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ACTION INL-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AGRE-00	AID-00	ARA-01
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 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7835  
 INFO DEA HQS WASHDC  
 DOSAIRWING PATRICK AFB FL  
 AMEMBASSY LIMA  
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
 AMEMBASSY QUITO  
 AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
 USEU BRUSSELS  
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY PARIS  
 DIA WASHDC  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
 CIA WASHDC//CNC//  
 COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHDC  
 USCINCSO HOWARD AFB PM//DDN/SCJ2//  
 US CUSTOMS SERVICE WASHDC  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5/SCDC//  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCFA/SOCSOUTH//  
 NDIC JOHNSTOWN PA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BOGOTA 007271

STATE FOR INL, INL/LP-SANCHEZ-CARLO, AND ARA, INL PASS TO  
USDA FOR ERIC ROSENQUIST

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L. MILLS  
 DATE/CASE ID: 22 MAY 2001 200004409

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NSC FOR JAMES DOBBINS  
JUSTICE FOR CRIM. WARREN RICHARD AND NDDS/VAN VLIET  
CUSTOMS FOR LA OPS, INTELLIGENCE  
DIA FOR DIR-3C4, DOF-5, DIR-5SA, JSI, JTIC, DAT-CN  
USEU FOR STICKNEY,  
ONDCP FOR JANET CRIST

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/00

TAGS: SNAR, CO

SUBJECT: SUCCESSFUL VISIT BY ONDCP AND INL STAFF

1. CLASSIFIED BY NAS DIRECTOR LUIS G. MORENO. REASON 1.5(D).

2. (U) SUMMARY: OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY (ONDCP) STAFF MEMBER MAJOR AND OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS (INL) OFFICER MCGARITY RECEIVED A FULL FOUR DAY TOUR OF THE ILLICIT CROP ERADICATION PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA DURING JULY 22-25. BOOKENDED BY BRIEFINGS IN BOGOTA, VISITING OFFICERS OBSERVED PREVIOUSLY FUMIGATED COCA AND OPIUM POPPY FIELDS, WITNESSED THE AERIAL HERBICIDE SPRAYING OF BOTH

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CROPS, AND SURVEYED THE OPERATIONAL FACILITIES IN SAN JOSE DE GUAVIARE, MIRAFLORES, NEIVA, AND MARIQUITA. THE GROUP ALSO VISITED GOC ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (PLANTE) AND HAD EXTENSIVE IN HOUSE BRIEFINGS, INCLUDING AN EXIT BRIEF WITH THE DCM AND AMBASSADOR. END SUMMARY.

IN HOUSE VISIT AND PLANTE

3. (U) ONDCP AND INL MEMBERS WERE BRIEFED AT THE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE AND IN A COUNTRY TEAM MEETING ON THE MORNING OF JULY 22 BEFORE A PROGRAM REVIEW AT THE OFFICES OF PLANTE, THE GOC'S ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. ALICIA FERNANDA QUIJANO, PLANTE'S CHIEF OF INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION, EXPRESSED THAT PLANTE INTENDS TO SERVE A ROLE AS A COMPLEMENT TO THE INTERDICTION PROGRAMS AND THAT IT OPERATES THROUGH A METHODOLOGY OF POINTS OF INTERVENTION WHERE THERE EXIST A HIGH INCIDENCE OF ILLEGAL CROPS. IN THIS WAY, PLANTE IS TO SERVE AS THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC COMPONENT OF THE GOC'S ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY, STRIVING TO PROVIDE A TRUE CARROT TO A TARGET GROUP OF 35,000 FAMILIES WHO HAVE FIRST SHOWN

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THEIR VOLITION BY ERADICATING ENTIRELY ANY ILLEGAL CROPS.

SAN JOSE DEL GUAVIARE

4. (C) THE TEAM FLEW WITH THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE (CNP) TO THE CNP ANTINARCOTICS BASE AT SAN JOSE DE GUAVIARE, WHERE THEY HELICOPTERED OVER TO VISIT THE COLOMBIAN MARINE BASE AT BARRANCON. THERE THEY RECEIVED A TOUR OF THE SPECIAL FORCES TRAINING FACILITIES AND A VERBAL DEFENSE OF THE CONVIVIR PUBLIC DEFENSE FORCES.

