF PARAMILITARY GROUPS IN GUAVIARE, AND THE UNION OF

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INDEPENDENT PARAMILITARY GROUPS UNDER THE UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION KNOWN AS THE AUC.

8. (S) A BIPAR DOCUMENT DATED 21 JUL 97 (b)(2) APPARENTLY PREPARED BY THE BATTALION COMMANDER'S ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FOR THE COLAR INSPECTOR GENERAL, PROVIDES ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE INITIAL INVESTIGATION OF THE MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT BY COLAR OFFICERS:

A. AT APPROXIMATELY 1600 HOURS (LOCAL) ON 21 JUL, A CNP HELICOPTER ARRIVED AT MAPIRIPAN, ACCOMPANIED BY BRIM 2 CHIEF OF STAFF (b)(1), 1.4 (c) WITH A "CONTRAGUERRILLA" (PLATOON OR SECTION) FROM THE BRIM 2. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) SPOKE WITH VARIOUS PERSONS FROM THE LOCAL AREA, WHO REPORTED THAT A GROUP OF HEAVILY ARMED MEN IN CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORMS HAD ARRIVED AT THE TOWN, CLAIMING TO BE PARAMILITARIES. THE LOCALS INTERVIEWED CLAIMED THAT THE GUNMEN HAD KILLED SEVERAL PEOPLE, ALTHOUGH THEY HAD ACTUALLY SEEN ONLY TWO BODIES. THE TOWNSPEOPLE ALSO REPORTED RUMORS THAT A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAD "DISAPPEARED," ALTHOUGH THEY WERE UNABLE TO CONFIRM EITHER THE NUMBER OF ALLEGED VICTIMS OR THEIR IDENTITIES.

B. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) ALSO SPOKE WITH (b)(1), 1.4 (c), "AN ICRC REPRESENTATIVE, WHO ASSERTED THAT HE HAD ONLY SEEN THE BODY OF ONE VICTIM, WHOSE THROAT HAD BEEN CUT. SANCHEZ ALSO LEARNED OF A RUMOR THAT THERE WERE TWO BODIES AT THE TRASH DUMP NEAR THE AIRPORT, AND (b)(1), 1.4 (c) (b)(1), 1.4 (c) THE SJC SIJIN COMMANDER, WAS DISPATCHED TO INVESTIGATE. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) REPORTED THAT HE HAD FOUND ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

C. THE BIPAR COMMUNICATION NOTES THAT, WITH THE ARRIVAL OF COLAR TROOPS IN MAPIRIPAN, THE LOCAL POPULATION APPEARED CALM. MANY OF THE INHABITANTS INDICATED THAT THEY HAD DECIDED NOT TO ABANDON THE TOWN AND FLEE TO VILLAVICENCIO, AS THEY HAD EARLIER PLANNED.

D. THE TWO VICTIMS WHOSE BODIES WERE FOUND (b)(1), 1.4 (c)

9. (S) ATTACHED TO THE 21 JUL 97 BIPAR REPORT (b)(2) ARE TWO CNP MESSAGES (b)(2) WHICH REPORT THE RESULTS OF INITIAL CNP/COLAR INVESTIGATIONS.

A. (b)(2) IS A MESSAGE (POLIGRAMA NO 0317), DATED 210797, (b)(1), 1.4 (c) CNP DEPARTMENTAL COMMANDER FOR GUAVIARE. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) INFORMS CNP HEADQUARTERS (b)(1), 1.4 (c) ACCOMPANIED THE COLAR FOURTH DIVISION COMMANDER AND A DANTI OPERATIONAL GROUP ON AN INSPECTION OF MAPIRIPAN, DEPARTING AT 1300 HOURS (LOCAL) ON 21 JUL 97. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) THE GOC OFFICIALS WERE ABLE TO ESTABLISH THE FOLLOWING FACTS:

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(1) A GROUP OF ARMED MEN ARRIVED AT MAPIRIPAN ON 14 JUL, AND REMAINED UNTIL 19 JUL.

(2) THE GUNMEN, IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS AUTODEFENSAS CAMPEÑAS UNIDAS DE COLOMBIA (AUC), GATHERED THE TOWNSPEOPLE AND BEGAN SELECTING INDIVIDUALS FOR EXECUTION. AMONG THOSE EXECUTED WERE (b)(1), 1.4 c, A TRUCK DRIVER, (b)(1), 1.4 c, THE LOCAL REPORT ADMINISTRATOR, ANTONIO ((CALLE)), (b)(1), 1.4 c, A LOCAL BUSINESSMAN, AND TWO UNKNOWN MALE SUBJECTS.

(3) IN THE NEARBY VILLAGE OF LA COOPERATIVA, THE GUNMEN REPORTEDLY KILLED ANOTHER UNIDENTIFIED MALE SUBJECT.

B. POLIGRAMA NO. 0318 (b)(2) IS A SUBSEQUENT MESSAGE (b)(1), 1.4 c, OFFERING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

(1) ICRC REPRESENTATIVES, WHO ARRIVED IN MAPIRIPAN SEPARATELY (b)(1), 1.4 c, TO VERIFY INFORMATION ABOUT A MASSACRE, REPORT THAT 120 ARMED MEN ARRIVED IN MAPIRIPAN ON 14 JUL, AND REMAINED THERE UNTIL 19 JUL. THE GUNMEN, WHO IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS PARAMILITARIES OF THE AUC, (b)(1), 1.4 c, BODY TRANSPORTED TO VILLAVICENCIO, (b)(1), 1.4 c, (BURIED IN LOCAL CEMETERY), AND (b)(1), 1.4 c, (BODY THROWN IN GUAVIARE RIVER).

