APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: DEC 2001

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(S)

[redacted]

INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS SITUATION REPORT [redacted] (DI IN SITREP 90-002)

FEBRUARY 1990

CONTENTS:

ITEM 1. PERSPECTIVE--COLOMBIA: BROADENING THE ANTIDRUG OFFENSIVE [redacted]

[redacted]

ITEM 7. HIGHLIGHTS--LATIN AMERICA [redacted]

ARTICLES:

ITEM 1. PERSPECTIVE--COLOMBIA: BROADENING THE ANTIDRUG OFFENSIVE (C NF)

RENEWED CALLS BY COLOMBIAN POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS FOR A DIALOGUE WITH THE TRAFFICKERS MAY INTENSIFY IF MEDELLIN DRUG KINGPIN PABLO ESCOBAR IS CAPTURED OR KILLED BY THE GOVERNMENT OR, INDEED, BY HIS RIVALS FROM CALI OR ELSEWHERE. THOSE TAKING SUCH A POSITION WOULD NOTE THAT ESCOBAR'S REMOVAL, FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF RODRIGUEZ GACHA IN DECEMBER, RIDS THE COUNTRY OF THE TWO MOST VIOLENT DRUG TRAFFICKERS AND FULFILLS BOGOTA'S AVOWED GOAL TO BRING THEM TO JUSTICE. THIS TACK WOULD GARNER STRONG PUBLIC BACKING AND INTENSIFY THE ALREADY SIGNIFICANT PRESSURE ON PRESIDENT BARCO TO DRAW DOWN OPERATIONS. TO DO SO, HOWEVER, WOULD LARGELY OFFSET THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PAST SIX MONTHS. A DRAWDOWN WOULD NOT ONLY PAVE THE WAY FOR THE MEDELLIN ORGANIZATIONS TO REBOUND BUT WOULD ALSO REMOVE ANY GOVERNMENT CHALLENGE TO THE LESS NOTORIOUS--BUT MORE INSIDIOUS AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS--SYNDICATES FROM CALI AND THE NORTH COAST, WHICH CONTINUE TO ACCOUNT FOR MUCH OF COLOMBIA'S COCAINE TRADE. [redacted]

SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR GENERALLY REFLECTED A BROAD UNDERSTANDING THAT THE VIOLENT TACTICS OF THE MEDELLIN TRAFFICKERS ARE A THREAT TO COLOMBIA'S SECURITY. THE DEATH OF RODRIGUEZ GACHA IN A FIREFIGHT WITH SECURITY FORCES AND THE GOVERNMENT'S SUBSEQUENT PLEDGE TO PURSUE HIS EQUALLY DANGEROUS COHORT, PABLO ESCOBAR, WON BOGOTA HIGH MARKS AT HOME AND ABROAD FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO CONFRONT THE KINGPINS. NEVERTHELESS, ESCOBAR'S PASSING FROM THE SCENE IS NOT LIKELY TO ACHIEVE ONE OF BOGOTA'S KEY GOALS: TO QUELL DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE IN MEDELLIN--SCENE OF SOME 18,000 MURDERS DURING THE 1980S--OR ELSEWHERE. [redacted]

TRAFFICKERS FROM CALI, THE NORTH COAST, AND ELSEWHERE MEANWHILE HAVE BEEN SPARED THE SAME LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT PRESSURE DEVOTED TO THE MEDELLIN ORGANIZATIONS LARGELY, WE BELIEVE, BECAUSE THEY HISTORICALLY HAVE USED LESS CONFRONTATIONAL TACTICS IN BLUNTING COUNTERNARCOTICS OPERATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, THESE ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH GENERALLY RELY ON BRIBERY RATHER THAN INTIMIDATION AND STAY OUT OF THE DIRECT POLITICAL LIMELIGHT, REPRESENT AN EQUALLY DANGEROUS THREAT TO COLOMBIA'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS, PARTICULARLY DISCERNIBLE THROUGH THEIR PENETRATION OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SECURITY INTERESTS. THE RODRIGUEZ OREJEULA FAMILY AND JULIO SANTACRUZ LONDONO, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE VAST COMMERCIAL HOLDINGS IN CALI THAT GIVE THEM CONSIDERABLE STAKE IN INFLUENCING THE ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF THE CITY AND THE REGION. [redacted] THEIR ASSETS INCLUDE DRUGSTORE CHAINS, PROFESSIONAL SOCCER TEAMS, RESTAURANTS, AGRICULTURAL-RELATED BUSINESSES, AND A RADIO STATION. SUCH MEDIA CONNECTIONS, WE BELIEVE,

COULD HAMPER GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN POPULAR BACKING FOR THE ANTIDRUG OFFENSIVE. IN A RECENT ARTICLE WRITTEN BY GILBERTO RODRIGUEZ OREJUELA, THE CALI KINGPIN REMINDED THE PUBLIC THAT ATTEMPTS TO SEEK HIS EXTRADITION WERE INVALID BECAUSE HE HAS ALREADY BEEN TRIED AND ACQUITTED IN A COLOMBIAN COURT OF THE CHARGES PENDING AGAINST HIM IN THE UNITED STATES. [redacted]

[redacted]