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THE OFFICIAL WHO PROVIDED THE TOUR EXPLAINED THAT THE MISSION OF THE CONVIVIR IS AKIN TO THAT OF THE HIRED SHERIFFS OR THE CALVARY OF THE WILD WEST. IN AREAS THAT SUFFER FROM A LACK OF STATE PRESENCE, THE CONVIVIR PROVIDES A LEGITIMATE MEANS OF DEFENSE FROM THE EXTERNAL AGGRESSION OF GUERRILLA FORCES. OUR HOST EMPHASIZED THAT, UNLIKE OLD FASHIONED SHERIFFS, THE CONVIVIR IS PERFECTLY CONTROLLED AND CARRIES ONLY REGISTERED ARMS OF DEFENSE AND RADIOS WITH A DUTY SIMPLY TO INFORM AND NOT TO FIRE.

5. (C) BACK AT THE CNP BASE IN SAN JOSE DE GUAVIARE THE TEAM WAS BRIEFED BY THE MAJOR GALEANO, COMMANDER OF THE EASTERN ZONE OF THE ANTINARCOTICS POLICE. THE COMMANDER ILLUSTRATED THAT THERE WERE 30 THOUSAND HECTARES OF COCA GROWN IN THIS ZONE AND THAT ONE OF THE GREATEST PROBLEMS WAS THAT OF THE PRECURSOR CHEMICALS THAT ENTER THE ZONE VIA POROUS BORDERS WITH VENEZUELA, BRAZIL, PERU, AND

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7836  
 INFO DEA HQS WASHDC  
 DOSAIRWING PATRICK AFB FL  
 AMEMBASSY LIMA  
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
 AMEMBASSY QUITO  
 AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
 USEU BRUSSELS  
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY PARIS  
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 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
 CIA WASHDC//CNC//  
 COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHDC  
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 US CUSTOMS SERVICE WASHDC  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5/SCDC//  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCFA/SOCSOUTH//  
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STATE FOR INL, INL/LP-SANCHEZ-CARLO, AND ARA, INL PASS TO  
 USDA FOR ERIC ROSENQUIST  
 NSC FOR JAMES DOBBINS  
 JUSTICE FOR CRIM. WARREN RICHARD AND NDDS/VAN VLIET  
 CUSTOMS FOR LA OPS, INTELLIGENCE  
 DIA FOR DIR-3C4, DOF-5, DIR-5SA, JSI, JTIC, DAT-CN  
 USEU FOR STICKNEY,  
 ONDCP FOR JANET CRIST

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ECUADOR. HE EXPLAINED THAT ELEVEN GUERRILLA FRONTS

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OPERATE OUT OF THE EASTERN ZONE AND THAT EVERY DAY THE ERADICATION AND ESCORT PILOTS ARE PLACING THEIR LIVES AT GREAT RISK, FOR ROUGHLY EVERY THREE DAYS ONE OF THE PLANES TAKES A HIT FROM ENEMY FIRE. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE ASSISTANCE FROM THE ARMY PROVIDED BY "OPERATION CONQUISTA," HE REMARKED THAT FOR A SHORT TIME THE SITUATION WAS SOMEWHAT BETTER, BUT THEN THE ARMY LEFT. THE COMMANDER ALSO ELABORATED ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF GROUND SUPPORT FROM ARMY TROOPS THAT ARE MUCH LESS MOBILE THEN THE PLANES AND HELICOPTERS THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO

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6. (C) IN THE LATE AFTERNOON INL AND ONDCP OFFICERS EXPERIENCED A TYPICAL MISSION PLANNING SESSION AS THE ERADICATION TEAM REVIEWED GOALS, TACTICS, AND COORDINATES FOR THE FOLLOWING MORNING'S FLIGHTS. THIS DEMONSTRATION EXPLAINED THAT MISSION PLANNING INVOLVED SEVERAL DIFFERENT POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR ERADICATION (IE. SAN JOSE, CALAMAR, MIRAFLORES) IN CASE OF RAIN. LEAD PILOTS ALSO REVIEWED THE PROCEDURES FOR FLIGHT ALTITUDES, FLIGHT FORMATIONS, HOSTILE FIRE, SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS, AND NOTIFIED THE VISITORS THAT EACH MISSION IS ACCOMPANIED BY A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, AND/OR THE GOC'S ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR. THE VISITING OFFICERS WERE FINALLY BRIEFED ON THE USE AND OPERATION OF THE SATLOC SYSTEM THAT ASSISTS MISSION PLANNERS IN SITE SELECTION AND PROVIDES PINPOINT ACCURACY TO RECORD WHAT AREAS HAVE BEEN SPRAYED.

