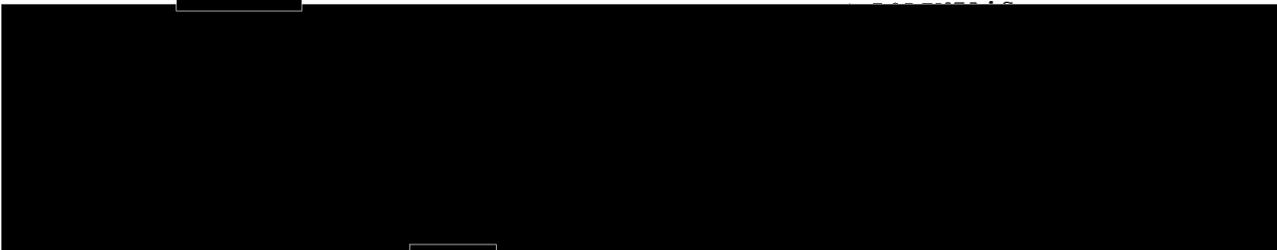


INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS SITUATION REPORT (MONTHLY) [REDACTED]

OCTOBER 1990

CONTENT

ITEM 1: PERSPECTIVE--COLOMBIA: GAMBLING WITH THE ANTIDRUG
OFFENSIVE [REDACTED]



ITEM 5: HIGHLIGHTS [REDACTED]

ITEM 1: PERSPECTIVE--COLOMBIA: GAMBLING WITH THE ANTIDRUG OFFENSIVE



PRESIDENT GAVIRIA, FOLLOWING THROUGH ON HIS CAMPAIGN PROMISE TO

PRIORITIZE NARCOTICS CONTROL, HAS MARKED HIS FIRST MONTHS IN OFFICE WITH A POLITICALLY SOUND--BUT TACTICALLY RISKY--ANTIDRUG GAMBIT: OFFERING PLEA BARGAINS TO TRAFFICKERS WHO SURRENDER WHILE PRIVATELY ASSURING US OFFICIALS THAT HE WILL INTENSIFY OPERATIONS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO NOT. GAVIRIA'S INITIATIVE PROVIDES THE GOVERNMENT WITH A BADLY NEEDED MEANS OF ENCOURAGING DEFECTIONS IN TRAFFICKER RANKS AND OF SHORING UP POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE ANTINARCOTICS OFFENSIVE. BUT THE COSTS COULD BE HIGH. IF SOME TRAFFICKERS SURRENDER, THE INITIATIVE WILL PUT A HEAVY BURDEN ON COLOMBIA'S WEAK JUDICIARY WHILE ALSO THREATENING TO REFOCUS THE OFFENSIVE AWAY FROM A CRACKDOWN THAT HAS LARGELY BEEN DOMINATED BY THE SECURITY FORCES OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS. [REDACTED]

DESIGNED TO DESTABILIZE THE LEADING DRUG ORGANIZATIONS, THE INITIATIVE PROCEEDS FROM A SERIES OF GOVERNMENT DECREES OFFERING TO CUT TRAFFICKERS' SENTENCES UP TO ONE-HALF IF THEY VOLUNTARILY SURRENDER, CONFESS, AND PROVIDE INFORMATION ON ACCOMPLICES. GAVIRIA INITIALLY VOWED TO EXTRADITE TRAFFICKERS WHO FAILED TO MAKE A FULL CONFESSION BUT LATER RESCINDED THIS REQUIREMENT, VIRTUALLY GUARANTEEING THAT ANY TRAFFICKER WHO SURRENDERS WILL NOT BE EXTRADITED. TRAFFICKERS CAPTURED IN GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, HOWEVER, ARE--PRESUMABLY--STILL SUBJECT TO EXTRADITION. [REDACTED]

BY ATTEMPTING TO DEFUSE THE VIOLENCE AND EXTRADITION ISSUES AT A TIME WHEN RESENTMENT IN COLOMBIA OVER THE OFFENSIVE'S MOUNTING COSTS AND CASUALTIES IS GROWING, GAVIRIA STANDS TO GAIN IN SEVERAL IMPORTANT AREAS:

X--HE EFFECTIVELY SEIZES THE PUBLIC RELATIONS INITIATIVE BY PLACING THE ONUS FOR PROLONGING THE DRUG WAR SQUARELY ON THE TRAFFICKERS. IN OUR VIEW, INCORPORATING INTO THE DECREES THE DEMANDS PREVIOUSLY MADE BY THE TRAFFICKERS TO BE SPARED EXTRADITION IN EXCHANGE FOR INCARCERATION IN COLOMBIA REMOVES THEIR PRIMARY JUSTIFICATION FOR RESISTING THE CRACKDOWN AND UNDERCUTS THEIR MOTIVATION FOR VIOLENCE.

