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RELEASE IN FULL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 02870 01 OF 03 222239Z
ACTION SCT-03

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	AID-01	ARA-01	A-01	CA-02	CCO-00
	CG-00	COME-00	CTME-00	C-01	OASY-00	DOEE-00	DS-00
	EB-01	OIGO-01	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	HA-09	H-01	IMMC-01
	INM-02	INR-00	INSE-00	L-03	ADS-00	M-01	NRCE-00
	NSAE-00	OIS-01	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-02	PRS-01	P-01
	RPCS-01	SNP-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-01
	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	/055W			

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R 222236Z FEB 93
 FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5290
 INFO USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
 DEA WASHDC
 DEPTJUSTICE WASHDC
 AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY LIMA
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
 AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
 AMEMBASSY MEXICO
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PAGE 02 BOGOTA 02870 01 OF 03 222239Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BOGOTA 02870

DEA WASHDC FOR OF, OFL, DO, AO, AX, OK, NK

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
 TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PTER, ASEC, SNAR, CO
 SUBJECT: ALVARO URIBE DEFENDS VISIT TO MRS. ESCOBAR

REFS: A) BOGOTA 593; B) BOGOTA 1063

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Marvin Russell, Senior Reviewer

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: THE PUBLIC BICKERING BETWEEN THE THREE COLOMBIANS WHO MET WITH PABLO ESCOBAR'S WIFE IN DECEMBER (REFTEL), COMBINED WITH THE PROTESTATIONS TO POLOFF OF ONE OF THOSE INVOLVED, APPEARS TO CONFIRM OUR BELIEF THE GAVIRIA ADMINISTRATION HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THESE CONTACTS, AND THOSE INVOLVED WERE ACTING PURELY OUT OF SELF-INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

3. THE FIRST OF PABLO ESCOBAR'S LATEST THREE LETTERS DEMANDING CONCESSIONS AND THREATENING VIOLENCE (REFTEL) WAS ADDRESSED TO THREE COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS, ONE OF WHOM (MEDELLIN SENATOR ALVARO URIBE VELEZ) CALLED ON POLOFF AT THE EMBASSY JANUARY 26 TO EXPLAIN HIS VERSION OF EVENTS AND CLARIFY HIS ROLE. ESCOBAR'S LETTER REFERRED TO THE VISIT OF THE THREE (THE OTHER TWO BEING MEDELLIN REGIONAL PROCURADOR IVAN VELASQUEZ AND EX-CONSERVATIVE SENATOR ALVARO VILLEGAS) WITH ESCOBAR'S WIFE, AND CONTAINED THINLY-VEILED THREATS AGAINST FISCAL GENERAL

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PAGE 03 BOGOTA 02870 01 OF 03 222239Z
(PROSECUTOR GENERAL) GUSTAVO DE GREIFF AND THE
DIPLOMATIC CORPS.

4. URIBE EXPLAINED TO POLOFF THAT DURING A DECEMBER 24 SECURITY MEETING WITH MEDELLIN POLITICIANS WHICH INCLUDED MEDELLIN MAYOR LUIS ALFREDO RAMOS, THE REGIONAL FISCAL, AND REGIONAL PROCURADOR VELASQUEZ (THE PROCURADURIA ACTS AS AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT WATCHDOG AGENCY), "SOMEONE" MENTIONED THAT THE REAL REASON ESCOBAR HAD NOT SURRENDERED WAS THAT HE FEARED HE WOULD BE KILLED. URIBE REPLIED IF THAT WAS THE ONLY OBSTACLE, HE WOULD BE MORE THAN WILLING TO ACT AS A GUARANTOR OF ESCOBAR'S SAFETY.

