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SECRET

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ACTION SS-00

INFO LOG-00 OASY-00 ADS-00 /000W  
-----11CDEE 172051Z /38

O 171948Z DEC 93  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4610  
INFO JCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
DEA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM IMMEDIATE  
USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
DIRONDCP WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
DIRFBI WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
DIRNSA FT GEORGE G MEADE MD//G2//DCN LINEAR// IMMEDIATE

RELEASED IN PART 25X1

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 19212

SPECAT/EXDIS ROUSING (C)  
PROVEN OPTION MESSAGE (U)

DECAPIONED

STATE FOR ARA/WATSON; INM/GELBARD, ARA/AND, AND,  
DS/DSS/ITA, DS/I/CT  
JCS FOR GENERAL SHALIKASHULI  
CIA FOR DIRECTOR WOOLSEY  
DEA FOR GREEN  
NSC FOR TONY LAKE

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Oscar Olson, Senior Reviewer

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USCINCSO FOR GENERAL WORTHINGTON  
USSOCOM FOR GENERAL DOWNING  
ONDCP FOR DIRECTOR BROWN

Classification Extended ~ Class: SECRET ~ Reason: 25X1

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, ASEC, SNAR, PTER, CO  
SUBJECT: GOMEZ PADILLA RESIGNS; IMPACT ON FUTURE  
OPERATIONS AGAINST THE CALI CARTEL.

REF: BOGOTA 18955  
1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT. PARA 6 CARRIES ADDITIONAL  
CONTROLS.

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2. SUMMARY: THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR GENERAL MIGUEL GOMEZ PADILLA MID-DAY ON DECEMBER 16, WHO INFORMED HIM THAT PRESIDENT GAVIRIA HAD ACCEPTED HIS RESIGNATION THE EVENING BEFORE. GOMEZ SAID THAT DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OCTAVIO VARGAS SILVA WOULD ASSUME COMMAND OF THE CNP ON 17 DECEMBER. IN THIS LIGHT, THE AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED WITH GOMEZ MINISTER OF DEFENSE PARDO'S PROPOSAL ON DECEMBER 10 TO CREATE A SMALL, SPECIALIZED, U.S.-SUPPORTED UNIT DESIGNED TO TARGET AND CAPTURE THE CALI KINGPINS. GOMEZ FELT THE CONCEPT WAS EXACTLY RIGHT BUT EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT VARGAS SILVA, AND ADVISED THE AMBASSADOR TO WAIT UNTIL PARDO IS BACK ON THE JOB TO COORDINATE THE EFFORT. END SUMMARY.

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PARDO'S PROPOSAL  
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3. IN A MEETING ON DECEMBER 10 (PER REFTTEL), MOD PARDO OUTLINED FOR ME HIS CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS FOR EFFECTIVELY COMBATTING THE CALI CARTEL. HE STATED THAT THE POLICE AND ARMY WOULD LAUNCH A MASSIVE OPERATION IN VALLE THE FOLLOWING WEEK, TO SEARCH HUNDREDS OF RESIDENCES AND PROPERTIES, BUT THAT THIS WOULD ESSENTIALLY BE COVER FOR THE "REAL" OPERATION. HE SAID HE INTENDED TO CREATE A SMALL, VERY SPECIALIZED UNIT OF VETTED (POLYGRAPHED) POLICE AND MILITARY OFFICERS, POSSIBLY SOME 30 INDIVIDUALS, TO PURSUE THE FOUR TOP KINGPINS AND THEIR PRINCIPAL "15-20 LIEUTENANTS." HE ASKED FOR THE SAME TYPE OF U.S. SUPPORT--DEA, [ ] AND JSOC ELEMENTS--TO THIS UNIT AS HAD BEEN PROVIDED TO THE ANTI-ESCOBAR TASK FORCE (BLOQUE DE BUSQUEDA) IN MEDELLIN. HE REQUESTED ASSISTANCE IN TRAINING THE UNIT, AS WELL AS WITH OPERATIONS PLANNING AND INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS. PARDO SAID THAT ONLY HE, THE PRESIDENT, MYSELF, AND GOMEZ PADILLA WOULD BE AWARE OF THE CELL, THE U.S. SUPPORT TO IT, OR THE SPECIFIC TARGETS OF THEIR OPERATIONS.