(2) TWO OTHER UNIDENTIFIED MALE SUBJECTS WERE ALSO KILLED IN MAPIRIPAN (BODIES THROWN IN GUAVIARE RIVER).

(3) IN THE NEARBY HAMLET OF LA COOPERATIVA, ONE UNIDENTIFIED MALE SUBJECT WAS REPORTEDLY KILLED.

(4) FIFTEEN PEOPLE ARE REPORTED TO HAVE DISAPPEARED, ALTHOUGH SOME OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY COMMUNICATED WITH THEIR FAMILIES.

(5) THE APPARENT MOTIVE FOR THE KILLINGS APPEARS TO BE THAT THE GUNMEN SUSPECTED THE VICTIMS OF BEING GUERRILLA AUXILIARIES.

(6) GRAFFITI LEFT ON THE WALLS OF LOCAL HOUSES MAKES REFERENCES TO THE AUC.

10. (S) A SUBSEQUENT BIPAR OFICIO NO. 2892, DATED 23 JUL 97 (ENCLOSURE 10), EXPLAINS THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH CAUSED A DELEGATION FROM THE PROCURADURIA AND FISCALIA TO BE DELAYED ONE DAY IN SJG, FINALLY SECURING TRANSPORTATION TO MAPIRIPAN ON 23 JUL. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, SIGNED BY BIPAR COMMANDER (b)(1), 1.4 c, (b)(1), 1.4 c, PRESIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISOR (b)(1), 1.4 c,

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(b)(1),1.4 (c)

LOZANO ARRIVED IN SJG ON 22 JUL 97, ACCOMPANIED BY THE 35TH SECTIONAL FISCAL (VILLAVICENCIO PROSECUTOR), AND FIVE AGENTS OF THE JUDICIAL POLICE'S TECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS CORPS (CTI). THIS GROUP WAS JOINED BY THE SJG REGIONAL PROSECUTOR, TWO JUDICIAL AGENTS, AND A DEPARTMENTAL PROCURADURIA (ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE) OFFICIAL.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

A. THE COMMISSION ARRIVED AT THE BIPAR BASE IN THE MORNING (22 JUL), WHILE AWAITING HELICOPTER SUPPORT TO TAKE IT TO MAPIRIPAN. AS SOON AS THE DEMONSTRATION FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARGENTINE ARMY WAS COMPLETED AT BARRANCON (APPROXIMATELY 1330 HOURS), THE HELICOPTERS ARRIVED AT THE BASE. (b)(1),1.4 (c) COLAR FOURTH DIVISION COMMANDER, SPOKE WITH THE COMMISSION, EXPLAINING WHAT HAD OCCURRED DURING THE PRECEDING DAYS AND UPDATING THEM ON THE SITUATION IN MAPIRIPAN. (b)(1),1.4 (c) DIRECTED (b)(1),1.4 (c) (b)(1),1.4 (c) BIPAR OPERATIONS OFFICER, TO ACCOMPANY THE COMMISSION TO MAPIRIPAN.

B. AT APPROXIMATELY 1400 HOURS, WHILE WAITING FOR THE HELICOPTERS TO REFUEL, (b)(1),1.4 (c) MET WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION, AND DECIDED TO POSTPONE THE TRIP TO MAPIRIPAN UNTIL THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE DECISION OF THE COMMISSION WAS BASED ON THE FACT THAT THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT DAYLIGHT REMAINING TO CONDUCT THE INVESTIGATION, AND THE SECURITY SITUATION MADE IT INADVISABLE TO REMAIN OVERNIGHT IN MAPIRIPAN. ONCE THE DECISION WAS MADE TO POSTPONE THE TRIP, THE COMMISSION WAS TAKEN TO THE BIPAR CASINO, WHERE IT WAS PROVIDED WITH MEALS, OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS, AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION TO ATTEND TO PERSONAL TASKS.

C. AT 0630 HOURS ON 23 JUL, THE COMMISSION WAS TAKEN TO THE SJG AIRPORT TO AWAIT HELICOPTER TRANSPORT. AT 1030 HOURS, THE COMMISSION DEPARTED THE AIRPORT FOR MAPIRIPAN ABOARD A CNP AIRCRAFT, WHICH WAS COMMITTED TO RETURN TO MAPIRIPAN AT 1600 HOURS TO RECOVER THE INVESTIGATORS.

D. IN REPLY TO AN APPARENT INQUIRY FROM THE COLAR COMMANDER CONCERNING THE DELAY, (b)(1),1.4 (c) SPOKE PERSONALLY WITH (b)(1),1.4 (c) WHO CONFIRMED THAT THE DECISION TO POSTPONE THE VISIT BY ONE DAY WAS MADE BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION--NOT BECAUSE THE REQUIRED HELICOPTER SUPPORT HAD BEEN DENIED.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

E. DUE TO THE COMMISSION'S DECISION TO POSTPONE THE VISIT, THE TWO FIFTH DIVISION HELICOPTERS (ASSIGNED TO

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TRANSPORT THE COMMISSION) WERE USED TO TRANSPORT A COLAR SECTION FROM EL RETORNO (GUAVIARE) TO MAPIRIPAN, (b)(1),1.4 (c)

11. (S) OFICIO NO. 21149, DATED 23 JUL 97 (ENCLOSURE 11), IS A REPORT FROM (b)(1),1.4 (c) TO THE ARMED FORCES COMMANDER, SPECIFICALLY DETAILING THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE TO TRANSPORT (b)(1),1.4 (c) GROUP TO MAPIRIPAN.

A. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, THERE WAS INITIALLY SOME CONFUSION ABOUT WHICH ORGANIZATION (CNP OR COLAR) WAS GOING TO TRANSPORT THE GROUP, AND TO WHICH SPECIFIC SITES. INITIALLY, THE COLAR CHIEF OF STAFF RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE ARMED FORCES COMMANDER TO TRANSPORT THE DELEGATION IN A COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE (FAC) AIRCRAFT, FIRST TO VILLAVICENCIO TO PICK UP THE PROSECUTORS, AND THEN TO TAKE THE ENTIRE GROUP DIRECTLY TO MAPIRIPAN. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE'S PRIVATE SECRETARY INFORMED THE COLAR CHIEF OF STAFF THAT (b)(1),1.4 (c) AND HIS PARTY WOULD BE TRANSPORTED BY A CNP AIRCRAFT.

B. AT 1100 HOURS ON 22 JUL, THE COLAR INSPECTOR GENERAL RECEIVED WORD (b)(1),1.4 (c) GROUP WERE STRANDED AT THE SJG AIRPORT BECAUSE THE CNP AIRCRAFT WAS INSTRUCTED TO TRANSPORT THE GROUP ONLY AS FAR AS SJG. AFTER CONSULTING (b)(1),1.4 (c) THE COLAR INSPECTOR GENERAL MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO TAKE THE PARTY TO THE BIPAR BASE TO AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF MILITARY HELICOPTERS WHICH WERE INVOLVED IN A DEMONSTRATION AT THE ARMY SPECIAL FORCES SCHOOL AT BARRANCON.

C. (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT THEN REPEATS THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED DETAILS OF (b)(1),1.4 (c) SUBSEQUENT ARRIVAL AT MAPIRIPAN ON 23 JUL. STATEMENTS TAKEN FROM THE FAC HELICOPTER PILOTS ARE ATTACHED TO (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT, CORROBORATING THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE NOTORIOUS ONE-DAY DELAY.

12. (S) OFICIO 0327, UNDATED (b)(2) IS A REPORT FROM (b)(1),1.4 (c), APPOINTED AS COLAR COMMANDER IN THE WAKE OF THE LATE-JUL 97 SACKING OF THEN-MILITARY FORCES (b)(1),1.4 (c) (b)(1),1.4 (c) DETAILING THE FACTS REGARDING THE 14-20 JUL 97 EVENTS AT MAPIRIPAN.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

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(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

B. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) VISITED MAPIRIPAN, VERIFIED THE RECORDS OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY AIRCRAFT AND RIVERINE MOVEMENTS WITHIN THE AREA, AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CNP DEPARTMENTAL POLICE ARRIVED AT THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

(1) BETWEEN 30 AND 40 ARMED MEN, DRESSED IN CAMOUFLAGED UNIFORMS, WERE PRESENT AT MAPIRIPAN. THESE GUNMEN KILLED THREE PEOPLE, AND CAUSED THE DISAPPEARANCE OF TWO OTHERS. THE OTHER VERSIONS OF THE NUMBER OF DEAD AND "DISAPPEARED" HAVE NOT BEEN CONFIRMED TO DATE.

(2) ACCORDING TO THE PARISH PRIEST, THE PERSONS KILLED AT MAPIRIPAN IN JULY WERE THE SAME INDIVIDUALS WHO LED THE "JUICIO POPULAR" (PEOPLE'S COURT) SOME THREE MONTHS EARLIER.

(3) SINCE THE EVENTS AT MAPIRIPAN (15-20 JUL), NINE OTHER PERSONS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE AND THE IMMEDIATE AREA, APPARENTLY AS A RESULT OF A "SETTLING OF ACCOUNTS" BETWEEN CRIMINAL BANDS, AND MUTUAL RETALIATIONS BY GUERRILLAS AND PARAMILITARIES. THE NINE VICTIMS AND DETAILS OF EACH CASE ARE THEN LISTED (SEE ENCLOSURE 12).

(4) (b)(1), 1.4 (c)

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(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(5) THE SITUATION HAS BEEN MAGNIFIED BY THE NEWS MEDIA AND BY SOME RED CROSS (ICRC) REGIONAL OFFICIALS. AS ONE ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATE TOLD THE MAYOR OF MAPIRIPAN, "HABIA QUE REGISTRAR LA APARICION DE UN GRAN NUMERO DE VICTIMAS EN LA FOSA COMUN PARA QUE SE MOVILIZARA EL GOBIERNO Y LA OPINION PUBLICA" (A LARGE NUMBER OF VICTIMS MUST BE FOUND IN THE COMMON GRAVE IN ORDER TO MOBILIZE THE GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC OPINION). IN THE COMMON GRAVE IN QUESTION, ONLY ONE BODY WAS ACTUALLY FOUND.

(6) ACCORDING TO THE BISHOP OF SAN JOSE, THERE WERE ALSO SELECTIVE KILLINGS ATTRIBUTED TO FARC GUERRILLAS DURING THE MONTHS OF FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, AND MAY IN THE INSPECTIONS (HAMLETS) OF LA LIBERTAD AND LA UNILLA. THE REPORT LISTS DETAILS OF SIX INDIVIDUAL KILLINGS (SEE ENCLOSURE 12).

