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INFO RUEADWD/OCSA WASHINGTON DC

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RUEACMC/CMC WASHINGTON DC

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TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC

INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC

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RUSNNOA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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CONTROLS

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SERIAL: (U)

/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

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COUNTRY: SOUTH AFRICA (SF).

SUBJ: (U) SOUTH AFRICA--SADF TO PATROL
WHITE SUBURBS, PARATROOPS DROP IN SOWETO, SET UP ROADBLOCKS.

- DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY
EVALUATED INTEL. REPORT IS CLASSIFIED ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~.
DOI: (U) 910529.

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SOURCE: A. (U) //OPEN//NEWSPAPER, "SUNDAY STAR" (U),
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, 910526, IN ENGLISH.B. (U) //OPEN//NEWSPAPER, "THE CITIZEN" (U), PRETORIA,
SOUTH AFRICA, 910527, IN ENGLISH.C. (U) //OPEN//NEWSPAPER, "THE CITIZEN" (U), PRETORIA,
SOUTH AFRICA, 910529, IN ENGLISH.

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SUMMARY: (U) REPORTS ON DEPLOYMENT OF SADF COMMANDO UNITS
IN WHITE SUBURBS, AND OF PARATROOPS FROM THE CITIZEN'S
FORCE THIRD PARA BATTALION IN SOWETO.TEXT: 1. (U) SOURCE A REPORTS AN ARMY PLAN TO PROTECT
WHITE SUBURBS WITH COMMANDO UNITS IN THE JOHANNESBURG
AREA. IT WOULD USE A REJUVENATED COMMANDO SYSTEM OF
PATROLS AND CALLED-UP SERVICEMEN AIMED AT SUPPORTING
POLICE IN COMBATING AND DETERING CRIME AND UNREST.
TRAINED SOLDIERS IN UNIFORM WILL BE LEGALLY ENTITLED TO
MAKE ARRESTS AND USE THEIR WEAPONS. ALTHOUGH COMMANDO
UNITS WILL INITIALLY OPERATE IN "WHITE" SUBURBS, THEIR
RANKS WILL BE OPEN TO ANYONE - REGARDLESS OF RACE OR SEX -
AND THEY WILL EVENTUALLY ALSO BE EXTENDED INTO BLACK
TOWNSHIPS AROUND THE CITY. WITWATERSRAND COMMAND
SPOKESMEN SAID THE PROGRAM WAS AIMED AT PUTTING AREA
PROTECTION ON A "STRUCTURED LEGAL BASIS" IN COMPARISON TO
"QUASI-MILITARY" GROUPS "DRIVEN BY EMOTION OR IDEOLOGY"
WHO OPERATE WITHOUT LEGAL SANCTION. THE SPOKESMEN WOULD
NOT NAME THE GROUPS THEY WERE REFERRING TO, BUT THERE HAS
BEEN A GROWTH IN RECENT YEARS OF PARAMILITARY AND RIGHT
WING GROUPS ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM FROM THE AWB ON
THE RIGHT TO THE ANC'S SELF DEFENSE UNITS ON THE LEFT.
-IN OUTLINING THE PLAN, GROUP 18 COMMANDER COL ONEL GEOFF
(HOLLAND-MUTER)) SAID THE COMMANDO WILL CARRY OUT NORMAL
LEGAL TASKS AND THEY WILL BE FULLY AUTHORIZED UNDER THE
TERMS OF THE DEFENSE ACT TO DO SO. COL HOLLAND-MUTER SAID

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THE ARMY IS HOPING TO ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN THE COMMANDO UNITS ACROSS THE WITWATERSRAND. THESE VOLUNTEERS WILL RECEIVE EXTENSIVE TRAINING IN USE OF RIFLES, RADIOS AND BASIC FIRST AID, AND WOULD BE ESPECIALLY WELL DRILLED IN THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF PATROLLING IN AN URBAN AREA.

2. (U) A SPOKESMAN FOR WITSATERSRAND COMMAND SAID ON 26 MAY THAT SADF COMMANDO UNITS ARE ALREADY OPERATING IN WHITE AREAS AROUND JOHANNESBURG AS A BACK UP TO THE POLICE AND OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES. COMMANDO UNITS ARE OPERATING IN THIS CAPACITY AT RIETFontein (THE BEDFORDVIEW AREA), AND AT KEMPTON PARK, IN THE MODDERFontein CONSTITUENCY. THE SYSTEM IS ALSO OPERATING IN OTHER URBAN AREAS, INCLUDING RANDBURG, WEMMER PAN, AND JOHANNESBURG WEST. THERE HAS BEEN NO COMMANDO CALL UP AS PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY.