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GOMEZ PADILLA RESIGNS  
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4. THAT NIGHT, AFTER OUR MEETING, PARDO UNDERWENT

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EMERGENCY OPEN-HEART SURGERY TO REPAIR A RUPTURED AORTA. IN LIGHT OF PARDO'S CONDITION, I WAITED UNTIL I COULD SPEAK DIRECTLY WITH GOMEZ PADILLA WHO WAS IN PANAMA AT THE TIME. WE MET ON DECEMBER 16 TO DETERMINE THE STATUS OF PLANS BOTH TO CARRY OUT THE LARGE-SCALE

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OPERATION, AND TO CREATE THE SMALLER UNIT. AS WE SAT DOWN GOMEZ PADILLA INFORMED ME OF HIS RESIGNATION. I ASKED GOMEZ IF HE FELT THAT THE OPERATIONS IN CALI WOULD PROCEED ON SCHEDULE GIVEN PARDO'S ABSENCE, AND HIS OWN RESIGNATION. HE REPLIED THAT THE GOC WOULD CARRY OUT THE LARGE-SCALE OPERATION, BUT THAT THIS WAS SIMPLY "SMOKE," DESIGNED TO SEND A SIGNAL. HE SAID VARGAS WOULD COORDINATE THE OPERATIONS AN HE HAD NO DOUBT THEY

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WOULD COMMENCE.

5. GOMEZ THEN SAID THE REAL OPERATION WAS THE SMALL  
UNIT PARDO AND I HAD DISCUSSED. HE SAID HE WONDERED  
WHETHER WE WANTED TO "HAND OVER" THIS OPERATION TO  
VARGAS, ADDING THAT THE FUTURE OF THIS UNIT WAS HIS  
MAJOR PREOCCUPATION IN RESIGNING. I REPLIED THAT WE HAD  
SOME CONCERNS ABOUT VARGAS. GOMEZ PADILLA STATED THAT  
ALTHOUGH HE HAD NO FACTS, HE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT  
VARGAS HIMSELF, AND ADVISED ME TO WAIT UNTIL PARDO WAS  
BACK ON THE JOB TO PURSUE THIS CONCEPT ANY FURTHER.

6. I TOLD GOMEZ WE WERE CONFIDENT VARGAS HAD HAD  
CONTACT WITH CALI DURING THE HUNT FOR ESCOBAR AND THAT  
WE HAD SPECULATED AS TO WHETHER IT WAS OPERATIONALLY  
ORIENTED, TO GAIN USEFUL INFORMATION. "THAT WAS NOT THE  
CASE," REPLIED GOMEZ. GOMEZ SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE  
IDEAS PARDO AND I DISCUSSED WERE PERFECT, AND WITH THE  
SAME TYPE OF SUPPORT WHICH HAD BEEN PROVIDED TO THE  
BLOQUE, WOULD WORK WELL IN CALI. WITH [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] DEA THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JSOC TRAINING  
THE OPERATIONAL UNIT, THE CONCEPT WAS SOUND. BUT, HE

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SAID SECURITY WAS PARAMOUNT AND PARDO WAS THE MAN TO  
TALK TO. HE SAID HE WAS NOT CERTAIN THAT THE PRESIDENT

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HAD BEEN BRIEFED, BUT FELT STRONGLY THAT VARGAS WAS NOT THE MAN TO CARRY THE PLAN FORWARD. HE SAID IT WOULD BE FOOLISH TO GO FORWARD WITH THESE OPERATIONS WITHOUT POLITICAL COVER AND APPROVAL, AND THAT NEEDED TO BE DECIDED BETWEEN GAVIRIA AND PARDO. SINCE GAVIRIA WOULD NOT TRUST ANYONE BUT PARDO WITH SUCH A DELICATE MATTER, THIS SHOULD BE PUT ON HOLD UNTIL PARDO HAD RECOVERED FROM HIS SURGERY AND HAD RETURNED TO WORK.

7. COMMENT: (NF NC OC WN) WE ARE STILL REELING FROM THE ONE-TWO LOSS OF PARDO AND GOMEZ PADILLA. BUT PARDO WILL BE BACK, WE ARE FORTUNATE THAT IT IS CHRISTMAS AND THERE WILL BE A BREAK, AND THERE IS TIME TO REGROUP. OUR PLAN IS VERY MUCH ALIVE AND A SMALL UNIT, COMPRISED OF TWO DISTINCT CELLS, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] IS THE ONLY EFFECTIVE MEANS BY WHICH THE GOC CAN COMBAT THE CALI CARTEL. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TEAM ALREADY IN PLACE HERE IN BOGOTA, WHICH IS ALREADY WORKING ON SUPPORTING OPERATIONS IN CALI.

8. WE SEE THE WISDOM IN GOMEZ PADILLA'S ADVICE TO WAIT A FEW WEEKS AND HAVE THUS AUTHORIZED THE MAJORITY OF THE JSOC ELEMENTS IN COUNTRY TO GO HOME OVER THE HOLIDAYS. AS REQUESTED, WE WILL FORWARD IN COMING DAYS A REVISED MISSION STATEMENT ALONG WITH A FLESHED OUT VERSION OF THE CONCEPT. AS FOR VARGAS, WE'VE LONG SUSPECTED HIM OF BEING TOO CLOSE TO CALI, AND GOMEZ' FEARS ARE OURS. ALL THE MORE REASON TO PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY IN THIS MATTER.

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