X--ADDRESSING THE EXTRADITION PROBLEM WINS GAVIRIA SUPPORT FROM A STRONGLY NATIONALISTIC POPULACE THAT INCREASINGLY OPPOSES THE POLICY AS AN AFFRONT TO COLOMBIAN SOVEREIGNTY--A SENTIMENT MOST RECENTLY FANNED BY THE COLOMBIAN PRESS, WHICH CONTRASTED THE OUTCOME OF THE MARION BARRY TRIAL WITH THE FATE OF COLOMBIAN TRAFFICKERS EXTRADITED AND INCARCERATED IN THE UNITED STATES.

X--BY ENCOURAGING DEFECTIONS, THE INITIATIVE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE ASSOCIATED WITH GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO WEAKEN THE DRUG NETWORKS WHILE ALSO DEVELOPING ADDITIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND EVIDENCE TO APPREHEND THE KINGPINS. (S NF)

WHETHER SOME TRAFFICKERS WILL, IN FACT, SURRENDER REMAINS UNCLEAR, BUT, SHOULD THEY CHOOSE THIS OPTION, THEY WOULD FACE LITTLE THREAT FROM COLOMBIA'S JUDICIARY AT THIS POINT. [REDACTED] INDICATES THAT SPORADIC EFFORTS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS TO REFORM

THE JUDICIARY AND INCREASE PROTECTION FOR JUDGES HAVE NOT STRENGTHENED THE INSTITUTION'S ABILITY TO CONFRONT TRAFFICKER CORRUPTION AND INTIMIDATION. THIS ASSESSMENT WAS REINFORCED LAST MONTH WHEN A MEDELLIN JUDGE RELEASED SIX OF PABLO ESCOBAR'S ALLEGED INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS SHORTLY AFTER THEY HAD BEEN ARRESTED, FOLLOWED DAYS LATER BY THE ESCAPE FROM A BOGOTA PRISON OF THE ACCUSED ASSASSIN OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE LUIS CARLOS GALAN. AND EVEN THE LOWER-LEVEL TRAFFICKERS WHO THE GOVERNMENT IS COUNTING ON TO SURRENDER ARE, IN OUR JUDGMENT, LIKELY TO BE DISSUADED BECAUSE OF THEIR FEAR OF THE CARTEL'S POLICY OF SWIFT RETALIATION AGAINST TRAITORS--UNDERScoreD MOST RECENTLY BY THE KILLING OF THE MAIN WITNESS, TURNED INFORMANT, IN THE GALAN ASSASSINATION CASE. [REDACTED]

GAVIRIA IS ALREADY TRYING TO SHORE UP THESE WEAKNESSES. [REDACTED] HE PLANS TO REPLACE COLOMBIA'S INQUISITORIAL SYSTEM OF JUSTICE WITH A US-STYLE PROSECUTORIAL SYSTEM THAT WILL GIVE THE POLICE AND OTHER INVESTIGATORS--RATHER THAN POOR, YOUNG, AND UNPROTECTED JUDGES--MORE POWER TO INITIATE AND PURSUE CASES. HE HAS ALSO PROMISED TO REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A CORE OF SPECIALIZED JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS TO HANDLE THE MOST IMPORTANT CASES AND TO CONSTRUCT A FORTIFIED ''SECURITY VILLAGE'' WHERE THEY CAN LIVE AND OPERATE FREE FROM THREATS AND VIOLENCE. NEVERTHELESS, CREATING A RELATIVELY SAFE JUDICIAL ENVIRONMENT WILL BE A LONG-TERM PROCESS AND, IN OUR JUDGMENT, THERE IS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT ANY ACTION STEMMING FROM GAVIRIA'S RECENT INITIATIVE WILL DIMINISH THE TRAFFICKING PROBLEM OR, FOR THAT MATTER, THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE. [REDACTED]

THERE IS, WE BELIEVE, SOME CHANCE THAT THE TRAFFICKERS, SEEING AN OPPORTUNITY TO CAPITALIZE ON GAVIRIA'S INITIATIVE, MAY PUSH FOR EVEN MORE CONCESSIONS. INDEED, THE RECENT KIDNAPPINGS OF SEVERAL COLOMBIANS RELATED TO PROMINENT MEDIA AND POLITICAL FIGURES, REPORTEDLY BY TRAFFICKERS LINKED TO PABLO ESCOBAR, SUGGEST SUCH PRESSURE IS ALREADY BUILDING. GAVIRIA WILL PROBABLY RESIST MAKING FURTHER CONCESSIONS BUT IN SO DOING FACES HAVING TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON HIS STILL UNPUBLICIZED PLEDGE TO STEP UP PRESSURE ON THE KINGPINS. RECENT REPORTS DETAILING NEW ARMS SHIPMENTS INTO THE COUNTRY MEANWHILE INDICATE THAT TRAFFICKERS ARE MAINTAINING THEIR CAPABILITY TO INITIATE YET ANOTHER ROUND OF VIOLENCE AND CORRUPTION. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