(b)(1),1.4c THE LEADER OF THE FARC'S EASTERN BLOC, (b)(1),1.4 (c) ISSUED THE FOLLOWING ORDER TO ALL THE FRONTS UNDER HIS COMMAND: "DENOUNCE BY ALL MEANS AVAILABLE BEFORE THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THAT IT IS THE COLAR, THE CNP, THE "CONVIVIRS" (LEGAL RURAL SECURITY COOPERATIVES), AND OTHER GOVERNMENT FORCES THAT ARE EXECUTING THE DECISIONS OF THE MILITARY HIGH COMMAND, MASSACRING COLOMBIANS, TORTURING THEM, DISAPPEARING THEM, AND ROBBING THEM OF THEIR PATRIMONY IN ORDER TO FORCE THEM TO COLLABORATE WITH THE ARMED FORCES. THEY (THE PEOPLE) MUST GO OR THEY DIE, GIVING THEM ONLY A FEW HOURS TO ESCAPE.

(8) (b)(1),1.4c ALSO GAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO MOBILIZE ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE REGION AND "MOTIVATE THE INITIATIVE AND COURAGE OF THE POPULATION, SO THAT, TOGETHER WITH THE GUERRILLAS, THEY (THE PEOPLE) ORGANIZE AND ARM THEMSELVES, AND CONFRONT THE ARMY DISGUISED AS PARAMILITARIES WHO ARE FINANCED BY "GRAN CAPITAL" (BIG BUSINESS). AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE ATTITUDE IN LAS CHARRAS, THIS COULD GENERATE A WAVE OF VIOLENCE SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH WAS SEEN IN URABA IN PREVIOUS YEARS.

(9) THE LEADER OF THE FARC'S SOUTHERN BLOC, (b)(1),1.4c (b)(1),1.4 (c) RELEASED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO THE MEDIA: "ON 16 JUL A COUNTERGUERRILLA PATROL COMPOSED OF 150 MEN FROM THE COLAR FOURTH DIVISION APPEARED IN CHARRAS, DISGUISED AS PARAMILITARIES FROM URABA AND CORDOBA. THEY CAPTURED SEVERAL PEASANTS AND CONTINUED ON TOWARD MAPIRIPAN.

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THERE, IT WAS FOUR DAYS BEFORE TWO OTHER PATROLS ARRIVED FROM SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE." (b)(1),1.4 STATEMENT CONTINUED, "UPON COMPLETION OF THE HORRENDOUS MASSACRE, THEY WITHDREW BY LAND AND BY RIVER--SOME TO RETURN TO THEIR UNIT, THE "JOAQUIN PARIS" BATTALION IN SJG, AND OTHERS TOWARD SAN MARTIN.

(10) THE TROOPS (COLAR UNITS) LEARNED OF THE PRESENCE OF AN ARMED GROUP IN THE MAPIRIPAN AREA ON 15 JUL 97, BY WAY OF A CALL MADE (b)(1),1.4 (c) TO (b)(1),1.4 (c). THE CIRCUIT JUDGE IN MAPIRIPAN. FROM THAT MOMENT, (b)(1),1.4 (c) BEGAN RECALLING TROOPS FROM OTHER MISSIONS IN ORDER TO PLAN A MILITARY OPERATION AGAINST THE GUNMEN IN MAPIRIPAN.

(11) THE POPULATION HAS BEEN GREATLY INTIMIDATED BY THE EVENTS AT MAPIRIPAN, THE CONTINUOUS WAVE OF SELECTIVE KILLINGS IN SJG, THE PROPAGANDA DISTRIBUTED BY THE ACCU (AUTODEFENSAS CAMPESINAS DE CORDOBA Y URABA), AND THE SUBSEQUENT FARC THREATS, PARTICULARLY IN LAS CHARRAS, WHERE THE FARC THREATENED THE POPULATION WITH BEING "AJUSTICIADOS" (SUBMITTED TO REVOLUTIONARY JUSTICE-- SUMMARY EXECUTION) IF IT DID NOT JOIN THE GUERRILLA CAUSE OR OTHERWISE REMAINED NEUTRAL. FOR THESE REASONS, THE PEOPLE ARE RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE INFORMATION.

C. (b)(1),1.4 (c) REPORT ALSO SUMMARIZES OTHER VERSIONS OF WHAT HAPPENED AT MAPIRIPAN:

(1) ACCORDING TO THE BISHOP OF SAN JOSE'S ACCOUNT TO (b)(1),1.4 (c), SIX OR SEVEN DAYS EARLIER (BEFORE HIS 22 JUL INTERVIEW--ON OR ABOUT 14-15 JUL) SEVERAL TRUCKS PASSED THROUGH SJG CARRYING APPROXIMATELY 120 UNARMED MEN DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHING. THIS GROUP, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION RECEIVED BY (b)(1),1.4 (c), WENT TOGETHER TO THE BIPAR. AFTER PASSING THROUGH THE BIPAR INSTALLATIONS, THE MEN CHANGED INTO MILITARY UNIFORMS AND CONTINUED ON DOWN A TRAIL THAT LEADS TO A PLACE CALLED CHARRAS. FROM LAS CHARRAS, ACCORDING TO THESE SAME SOURCES, THE MEN TRAVELED (PRESUMABLY BY BOAT) TO THE VICINITY OF MAPIRIPAN. THIS GROUP OF MEN ALLEGEDLY ARRIVED IN A "HERCULES" (C-130 HERCULES) AIRCRAFT AT THE SJG AIRPORT.

(2) EXAMINATION OF THE FLIGHT PLANS REGISTERING AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS BETWEEN 1 AND 20 JUL 97, GALAN CONCLUDES THAT THE REGISTERED FLIGHTS ARE THOSE THAT ROUTINELY ARRIVE AT SJG WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TWO FLIGHTS THAT ARRIVED ON 12 JUL FROM LOS CEDROS (SAN JUAN DE URABA). ONE OF THE AIRCRAFT WAS AN ANTONOV, AND THE OTHER WAS A DC-3. AT THE TIME WHEN GALAN SUBMITTED THE REPORT, THE DETAILS OF THE FLIGHTS' PURPOSES, DESTINATIONS, PASSENGERS, ETC., WERE STILL BEING VERIFIED.