INCONSISTENCIES WITH COUNTERNARCOTCS CENTER (CNC)  
PROVIDED COORDINATES

7. (C) THE TEAM SPENT THE MORNING AND EARLY AFTERNOON OF JULY 23 LANDING IN PREVIOUSLY ERADICATED COCA FIELDS TO VERIFY THE RESULTS OF THE GLYPHOSATE SPRAYING. THE FIELD LOCATION COORDINATES HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY SELECTED BY THE CNC IN A JULY 18 MEMORANDUM WHICH ALSO CONTAINED DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FIELD CHARACTERISTICS AND CONDITION OF THE COCA CROP. THE FIRST TWO FIELDS THAT THE TEAM REACHED WERE NUMBERS 5 AND 6 FROM THAT MEMO, LOCATED

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 OUTSIDE OF CALAMAR WITH THE COORDINATES 02-07-09N 072-20-59W, AND 02-07-50N 072-19-05W. ALL HELICOPTER-SIGHTED COORDINATES WERE DOUBLE CHECKED WITH THE PERSONAL GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS) OF THE LUIS EDUARDO PARRA, THE GOC'S ENVIRONMENTAL AUDITOR WHO ACCOMPANIED THE TEAM DURING ALL STAGES OF ITS FIELD OBSERVATIONS, AS WELL AS WITH GPS SYSTEMS ABOARD INL AIRWING HELICOPTER IN WHICH THE GROUP WAS TRAVELLING.

8. (C) THE FIRST FIELD, WHICH WAS DESCRIBED AS A "GOOD EXAMPLE OF HEALTHY COCA INTERMIXED WITH EVENLY SPACED TREES/BUSHES," HAD BEEN SPRAYED IN "JUNE/JULY/AUGUST OF 1996." THE COCA BUSHES THAT THE TEAM INSPECTED WERE DRY AND DEAD, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SOME MEAGER AND DEFORMED LEAVES THAT, AS DR. PARRA EXPLAINED, THE DYING PLANTS EMIT AS A FEEBLE ATTEMPT TO REGENERATE. THE BUSHES COULD BE PULLED OUT BY THE ROOTS WITH ONE HAND AND ALL OF THE SHOOTS TOGETHER WOULD SNAP UNDERFOOT WHEN STEPPED ON.

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 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7837  
 INFO DEA HQS WASHDC  
 DOSAIRWING PATRICK AFB FL  
 AMEMBASSY LIMA  
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
 AMEMBASSY QUITO  
 AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
 USEU BRUSSELS  
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY PARIS

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DIA WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
CIA WASHDC//CNC//  
COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHDC  
USCINCSO HOWARD AFB PM//DDN/SCJ2//  
US CUSTOMS SERVICE WASHDC  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5/SCDC//  
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCFA/SOCSOUTH//  
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STATE FOR INL, INL/LP-SANCHEZ-CARLO, AND ARA, INL PASS TO  
USDA FOR ERIC ROSENQUIST  
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AN ABANDONED LAB THAT WAS DISCOVERED IN THE UNDERBRUSH  
BEYOND THE CLEARING WAS SET ALIGHT USING UNUSED  
PROCESSING CHEMICALS. THE COCA PLANTS IN FIELD NUMBER 6  
SHOWED THE SAME CHARACTERISTICS, ALTHOUGH THE SURROUNDING  
GRASS HAD GROWN EVEN HIGHER THAN THE BUSHES THAT WERE  
COVERED IN FUNGUS. AN ATTEMPT HAD BEEN MADE WITH BLACK  
PLASTIC TUBING TO IRRIGATE ONE PATCH OF COCA THAT WAS  
STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE SURROUNDED BY DEAD COCA ON ALL  
SIDES.