-ACCORDING TO THE SPOKESMAN, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THROUGH AN INCREASED VISIBILITY OF COMMANDO ELEMENTS BOTH CRIME AND POSSIBLE VIOLENCE WOULD BE DISCOURAGED. A SIMILAR SYSTEM HAS BEEN IN USE IN RURAL AREAS FOR YEARS. TRAINED SOLDIERS IN UNIFORM WOULD BE EMPOWERED TO USE THEIR WEAPONS AND MAKE ARRESTS. THE USE OF COMMANDOS STARTED BEFORE THE STATEMENT BY ANC DEPUTY PRESIDENT NELSON ((MANDELA)) THAT VIOLENCE COULD SPILL OVER INTO WHITE AREAS.

3. (U) SOURCE C REPORTS ABOUT 120 MEMBERS OF THE SADF'S THREE PARACHUTE BATTALION PARACHUTED INTO SOWETO'S PIMVILLE DURING THE AFTERNOON OF 28 MAY AND SET UP ROADBLOCKS. ACCORDING TO SAP SPOKESMAN COL JAC ((DE VRIES)) ABOUT 120 PARATROOPERS WERE CONDUCTING TRAINING JUMPS, WHICH WILL BE REPEATED ON 29 MAY. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME MEMBERS OF THE SADF HAD PARACHUTED INTO A TOWNSHIP.

-ANC SPOKESMAN IN THE AREA, RONNIE ((MAMOEP)), CRITICIZED THE SADF FOR NOT CONSULTING RESIDENTS IN THE AREA FIRST -ACCORDING TO THE SAP, CITIZENS FORCE MEMBERS OF THREE PARACHUTE BATTALION HAD BEEN BASED IN THE AREA FOR SOME TIME NOW, CONDUCTING PATROLS. THE PARACHUTE JUMP WAS WIDELY COVERED BY THE PRESS, INCLUDING VIDEO TAPE COVERAGE ON THE SABC EVENING NEWS.

COMMENTS: 1. ~~(C)~~ ACCORDING TO THE SAP, THE DEPLOYMENT OF SADF COMMANDO UNITS INTO WHITE AREAS PRECEDED STATEMENTS BY THE ANC THAT VIOLENCE COULD SPILL OVER INTO THE SUBURBS. THE RECENT PUBLICITY OVER THE DEPLOYMENTS IS PROBABLY MEANT TO ALLAY THE FEARS OF THOSE LIVING IN WHITE AREAS.

2. ~~(C)~~ THE UNSTATED EFFECT OF THE USE OF THE COMMANDOS IN THE RELATIVELY LOW THREAT WHITE AREAS WILL BE TO FREE TRAINED POLICE OFFICERS FOR DUTY IN THE MORE VIOLENCE-PRONE TOWNSHIPS.

3. ~~(C)~~ WITH THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE VOLUNTEER COMMANDO, THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS, AS STATED IN SOURCE A, TRYING TO PREVENT THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF VIGILANTE GROUPS IN AREAS OF VIOLENCE. IN SPITE OF THIS, THE

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GOVERNMENT RUNS THE RISK OF A FUTHER POLARIZATION OF GROUPS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND, FURTHER, THAT A RANDOM OR ACCIDENTAL ACT OF VIO LENCE BY A COMMANDO MEMBER COULD CAUSE AN ESCALATION RATHER THAN A REDUCTION IN VIOLENCE.

4. (C) THE USE OF THE PARATROOPS, REPORTEDLY ONE COMPANY OF THE THIRD PARA BATTALION, IS OBVIOUSLY INTENDED TO BE A HIGHLY VISIBLE STATEMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF THE SADF IN TROUBLED AREAS. THE THIRD PARA BATTALION IS A CITIZENS FORCE UNIT NORMALLY ATTACHED TO THE CF 44 PARACHUTE BRIGADE, HEADQUARTED NEAR PRETORIA.

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