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(3) THE REPORT PROVIDES FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING MILITARY FLIGHTS WHICH ARRIVED AT SJG AIRPORT DURING THE TIME IN QUESTION. A FAC C-130 HERCULES AIRCRAFT LANDED AT SJG ON 8 JUL 97, CARRYING MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED

(b)(1),1.4 (c) (TOLIMA) FOR TRAINING AT THE SPECIAL FORCES SCHOOL AT BARRANCON. ON 17 JUL 97, A C-130 HERCULES ARRIVED WITH A VEHICLE FOR THE COLMAR DETACHMENT AT BARRANCON AND, ON 18 JUL, A C-130 ARRIVED FROM BOGOTA TO TRANSPORT BRIM 2 PERSONNEL TO CARIMAGUA (CAQUETA), IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COLAR BUILD-UP FOR THE SUBSEQUENT OPERATION "DESTRUCTOR" IN THE YARI PLAINS.

AIRCRAFT (b)(1),1.4 (c)

(4) TWO DC-3 AIRCRAFT (APPARENTLY COMMERCIAL) LANDED AT SJG ON 11 JUL 97. THESE FLIGHTS BROUGHT PERSONNEL FROM BIPAR COMPANY B BACK TO SJG FROM LEAVE. BOTH FLIGHTS DEPARTED FROM APIAY AIR BASE.

(5) THE ARRIVAL OF PERSONNEL AT SJG WAS VERIFIED AGAINST THE REGISTRATION BOOK AT SJG AIRPORT AND THE CONTROL REGISTRY OF RIVERINE MOVEMENTS. FROM THESE RECORDS, GALAN CONCLUDED THAT STRANGE (OR UNACCOUNTED FOR) PERSONNEL DID NOT ARRIVE IN SJG VIA THESE TRANSPORT MEDIUMS.

(6) THE RECORDS OF COLAR CHECKPOINTS WERE EXAMINED SHOWING THAT NO TRUCKS LOADED WITH MEN, SUCH AS THOSE REPORTED BY THE BISHOP OF GUAVIARE, HAD PASSED THROUGH THE PERMANENT BIPAR CHECKPOINT "EL VIRGIN," ALTHOUGH THE POSSIBILITY THAT TRUCKS MIGHT HAVE EVADED THE ROADBLOCK BY USING UNIMPROVED TRAIL NETWORKS COULD NOT BE DISCOUNTED.

(7) BECAUSE OF THE EVENTS AT MAPIRIPAN, INFORMATION HAS ARRIVED FROM EVERY MUNICIPALITY IN THE AREA REPORTING POSSIBLE PARAMILITARY INCURSIONS--WITHOUT PROVIDING CLEAR INFORMATION REGARDING THE EXACT SITE OF THE ALLEGED PARAMILITARY PRESENCE.

D. (b)(1),1.4 Report SUMMARIZES THE RESULTS OF A "CONSEJO DE SEGURIDAD" (SECURITY COUNCIL) HELD ON 2 AUG 97 AT THE BIPAR BASE, AT WHICH THE ABOVE-MENTIONED WITNESSES WERE PRESENT. THE CONSEJO DE SEGURIDAD ANALYZED THE SITUATION AT MAPIRIPAN, THE SUBSEQUENT SELECTIVE KILLINGS IN SJG, AND CLARIFIED A SERIES OF VERSIONS OF EVENTS THAT HAVE CIRCULATED, MAINLY PROMULGATED BY SOME AUTHORITIES AS THE PRODUCT OF DISINFORMATION PROVIDED BY LOCAL INHABITANTS. ADDITIONALLY, THE CONSEJO DE SEGURIDAD ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

(1) CLEARLY INFORM THE POPULATION OF THE FACTS IN ORDER TO AVOID FURTHER DISTORTION OF THE INFORMATION.

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(2) TIGHTEN THE SECURITY MEASURES IN SJG AND SURROUNDING AREAS BY MEANS OF SEARCH AND CONTROL OPERATIONS COORDINATED WITH THE CNP AND COLAR DESIGNED TO REESTABLISH PUBLIC ORDER.

(3) CALL UPON THE AUTHORITIES TO ENCOURAGE DISPLACED PERSONS TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES AND PROVIDE THE FACTUAL INFORMATION IN ORDER TO DAMPEN THE FALSE, MALICIOUS RUMORS THAT HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING.

(4) INSIST ONCE AGAIN IN THE UNION OF ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL, MILITARY, AND POLICE AUTHORITY IN ORDER TO NEUTRALIZE THE FACTORS THAT NEGATIVELY AFFECT SECURITY AND SPREAD FEAR AMONG THE POPULACE.

E. (b)(1), 1.4 Report PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS:

(1) THE INCURSION OF A PARAMILITARY GROUP INTO GUAVIARE IS EVIDENT. THE GROUP VARIES BETWEEN 30 AND 50 MEN, ALTHOUGH THE EXACT NUMBER AND ORIGIN OF THE GROUP CANNOT BE PRECISELY DETERMINED.

(2) THE PARAMILITARY GROUP ENTERED THE AREA WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF INHABITANTS OF THE REGION, APPARENTLY AS A RESULT OF THE EARLIER GUERRILLA KILLINGS IN LA LIBERTAD AND THE "JUICIO POPULAR" IN MAPIRIPAN. AS THE PARISH PRIEST OF MAPIRIPAN TESTIFIED, SOME OF THE PERSONS KILLED AT MAPIRIPAN WERE THE RINGLEADERS OF THE MENTIONED "JUICIO POPULAR."