9. (C) AFTER REFUELING, THE TEAM HEADED DOWN TO

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MIRAFLORES AND ENCOUNTERED THE RELATIVELY MASSIVE  
EXPANSES OF COCA THAT ARE MORE COMMON IN THAT AREA. THE  
VISITORS HAD PICKED OUT A FIELD, NUMBER FOUR ON THE CNC  
MEMO (AT COORDINATES 01-24-06N 71-55-53W), THAT HAD BEEN  
SPRAYED IN OCTOBER, 1996 AND "WAS IN POOR CONDITION IN  
JANUARY BUT BY MAY HAD REBOUNDED AND WAS HEALTHY AGAIN."  
WHEN THE GROUP TOUCHED GROUND AND SURVEYED THE AREA THEY  
DISCOVERED THAT THE FIELD WAS COMPLETELY DEAD AND COVERED  
WITH EXTENSIVE WEEDS AND GRASSES.

10. (C) UPON LANDING SPONTANEOUSLY IN ONE AREA THAT HAD  
VERY ACTIVE (UNFUMIGATED) COCA BUSHES, THE TEAM  
DISCOVERED AN ENCAMPMENT OF SEVEN HOUSES WITH SLEEPING  
QUARTERS FOR CLOSE TO THIRTY INDIVIDUALS. THE CAPTURED  
LEAF PICKERS, AMONG THEM A YOUNG BOY CLAIMING TO BE ALL  
OF FIFTEEN YEARS OLD, SAID THAT THEY WERE PAID 2,000  
PESOS, OR JUST UNDER 2 DOLLARS, FOR EACH ARROBA (25  
POUNDS) OF LEAVES THAT THEY PICKED. BEFORE LEAVING THE  
AREA THE GROUP WAS GIVEN A DEMONSTRATION OF A RADIAL  
SPRAY MISSION OVER AN EXTENSIVE COCA FIELD BY FOUR T-65  
AIRCRAFT.

NEIVA AND OPIUM POPPY CULTIVATION

11. (C) THAT AFTERNOON ONDCP, INL, AND NAS OFFICERS FLEW  
TO NEIVA WHERE THEY WERE MET BY THE ENTIRE UNIT AFTER AN  
ESCORT TO THE CNP ANTINARCOTICS BASE. CAPTAIN VARGAS OF  
THE CNP LEAD THE BRIEFING ON OPIUM POPPY ERADICATION  
EFFORTS WHICH INCLUDED OPERATIONAL AND SECURITY NORMS AS  
WELL AS VISUAL DISPLAYS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE  
WROUGHT BY POPPY PRODUCTION UP AMONG THE MOUNTAIN PEAKS.

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VARGAS INDICATED THAT THE CNP IN NEIVA WAS IN PERMANENT  
CONTACT WITH THE COUNTERGUERRILLA PATROLS AND THAT ON 30  
PERCENT OF ERADICATION MISSIONS SOMEBODY FIRES AT  
FUMIGATION OR ESCORT AIRCRAFT.

12. (C) CAPTAIN MORA FOLLOWED WITH AN EXPLANATION OF THE  
DIFFICULTIES THAT THE ERADICATION CAMPAIGN FACES OUT OF  
NEIVA, INCLUDING SUBVERSIVE GROUPS (NEIVA IS THE  
BIRTHPLACE OF THE FARC, COLOMBIA'S LARGEST INSURGENT

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ORGANIZATION), RUGGED TOPOGRAPHY, AND A SHORTAGE OF OPERABLE AIRCRAFT. AS IN SAN JOSE, THE GLYPHOSATE SPRAYING PROGRAM IS ACCOMPANIED BY GOC OFFICIALS WHO VERIFY THAT THE CHEMICAL SPRAYED IS INDEED GLYPHOSATE AND NOT ANOTHER CHEMICAL AS SOME HAVE ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF USING. THIS IMMEDIATE EVALUATION IS FOLLOWED UP WITH A LONG-TERM EVALUATION OF PROGRAM SUCCESS, ALTHOUGH THE OPIUM POPPY SHOWS SIGNS OF DYING WITHIN FOUR TO FIVE DAYS WITH THE COCA PLANT THESE SIGNS APPEAR AFTER A SIXTY DAY .

