CDS
RAASZYUW RUEKDIA1189 1481910-0000- RUEALGX.
ZNY-0000-
HEADER
R 281815Z MAY 02
FM DIA WASHINGTON DC
(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

(b)(3):10 USC 424

ZEM
CONTROLS
SECRET
NOMORN
NOMORN-
SERIAL: MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIGEST {MID} 101-4A
BODY
SUBJ: (MEC) (U)COLOMBIA: TRAFFICKER LEADS PARAMILITARY GROUP

//NOTICE// AUTOMATED MESSAGE ERROR CORRECTION
-------------- ORIGINAL MESSAGE TEXT ------------------------
RAASZYUW RUEKDIA1189 1481910-0000- RUEALGX.
ZNY-0000-
R 281815Z MAY 02
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(b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

BT
SECRET NOMORN

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(U) THIS MESSAGE IS PART OF THE PRODUCTION EFFORT OF THE UNIFIED COMMANDS, THE MILITARY SERVICES, AND DIA. EVERY REASONABLE EFFORT IS MADE TO ENSURE THAT INDIVIDUAL ARTICLES REPRESENT THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY VIEW.
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SECRET
NOMORN
SERIAL: MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIGEST (MID) 101-4A
SUBJ: (U)COLOMBIA: TRAFFICKER LEADS PARAMILITARY GROUP
DO: 24 MAY 02 (AS OF 1200EST)

TEXT 1. (G/INF) DRUG TRADE MONEY STILL FUNDS GROWTH OF THE UNITED
SELF-DEFENSE FORCES OF COLOMBIA (AUC). DIEGO FERNANDO
MURILLO-BEJARANO, A MEMBER OF THE AUC'S MILITARY HIGH COMMAND AND
CURRENTLY THE PACIFIC BLOC COMMANDER, PROVIDES IMPORTANT LINKS TO THE
POWERFUL NORTH VALLEY AND CALI DRUG-TRAFFICKING CARTELS. AT THE SAME
TIME, HE LEADS AN INTENSE COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE
REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION
ARMY.

2. (G/INF) THE AUC POLITICAL LEADER, CARLOS CASTANO-GIL, HAS PLACED
PROVEN COMBAT LEADERS IN SENIOR PARAMILITARY COMMAND POSITIONS
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. IN JUNE 2001, CASTANO CHOSE FORMER MEDELLIN
CARTEL SENIOR LIEUTENANT DIEGO FERNANDO MURILLO-BEJARANO, AKA "ADOLFO
PAZ" OR "DON BERTA," TO COMMAND THE SELF-DEFENSE GROUPS OF CORDOBA
AND URABA'S (ACCU'S) PACIFIC BLOC. SINCE 1999, THE AUC HAS BECOME A
MAJOR FORCE ON COLOMBIA'S WEST COAST, PARTICULARLY IN VALLE DEL CAUCA
DEPARTMENT. PROFITS DERIVED FROM DRUG TRAFFICKING AND SUPPORT FROM
SOME POPULATION SECTORS, INCLUDING LEGAL BUSINESSES, ARE CONTRIBUTING
TO THE AUC'S RAPID GROWTH. AS THE ACCU'S PACIFIC BLOC COMMANDER,
DIEGO MURILLO SMOOTH RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TRAFFICKERS AND THE AUC.

4. (G/INF) ASSESSMENT. A DEPENDABLE, LONGTIME CASTANO COLLEAGUE,
DIEGO MURILLO GIVES THE AUC DRUGTRAFFICKING EXPERTISE AND CONNECTIONS
TO THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG MARKET. HE COORDINATES COCAINE-FOR-WEAPONS
DEALS WITH DRUG AND ARMS DEALERS OPERATING THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA.
HIS INVOLVEMENT IN MULTIPLE MURDERS UNDERSCORES HIS EXTREME
PROPENSITY FOR VIOLENCE. AS COMMANDER OF THE PACIFIC BLOC, DIEGO
MURILLO WORKS WITH REGIONALLY BASED DRUG TRAFFICKERS OPERATING IN THE
VALLE DEL CAUCA TO RIDE COLOMBIA'S WEST COAST OF THE REVOLUTIONARY
ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY. IN THE
LATE 1990S, REGIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKERS RECOGNIZED THE DIFFICULTIES IN
DEALING WITH INSURGENTS AND SAW AUC ATTEMPTS TO RID THE TERRITORY OF GUERRILLAS AS BENEFITING BOTH GROUPS. DIEGO MURILLO WILL CONTINUE TO BE A KEY FACTOR IN THIS EFFORT.


6. (C/NF) COCAINE-FOR-WEAPONS A COMMON THEME. LIKE OTHER ILLEGLY ARMED GROUPS IN COLOMBIA, THE AUC MAINTAINS A VIGOROUS COCAINE-FOR-WEAPONS BUSINESS. COLOMBIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT PLACES DIEGO MURILLO, AKA "DON BÉRNA," AT THE CENTER OF MANY INVESTIGATIONS. IN JUNE 2000, THEN ADMINISTRATIVE SECURITY DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR GERMAN GUSTAVO JARAMILLO CLAIMED THAT AUC LEADER "DON BÉRNA" WAS BEING INVESTIGATED FOR ILLEGALLY IMPORTING 15,000 WEAPONS DESTINED FOR PARAMILITARY FORCES. THESE WEAPONS, PURCHASED FROM CORRUPT ACTIVE OR RETIRED NICARAGUAN MILITARY SERVICEMEN, WERE TRANSPORTED TO COLOMBIA'S NORTH COAST.
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