(3) SURROUNDING THE FACTS THERE IS A GREAT AMOUNT OF DISINFORMATION, PROPAGATED BY THE NEWS MEDIA AND BY SOME OFFICIALS OF THE REGIONAL ICRC, WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE GENERATION OF FEAR AMONG THE POPULACE.

(4) THE THREATS OF FARC LEADERS HAVE BEGUN TO CREATE A GREAT INTIMIDATION OVER THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, AND ARE POLARIZING THE INHABITANTS.

(5) THE AERIAL MOVEMENTS OF COLAR TROOPS ARE COMPLETELY JUSTIFIED WITH SPECIFIC MISSIONS AND ACTIVITIES.

(6) IT IS CLEAR THAT THE REPORTED "TRUCKS WITH STRANGE PERSONNEL" DID NOT PASS THROUGH THE MILITARY CHECKPOINT ADJACENT TO THE BIPAR INSTALLATION, BUT THESE REPORTS HAVE GENERATED THE IMPRESSION OF APPARENT COLLUSION BETWEEN MILITARY UNITS AND PARAMILITARY GROUPS.

(7) DESPITE RECEIVING INFORMATION ABOUT ARMED GROUPS IN THE REGION, THE MILITARY OPERATIONS BEING CONDUCTED AT THE TIME (OF THE MAPIRIPAN INCURSION), AND THE DISPOSITION OF THE UNIT (BIPAR), DID NOT PERMIT AN IMMEDIATE REACTION, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERING THE SERIES OF THREATS THAT WERE REPORTED THROUGHOUT THE AREA OF

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RESPONSIBILITY, WHICH OBLIGED THE COMMAND TO REINFORCE THE BIPAR WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING 20 JUL.

(8) PART OF THE DISINFORMATION, AND THE MAGNIFICATION OF THE INCIDENT AT MAPIRIPAN, WAS RECOGNIZED BY ALL THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE CONSEJO DE SEGURIDAD AS BEING THE RESULT OF THE ABSENCE OF A CLEAR AND DEFINED POSITION ON THE PART OF ALL THE CIVIL, MILITARY, AND ECCLESIASTIC AUTHORITIES, WHICH ALLOWED THE MEDIA AND LOCAL INHABITANTS TO INVENT VERSIONS WITHOUT A FACTUAL BASIS, AND SPREAD BASELESS RUMORS.

F. (b)(1), 1.4 (c) REPORT INCLUDES A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS, THE MORE INTERESTING OF WHICH INCLUDE:

(1) INTENSIFY (b)(1), 1.4 (c) OPERATIONS IN SJG, IN COORDINATION WITH THE CNP AND THE FISCALIA, IN ORDER TO CAPTURE THE CRIMINALS WHO ARE CARRYING OUT THE SELECTIVE KILLINGS AND DEMONSTRATE THE INSTITUTIONAL POSITION (AGAINST THESE ACTIVITIES).

(2) INCREASE THE COLLABORATION IN GUAVIARE AMONG THE COLAR, THE CNP, THE FISCALIA, AND THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES IN ORDER TO AVOID THE POLARIZATION OF THE POPULACE.

(3) INITIATE PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS, IN COORDINATION WITH CIVIL AUTHORITIES, IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE DISPLACED PERSONS TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.

(4) IT IS OF OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE THAT THE CNP OCCUPY THE MUNICIPALITIES OF MAPIRIPAN, EL RETORNO, AND CALAMAR IN ORDER TO KEEP THESE AREAS FROM BEING DOMINATED BY EITHER GUERRILLAS OR PARAMILITARIES. THIS RECOMMENDATION MUST BE EMPHASIZED BECAUSE THE COLAR DOES NOT POSSESS THE CAPACITY TO COVER ALL THE TOWNS. IF THE COLAR WERE TO DO SO, IT WOULD BECOME COMPLETELY IMMOBILIZED, LEAVING COMPLETE FREEDOM OF ACTION TO BOTH THE GUERRILLAS AND THE PRIVATE JUSTICE GROUPS. AS LONG AS THERE IS NO POLICE PRESENCE, THE COLAR CANNOT INTENSIFY MILITARY OPERATIONS (AGAINST EITHER THE GUERRILLAS OR THE PARAMILITARIES).

(5) THROUGH THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT, DEMAND THAT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMPLY WITH THE AGREEMENTS TO CARRY OUT THEIR ACTIVITIES IN COORDINATION WITH THE LEGAL AUTHORITIES, AND AVOID CONVERTING THEMSELVES INTO "DESORIENTADORES" (MISLEADING SOURCES OR SOURCES OF DISINFORMATION) FOR THE MEDIA.

(b)(1), 1.4 (c), 1.4 (d)

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(b)(1),(b)(2),(b)(3):10 USC 424,1.4 (c),1.4 (d)

5. (S) THE COLAR'S STRUGGLE AGAINST INADVERTENT MISINFORMATION AND DELIBERATE DISINFORMATION CONCERNING THE MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT IS EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE STACK OF DOCUMENTS EXAMINED IN THIS REPORT. THERE IS ALSO AN APPARENT REALIZATION ON THE PART OF SEVERAL SENIOR COLAR OFFICERS THAT MUCH OF THE INADVERTENT DISINFORMATION RESULTED DIRECTLY FROM THE ABSENCE OF FACTUAL INFORMATION, A SITUATION WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN IMPROVED IF THE GOC AGENCIES HAD COORDINATED THEIR INVESTIGATIONS AND PROMPTLY INFORMED THE PUBLIC OF THE FACTS. SIMILARLY, THESE OFFICERS SEEM TO REALIZE THAT THE FARC'S DELIBERATE DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN OWED MUCH OF ITS SUCCESS TO THE LACK OF A COHERENT GOC PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THE FACTS. IRONICALLY, HAVING APPARENTLY RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING THE FACTS OUT IN A TIMELY MANNER IN ORDER TO SQUELCH THE FALSE, MALICIOUS RUMORS, THE COLAR DID NOT COMPLETE ITS INVESTIGATIONS UNTIL NOV 97 (BY WHICH TIME MAPIRIPAN WAS OLD NEWS, AND THE DAMAGE WAS ALREADY DONE), AND THEN FAILED TO RELEASE THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION TO THE PUBLIC.