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 AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
 AMEMBASSY PARIS  
 DIA WASHDC  
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
 CIA WASHDC//CNC//  
 COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHDC  
 USCINCSO HOWARD AFB PM//DDN/SCJ2//  
 US CUSTOMS SERVICE WASHDC  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5/SCDC//  
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCFA/SOCSOUTH//  
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STATE FOR INL, INL/LP-SANCHEZ-CARLO, AND ARA, INL PASS TO  
USDA FOR ERIC ROSENQUIST  
NSC FOR JAMES DOBBINS  
JUSTICE FOR CRIM. WARREN RICHARD AND NDDS/VAN VLIET  
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USEU FOR STICKNEY,  
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13. (C) VISITING OFFICIALS SPENT THE FOLLOWING MORNING  
VERIFYING THE EFFECTS OF GLYPHOSATE SPRAYED ON MATURE  
POPPIES FOUR DAYS BEFORE AND THEN WITNESSED THE  
SPECTACULAR AERIAL ERADICATION OF THE STEEPLY SLOPED  
NEIGHBORING POPPY FIELDS. IT WAS EVIDENT EVEN AT THIS  
EARLY STAGE THAT THE POPPY FLOWERS WERE WILTING AND  
LOSING COLOR. DR. PARRA EXPLAINED THAT THE MOST  
EFFECTIVE TIME FOR ERADICATION WAS IN THE VERY FIRST  
STAGES OF SEEDLING DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLANT, EVEN THOUGH

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THE GREATEST ECONOMIC BLOW IS DELIVERED WHEN THE PLANTS  
ARE DESTROYED IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO HARVEST AND AFTER  
SUBSTANTIAL HUMAN RESOURCES HAVE BEEN INVESTED IN THE  
CROP. IN THE AFTERNOON THE TEAM FLEW INTO MARIQUITA TO  
INSPECT THE AERIAL ANTINARCOTICS TRAINING FACILITIES OF  
THE CNP'S AVIATION SCHOOL THAT ARE CENTERED THERE.

14. (C) ON FRIDAY JULY 25, THE VISITORS MET WITH COLONEL  
JOSE LEONARDO GALLEGU, THE DIRECTOR OF THE CNP

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ANTINARCOTICS FORCES, IN BOGOTA AFTER SPENDING THE MORNING WITH EMBASSY APPOINTMENTS. GALLEGU EXPRESSED THAT THIS YEAR'S GOAL WAS TO FUMIGATE 30 THOUSAND HECTARES OF COCA AND THAT THE PROGRAM WAS WELL WITHIN THOSE PARAMETERS AT THE PRESENT TIME. HE ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE CNP DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES THAT WOULD FOSTER EVEN GREATER SUCCESS BECAUSE THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH CNP MEMBERS, THE CNP HELICOPTERS ARE NOT MADE FOR DEFENSE, AND BECAUSE CNP ARMS ARE INFERIOR TO THOSE OF THE GUERRILLA, WHO HAVE .50 MACHINE GUNS, MORTARS, AND ROCKETS.

15. (C) GALLEGU MADE CLEAR THAT THE CNP DID NOT NEED THE ARMY IN ORDER TO COMPLETE ITS MISSION AND EMPHASIZED THAT THE ARMY WAS COMPRISED OF CONSCRIPTS WHO WERE NOT WELL TRAINED WHEREAS THE CNP ARE PROFESSIONALS SERVING ON THEIR OWN VOLITION AND WITH GREATER PROFESSIONALISM AND TRAINING. HE RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE ARMED SERVICES AND THE CNP AND EXCLAIMED THAT THE MILITARY DOES NOT HAVE RESPECT FOR THE POLICE AND WANT TO DISGRACE THEM WHENEVER POSSIBLE, WHEREAS THE CNP SUPPORTS, RESPECTS, AND BACKS THE MILITARY. GALLEGU DID

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OFFER THAT IN SUCH OPERATIONS AS OPERATION CONQUISTA, THE MILITARY AND POLICE HAVE WORKED IN CONCERT, ALTHOUGH THE ARMY CAN NOT COVER ALL THE GROUND AND SOMETIMES OFFER HELP JUST TO DEMONSTRATE INVOLVEMENT AND THEN ASK FOR RESOURCES.

16. COMMENT: (C) CNP COORDINATION OF THE TRIP AND VIP TREATMENT AFFORDED THE VISITORS WERE FIRST RATE. THE GROUP'S OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW THE ERADICATION PROGRAM FROM SUCH A CLOSE ANGLE WILL GIVE THEM UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THE PROGRAM'S STRENGTHS AND POTENTIAL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT.  
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