INQUIRE=DOC17D ITEM NO=00261423 **ENVELOPE** CDSN = LGX088 MCN = 92071/24365 TOR = 920711357 RTTCZYUW RUEKJCS3641 0711359- - RUEALGX. ZNY **HEADER** R 111359Z MAR 92 FM JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC INFO RUEADWD/OCSA WASHINGTON DC RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC RUEAHQA/CSAF WASHINGTON DC RUEACMC/CMC WASHINGTON DC RUETIAQ/MPCFTGEORGEGMEADEMD RULKNIS/COMNISCOM WASHINGTON DC//NAVATAC// RUEOGWA/CDRUSARSO FT CLAYTON PM RUWSMXI/MAC INTEL CEN SCOTT AFB IL//IN// RUCQVAB/USCINCSOC INTEL OPS CEN MACDILL AFB FL RUEOFAA/COMJSOC FT BRAGG NC//J2// RUEHC /SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC RULKQAN/MARCORINTCEN QUANTICO VA RUEALGX/SAFE R 111316Z MAR 92 TO RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC INFO RHLBAAA/USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM//SCJ2// BT CONTROLS SECTION 01 OF 03 (U) IIR /****** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *********/ BODY COUNTRY: (U) COLOMBIA (CO). SUBJ: IIR FIFTH ARTILLERY BN, ORDER OF BATTLE, GUERRILLA ACTIVITY (U). WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVAL-UATED INTEL. REPORT CLASSIFIED DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DOI: (U) 920303. REQS: (U)

(U) SOURCE:

THE FIFTH ARTILLERY BN HAS A THREEFOLD SUMMARY: MISSION OF DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY, COUNTERGUERRILLA OPS, AN COUNTERNARCOTICS. THIS REPORT COVERS UNIT DESCRIPTION, COUNTER-DRUG EFFORTS, EQUIPMENT, STAFF, DEPLOYMENT, JURISDICTION, AND BASE SECURITY.

TEXT: 1. THE FIFTH ARTILLERY BATTALION OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMY IS LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF SOCORRO, SANTANDER DEPT.

IN ADDITION TO ITS MISSION OF PROVIDING DIVISIONAL ARTILLERY SUPPORT, THE BN CARRIES OUT COUNTERGUERRILLA AND COUNTERNARCOTICS OPERATIONS IN ITS AREA OF JURISDICTION. THESE LAST TWO MISSIONS TAKE UP MOST OF THE UNIT'S TIME.

THERE ARE SIX BATTERIES IN THE BN AMONG WHICH ARE A HQS BATTERY; A LOGISTICS BATTERY; AND AND A NIMROD MISSILE BATTERY WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THE BN BUT NOT ORGANIC.

EQUIPMENT -

105MM HOWITZERS 120MM BRANDT MORTARS NIMROD ANTI-TANK MISSILES 75 MM SKODA HOWITZER

ISRAELI M-462 AVIR TRUCKS IN MINT CONDITION.

US 2.5 TON TRUCK MERCEDES BENZ TRUCK WILLYS JEEP TYPE MILITARY PICKUP TRUCK FORD HEAVY FLATBED TRUCK FORD VAN AMBULANCE US 2.5 TON-TYPE TRUCK WATER TRUCK US 2.5 TON-TYPE TRUCK TOW TRUCK TOYOTA/NISSAN 4 WHEEL DRIVE CIVILIAN VEHICLES

MERCEDES BENZ SEDAN FOR USE BY BN COMMANDER. OF GALIL RIFLES-MAINSTAY OF THE BN. OF G-3 RIFLES-VERY FEW OF THESE LEFT AS

THEY ARE BEING PHASED OUT IN FAVOR OF THE GALIL.

B. UNIFORMS - THE BN IS VERY LOW IN UNIFORMS. EACH SOLDIER HAS ONLY TWO KHAKI UNIFORMS. THERE ARE ONLY 160 CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORMS. THESE WERE ACQUIRED THROUGH A BARTERING AGREEMENT WITH A NEIGHBORING UNIT.

3. DEPLOYMENT -

THE UNIT IS OUT ON PATROL THROUGH OUT THE AO IN ORDER TO PURSUE GUERRILLAS, DESTROY NARCOTICS FIELDS, OR ESTABLISH A PRESENCE WHICH WILL DENY THE GUERRILLAS AN OPERATING AREA.

GUERRILLA PRESENCE - THERE ARE THREE FARC FRONT OPERATING IN THE AREA ALONG THE CUCHILLA DE LOS COBARDES MOUNTAIN RANGE THE WESTERN LIMIT OF THE BN JURISDICTION. THESE FRONTS ARE- 46, 23, AND 12TH FRONTS. THERE ARE NO KNOWN PERMANENT GUERRILLA BASES.

TOWNS OF SIMACOTA AND CHIMA, 14KM AND 35 KM WEST OF SOCORRO BY ROAD.

5. COUNTERNARCOTICS UNIT. A COUNTERDRUG UNIT WAS CREATED WITHIN THE BN.

HAVE RECENTLY DESTROYED SEVERAL SMALL OPIUM POPPY FIELDS IN THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE BATTALION'S OPERATING AREA.