(b)(1),1.4 (c),1.4 (d)

6. (S) (b)(1),1.4 (c),1.4 (d)

THESE REPORTS DEMONSTRATE HOW A WELL-INTENTIONED, RESPECTED ORGANIZATION LIKE THE ICRC CAN SOMETIMES CONTRIBUTE TO THE PUBLIC HYSTERIA BY PASSING UNCONFIRMED, FRAGMENTARY INITIAL REPORTS OF SUCH INCIDENTS DIRECTLY TO THE NEWS MEDIA. THE COMMENTS OF ONE REGIONAL ICRC OFFICIAL STRONGLY IMPLY THAT THE INDIVIDUAL WAS MORE ANXIOUS TO "MOBILIZE PUBLIC OPINION" THAN HE WAS TO GET THE FACTS STRAIGHT.

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7. (S) THE INITIAL FRONT-PAGE REPORTS OF THE MAPIRIPAN MASSACRE LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT THE PARAMILITARIES ARRIVED AT MAPIRIPAN ABOARD COLAR TRUCKS; 35-40 PERSONS HAD BEEN KILLED; THE LOCAL BUTCHER SHOP HAD BEEN TURNED INTO A CHAMBER OF HORRORS; AND THAT A NUMBER OF PERSONS EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN THE NUMBER KILLED HAD BEEN DISAPPEARED. SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATIONS HAVE REVEALED THAT SEVEN PEOPLE WERE CONFIRMED TO HAVE BEEN KILLED AT MAPIRIPAN AND OTHER NEARBY TOWNS. THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERSONS BELIEVED TO HAVE "DISAPPEARED" WAS 15, AND MANY OF THESE SUPPOSED VICTIMS BEGAN CONTACTING THEIR FAMILIES AS EARLY AS 22 JUL TO INFORM THEM THAT THEY WERE IN FACT ALIVE, AND NOT IN THE HANDS OF THE PARAMILITARIES. THE "COLAR TRUCKS" AND THE BUTCHER SHOP/TORTURE CHAMBER DO NOT APPEAR IN THE SUBSEQUENT TESTIMONY OF ANY OF THE WITNESSES.

8. (S) IT APPEARS TO BE CERTAIN THAT THE PERPETRATORS OF THE MAPIRIPAN MASSACRE WERE ILLEGAL PARAMILITARIES, ALTHOUGH THE EXACT NATURE OF THEIR MOTIVES REMAINS UNCLEAR. THE PARISH PRIEST'S CONCLUSION THAT THE VICTIMS WERE KILLED IN RETALIATION FOR THE EARLIER FARC KILLINGS IN THE AREA APPEARS TO BE THE MOST LIKELY SCENARIO, AND THE FACT THAT THE VICTIMS WERE THE RINGLEADERS OF THE FARC'S "JUICIO POPULAR" STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE PARAMILITARIES HAD SOME HELP FROM THE LOCAL INHABITANTS. THE MOST PUZZLING ASPECT, (b)(2), IS WHY (b)(1).1.4 c WAS NOT KILLED. THE FARC'S ENDORSEMENT OF THE GOOD JUDGE'S PERFORMANCE IN OFFICE WOULD SEEM TO MAKE HIM A LIKELY PARAMILITARY TARGET.

9. (S) (b)(2)

ON 4 MAY 98, THE PARISH PRIEST AT PUERTO ALVIRA, SOME 60 KILOMETERS DOWNRIVER FROM MAPIRIPAN (BUT WITHIN THE SAME MUNICIPALITY), REPORTED THAT A LARGE GROUP OF ARMED MEN DESCENDED UPON THE TOWN AND KILLED AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF PEOPLE. SUBSEQUENT OPEN PRESS REPORTS OF 6 MAY SPEAK OF 14 BODIES AND EIGHT "DESAPARECIDOS," WITH HUNDREDS OF PERSONS FLEEING THE AREA. APPARENTLY THE GUNMEN DYNAMITED THE LOCAL AIRSTRIP (USED PRIMARILY FOR NARCOTRAFFICKER DRUG FLIGHTS) AND BURNED A LIGHT AIRCRAFT ON THE GROUND.

