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 ACTION SS-00

RELEASED IN PART  
 B1, 1.4(D)

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W  
 -----A5F04A 112013Z /38

R 111742Z MAR 93  
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5933  
 INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY QUITO  
 AMEMBASSY LIMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 03935

DEPT PLEASE PASS  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM  
 USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA  
 CIA WASHDC  
 DIA WASHDC

EXDIS

CINCSO AND CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
 TAGS: PGOV, CO  
 SUBJECT: THE RACE FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL  
 NOMINATION: ERNESTO SAMPER

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 REF: BOGOTA 3766

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY: ONE OF LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL PRE-CANDIDATE ERNESTO SAMPER'S CAMPAIGN AIDE'S, WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN CESAR VILLEGAS, PREDICTS THAT THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA WILL BE EITHER SAMPER OR CONSERVATIVE ANDRES PASTRANA. AD M-19'S ANTONIO NAVARRO WOLFF IS LIKELY TO BE THE KINGMAKER IN THE NEXT ELECTION AND THEREFORE A POWERFUL INDIVIDUAL IN THE NEXT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: JAMES F COOPER  
 DATE/CASE ID: 20 MAY 2009 200705928

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3. A KEY CAMPAIGN AIDE TO LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL PRE-CANDIDATE ERNESTO SAMPER, CESAR VILLEGAS, TOLD POLICONS THAT HE HAD NO DOUBTS THAT HIS MAN WOULD TAKE HIS PARTY'S NOMINATION. THE CONTEST IS NOT FOR THE NOMINATION -- "WE WILL GET THAT" -- IT IS FOR THE PRESIDENCY AND THE MAN TO BEAT IS CONSERVATIVE ANDRES PASTRANA, VILLEGAS SAID. "I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE NEXT TWO PRESIDENTS OF COLOMBIA (1994 AND 1998) WILL BE SAMPER AND PASTRANA." "WHAT I DO NOT KNOW IS WHICH OF THE TWO WILL BE ELECTED IN '94 AND WHICH IN '98."

4. LIKE HUMBERTO DE LA CALLE, SAMPER'S CHIEF RIVAL FOR THE LIBERAL PARTY NOMINATION (REFTEL), VILLEGAS WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE INFLUENCE AD M-19'S ANTONIO NAVARRO WOLFF WILL WIELD IN THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION. (COMMENT: BOGOTA'S POLITICAL SAVANTS ARE IN ACCORD THAT BECAUSE THERE WILL BE AT LEAST THREE CANDIDATES IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN MAY OF 1994, NONE WILL WIN A  
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MAJORITY OF THE VOTES, THEREBY NECESSITATING A SECOND-ROUND RUN OFF BETWEEN THE TOP TWO VOTE GETTERS. ALL ALSO AGREE THAT THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE, PRESUMABLY PASTRANA, AND THE LIBERAL CANDIDATE (SAMPER IF YOU ASK VILLEGAS, BUT FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE BY NO MEANS DECIDED) WILL MAKE IT TO THE SECOND ROUND. NAVARRO WOLFF WILL THEN BE IN THE ENVIABLE POSITION OF BEING ABLE TO INFLUENCE HIS FOLLOWERS TO VOTE FOR ONE OR THE OTHER, AND NO ONE DOUBTS NAVARRO'S ABILITY TO GUIDE THE SECOND-ROUND VOTE OF HIS FIRST-ROUND SUPPORTERS.)

5. VILLEGAS ARGUED THAT OF SAMPER AND PASTRANA, SAMPER WAS CLOSER TO NAVARRO PHILOSOPHICALLY. NAVARRO SHOULD GO WITH US, HE SAID. HE DID NOT SAY PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNDERWAY, BUT HE DID SAY HE THOUGHT NAVARRO'S PRICE FOR SUPPORTING SAMPER IN THE SECOND-ROUND WOULD BE THREE MINISTRIES, ONE MAJOR MINISTRY AND TWO LESSER ONES. HE SAID HEALTH AND EDUCATION WOULD PROBABLY BE THE LESSER MINISTRIES. WHAT MAJOR PLUM NAVARRO WILL SEEK, HOWEVER, REMAINS A MYSTERY.

6. VILLEGAS SAID THAT SOMEONE SEEKING NATIONAL RECOGNITION AND A NATIONAL PLATFORM WOULD TRY TO BECOME THE NEXT FISCAL. IF CURRENT FISCAL GENERAL GUSTAVO DE

GREIFF WERE 45, INSTEAD OF 63, HE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA, VILLEGAS SAID. WE WOULD NOTE THAT NAVARRO, HOWEVER, IS NOT A LAWYER AND THEREFORE IS PERSONALLY INELIGIBLE TO BE FISCAL. FURTHER, GUSTAVO DE GREIFF'S TERM DOES NOT EXPIRE UNTIL JULY OF 1996 -- THE NEXT PRESIDENT'S SECOND YEAR IN OFFICE, SO THIS WOULD NOT BE AN IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITY,

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THOUGH WE CANNOT DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT DE GREIFF WOULD RESIGN IF SAMPER,

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WERE ELECTED

PRESIDENT. FINALLY, VYING FOR THE FISCALIA IS CHANCY.

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THE FISCAL IS SELECTED BY THE SUPREME COURT FROM A LIST  
OF THREE PERSONS SUBMITTED TO THE COURT BY THE PRESIDENT  
AND THE JUSTICES ARE QUITE INDEPENDENT.

7. SAMPER PLANS TO RETURN TO COLOMBIA SOMETIME IN  
APRIL, VILLEGAS SAID, THOUGH HE WON'T OFFICIALLY BEGIN  
HIS CAMPAIGN UNTIL LATE SUMMER. IF THE GOC FAILS TO GET  
PABLO ESCOBAR, HOWEVER, SAMPER WILL DELAY HIS RETURN IN  
ORDER TO DISTANCE HIMSELF TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE FROM  
CURRENT PRESIDENT AND TITULAR HEAD OF THE LIBERAL PARTY  
CESAR GAVIRIA, WHOSE PERSONAL POPULARITY REMAINS QUITE  
LOW IN LARGE PART BECAUSE OF ESCOBAR.

8. VILLEGAS CONFIRMED THAT FORMER PEACE COUNSELLOR  
HORACIO SERPA WOULD RUN THE SAMPER CAMPAIGN; FORMER  
COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UN ENRIQUE PENALOSA WILL BE  
CAMPAIGN TREASURER.

9. VILLEGAS

HE SAID HE WAS CAUTIONING SAMPER

THAT THE CAMPAIGN HAD TO BE DESIGNED TO AVOID TO THE  
EXTENT POSSIBLE SUCH CHARGES.

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WE HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS THAT, IF ELECTED, HE  
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WOULD PURSUE COUNTERNARCOTICS WITH THE SAME ENERGY AND  
VIGOR THAT GAVIRIA HAS.  
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