HE GETS NO SPECIAL AID, TRAINING, O

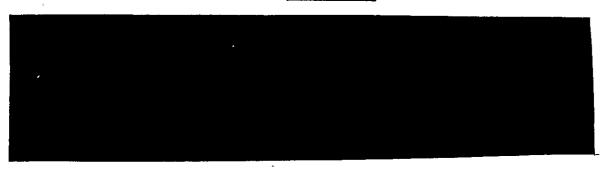
FUNDING FOR THE UNIT.

OPINIONS ON CUT OF U.S. COUNTER DRUG AID. SEVERAL BN OFFICERS SEEMED AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND THE CUIN US AID TO THE COLOMBIAN ARMY. THE LOCAL PRESS TERMED THE CUT AS A REACTION TO DIVERSION OF EQUIPMENT TO FIGHT GUERRILLAS. THE OFFICERS EXPLAINED THAT BY FIGHTING THE INSURGENTS THEY WERE FIGHTING NARCOTRAFFICKERS AS THE TWO HAD BECOME TIGHTLY LINKED. THERE WAS A HINT OF RESENTMEN AT BEING LIGHTLY SLIGHTED BY THE U.S., BUT THERE WAS NO REAL NEGATIVE FEELING TOWARDS THE U.S. OR ITS INSTITUTION

7. POLICE. POLICE UNITS IN THE AREA ARE UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE BN COMMANDER.

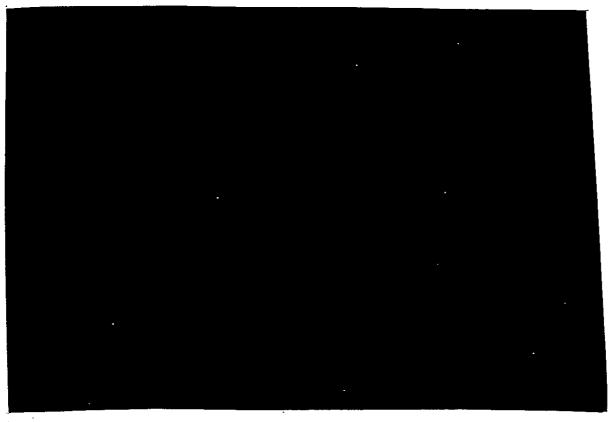
POLICE DISTRICTS IN THE BN AO, ALL HEADED BY A MAJOR AND EACH WITH APPROX 250 POLICEMEN. GUERRILLA ATTACKS ON THE POLICE STATIONS OR POLICE PATROLS ARE COMMON. THE AREAS OF GREATEST CONCERN ARE THE TOWNS OF SIMACOTA AND CHIMA, 14KM AND 35 KM WEST OF SOCORRO BY ROAD. GUERRILLAS ARE KNOWN TO FREQUENTLY ROAM THIS AREA. COMMON CRIME DOES NO SEEM TO BE MUCH OF A PROBLEM WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CATTLE RUSTLING.

GARRISON SITE. THE BN SPREADS OVER A 54 HECTARE AREA ON THE SW EDGE OF THE TOWN. IT LIES IMMEDIATELY ALONG THE MAIN BOGOTA-BUCARAMANGA HIGHWAY, APPROX ONE KILOMETER IN FROM THE TOWNS SOUTHERN EDGE. THE UNIT PRESENTS A VERY GOOD IMAGE TO THE VISITOR AS IT SEEMS WEL ORGANIZED, CLEAN, AND WELL MAINTAINED. IN ADDITION IT HA BEAUTIFUL VEGETATION AND A STUPENDOUS VIEW OF THE CUCHIL DE LOS COBARDES MOUNTAINS. BN OFFICERS CLAIM THIS IS AMONG THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF COLOMBIAN ARMY GARRISONS.

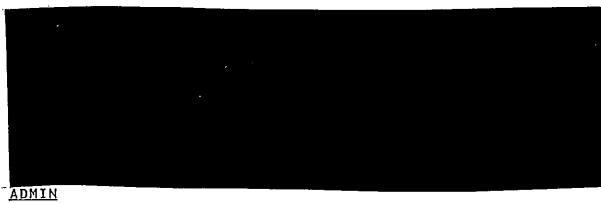


10. (U) BN STAFF. COMMANDER- LTC LUIS JORGE (CHERNANDEZ EXECUTIVE OFFICER/SECOND COMMANDER - MAJ GUSTAVO (CASTRO OPS OFFICER(THIRD IN COMMAND) - MAJ GOMEZ NIMROD BATTERY COMMANDER - CAPT PINEDA (FIELD COMMENT - THE FIRST THREE OFFICERS ALL ARRIVED

BETWEEN DEC 91 AND JAN 92. THEY ARE ON TWO YEAR TOURS.)



2. OVERALL, THE UNIT SEEMS IN GOOD PHYSICAL AND MORAL CONDITION. THERE IS AN AIR OF CONFIDENT RELAXATION. THE GUERRILLAS DO NOT SEEM TO POSE MUCH OF A PROBLEM. NO ONE SEEMS TO REMEMBER WHEN THE LAST ENGAGEMENT TOOK PLACE. HOWEVER, THE UNIT SEEMS AWARE THAT THIS SITUATION MIGHT CHANGE AT ANY MOMENT.



PROJ: (U).

COLL: (U) AB; AC

INSTR: (U) U.S.

PREP: (U)

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DISSEM: (U) FIELD: EMBASSY AT BOGOTA.

WARNING: (U) REPORT CLASSIFIED

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