10. (S) PUERTO ALVIRA (OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "CANO JABON") IS A WELL-KNOWN CENTER OF ILLICIT NARCOTICS ACTIVITY, AND A SITE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED BY PARAMILITARY LEADER (b)(1).1.4 c AS A TARGET OF HIS GROUP. THE POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOR THIS LATEST MASSACRE REMAIN AS MURKY AS THOSE OF THE JUL 97 INCURSION INTO MAPIRIPAN. MANY OBSERVERS CLAIM THAT THE PARAMILITARIES ARE FINANCED AND SUPPORTED BY NARCOTRAFFICKERS, AN ASSERTION WHICH APPEARS TO BE CONTRADICTED BY THIS LATEST PARAMILITARY ATTACK AGAINST A PRIME NARCOTRAFFICKING CENTER. IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW DYNAMITING THE RUNWAY, BURNING A PROBABLE

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NARCOTRAFFICKER AIRCRAFT, AND DISPLACING THE POPULATION WHICH PROVIDES THE LABOR FORCE FOR COCA CULTIVATION AND PROCESSING WOULD IN ANY WAY BENEFIT THE PARAMILITARIES' SUPPOSED NARCOTRAFFICKER SPONSORS. IT MIGHT BE A RETALIATORY ATTACK AGAINST A FARC STRONGHOLD OR AGAINST A RIVAL DRUG ORGANIZATION. WHATEVER THE CASE, AT LEAST SEVERAL PEOPLE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN KILLED, AND THE MOTIVES OF THE KILLERS REMAIN ELUSIVE.

11. ~~(S)~~ AS IN THE JUL 97 MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT, INITIAL REPORTS FROM SUPPOSED "WITNESSES" HAVE INCLUDED FANTASTIC ACCOUNTS OF 200 HEAVILY-ARMED "PARAS" ARRIVING IN FIVE TRUCKS, SUPPORTED BY AERIAL BOMBARDMENT COORDINATED BY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS AMONG THE AIRCRAFT CREW, PARAS ON THE GROUND, AND "SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE." NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS SAY THAT THE NUMBER OF DEAD "COULD BE AS HIGH AS 20." THIS TIME THE COLAR MANAGED TO GET TROOPS INTO THE AREA BY 1700 HOURS ON 5 MAY. A LITTLE MORE THAN A DAY AFTER THE INCURSION.

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

12. ~~(S)~~ (b)(1) 1.4 (c) THE DELIBERATE GENERATION OF PHANTOM REPORTS OF PARAMILITARY INCURSIONS ALL OVER THE AREA WOULD BE USED TO SET THE COLAR UP FOR CHARGES OF "FAILING TO PROTECT THE POPULATION DESPITE EARLIER WARNINGS" WHEN A REAL PARAMILITARY INCURSION ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE. THIS ASSERTION, WHICH MAY HAVE SOUNDED LIKE A LAME EXCUSE FOR INACTION IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF THE MAPIRIPAN INCIDENT, HAS NOW PROVEN TO BE TRUE. THE GOC HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN, JOSE FERNANDO ((CASTRO)), HARSHLY ATTACKED THE SECURITY FORCES FOR FAILING TO PREVENT THE INCIDENT, CLAIMING THAT HE HAD ALERTED AUTHORITIES IN JANUARY ABOUT GUERRILLA AND PARAMILITARY THREATS AGAINST PUERTO ALVIRA. WHILE CASTRO MAY INDEED HAVE WARNED GOC AUTHORITIES ABOUT A THREAT AGAINST PUERTO ALVIRA, BOTH CNP AND COLAR OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN DELUGED WITH SIMILAR WARNINGS OF THREATS AGAINST EVERY MUNICIPALITY IN THE AREA.

13. ~~(S)~~ (b)(2) THE BIPAR HAS ITS TROOPS SCATTERED ALL OVER THE DEPARTMENTS OF META AND GUAVIARE, WITH ISOLATED COMPANIES TIED DOWN IN THE TOWNS OF EL RETORNO AND CALAMAR (GUAVIARE), AND PUERTO CONCORDIA AND MAPIRIPAN (META). BIPAR SIMPLY DOES NOT HAVE THE TROOPS TO GARRISON EVERY HAMLET IN THE AREA, AND IT LACKS THE TACTICAL MOBILITY TO RESPOND TO THREATENED SECTORS IN A TIMELY MANNER--ESPECIALLY WHEN THE WARNINGS (THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEM FALSE) ARE COMING IN

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CONTINUOUSLY FROM EVERY TOWN IN THREE DEPARTMENTS.

14. (S) THE COLAR IS IN AN UNENVIABLE SITUATION. WHEN THE COLAR SUFFERS EMBARRASSING TACTICAL DISASTERS LIKE THE RECENT ONE AT EL BILLAR, THE CRITICS BLAST IT FOR SENDING TOO FEW TROOPS INTO GUERRILLA-CONTROLLED TERRITORY WITHOUT ADEQUATE SUPPORT. YET, WHEN A PARAMILITARY MASSACRE TAKES PLACE IN AN ISOLATED VILLAGE DEEP INSIDE GUERRILLA TERRITORY, THE CRITICS ATTACK THE COLAR FOR FAILING TO PREVENT THE INCIDENT--WITH THE SAME INADEQUATE FORCES. COLAR AND CNP COMMANDERS RIGHTLY POINT OUT THAT ANY ISOLATED GARRISON OF LESS THAN COMPANY SIZE IS LITTLE MORE THAN AN INVITATION FOR A DEVASTATING GUERRILLA ATTACK. THE FATE OF THE CNP POST AT MAPIRIPAN (DESTROYED BY GUERRILLAS IN JAN 96, WITH ALL 12 CNP KILLED) IS AN ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE. IF THE CNP CONTINUES TO WITHDRAW ITS VULNERABLE POLICE POSTS IN PLACES LIKE MAPIRIPAN, THE COLAR WILL HAVE TO REPLACE THEM WITH PERMANENT GARRISONS OF AT LEAST COMPANY SIZE. IN ORDER TO DO THIS, THE COLAR'S MANPOWER AND COMBAT CAPABILITIES WOULD HAVE TO BE DRAMATICALLY INCREASED--SOMETHING THAT NEITHER THE GOC NOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN ARE LIKELY TO SUPPORT.

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

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(b)(2)

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