5. AT THIS POINT, ACCORDING TO URIBE, VELASQUEZ SAID HE KNEW ESCOBAR'S MOTHER, AND COULD PROBABLY ARRANGE A MEETING WITH HER FOR URIBE, WHO COULD RELAY HIS WILLINGNESS TO GUARANTEE ESCOBAR'S SAFETY IF HE SURRENDERED. A FEW DAYS LATER VELASQUEZ CALLED TO SAY EVERYTHING WAS SET, AND THAT EX-SENATOR AND CONSERVATIVE PARTY LEADER ALVARO VILLEGAS WOULD ACCOMPANY THEM. THE THREE WERE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING BODYGUARDS, AND WENT UNACCOMPANIED TO AN APARTMENT TO MEET, NOT ESCOBAR'S MOTHER, BUT HIS WIFE. URIBE SAID HE DID NOT REALIZE

UNCLASSIFIED U.S. Department of State Case No. M-2013-01203 Doc No. C17423251 Date: 10/05/2017
THEY WERE DEALING WITH ESCOBAR'S WIFE UNTIL THEY WERE
SEVERAL MINUTES INTO THE CONVERSATION, AND HAD NO
EXPLANATION FOR WHY THE MEETING HAD BEEN ARRANGED WITH
HER AND NOT ESCOBAR'S MOTHER.

6. URIBE SAID HE EMPHASIZED TO MRS. ESCOBAR THAT HE HAD
NO AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE, AND HIS VISIT WAS NOT
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PAGE 04 BOGOTA 02870 01 OF 03 222239Z
SANCTIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT. HE EXPRESSED HIS DEEP
CONCERN ABOUT THE VIOLENCE, AND THAT HE WAS WILLING TO
DO WHATEVER NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT ESCOBAR IS ALLOWED
TO SURRENDER PEACEFULLY. HE TOLD MRS. ESCOBAR THAT
MEDELLIN DESPERATELY NEEDED PEACE, AND THAT PRESIDENT
GAVIRIA'S SURRENDER DECREES WERE THE BEST MECHANISM TO
ACHIEVE THIS.

7. ACCORDING TO URIBE, MRS. ESCOBAR WAS VERY DISCREET,
REPLYING WITH GENERALITIES ABOUT THE "DIFFICULTY OF THE

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PAGE 01 BOGOTA 02870 02 OF 03 222240Z
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PAGE 02 BOGOTA 02870 02 OF 03 222240Z

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SITUATION." URIBE SAID SHE MAY HAVE BEEN COACHED BY LAWYERS TO SAY AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE. ACCORDING TO URIBE, WORD ON THE STREETS IS THAT SHE IS EMBARRASSED BY ESCOBAR'S TERRORISM AND SHUNNED BY NEIGHBORS. THE PEOPLE OF MEDELLIN ARE ANGRY AT ESCOBAR AND THE NUMBER OF SYMPATHIZERS IS CONSTANTLY SHRINKING. THE MEETING ENDED WITH NO AGREEMENTS REACHED. URIBE SAID HE NEVER RECEIVED ESCOBAR'S LETTER, BUT LEARNED ABOUT IT FROM THE PRESS. HE BELIEVES THE ORIGINAL WAS SENT TO REGIONAL PROCURADOR VELZQUEZ.

8. DURING THE MEETING WITH POLOFF, URIBE CONSTANTLY PACED THE SMALL OFFICE; HE WAS VISIBLY AGITATED. HE SAID HE WANTED THE EMBASSY TO BE AWARE OF HIS EXACT ROLE

TRANSPARENT AND ABOVE-BOARD. HE EMPHATICALLY DENIED RUMORS THAT ESCOBAR HIMSELF WAS AT THE MEETING. HE ALSO SAID HE ABSOLUTELY REJECTS ANY THOUGHTS OF DIALOGUE OR CONCESSIONS TO ESCOBAR. "AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, ESCOBAR HAS THREE OPTIONS--SURRENDER UNCONDITIONALLY, BE CAPTURED, OR BE KILLED." URIBE WENT ON AT LENGTH ABOUT COLOMBIA'S DIMINISHED IMAGE IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD AS
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PAGE 03 BOGOTA 02870 02 OF 03 222240Z
THE RESULT OF THE ENVIGADO AFFAIR. HE SAID GAVIRIA CANNOT MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS TO ESCOBAR BECAUSE "THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WOULD NOT ACCEPT IT."

9. URIBE SAID HE FEARED FOR HIS LIFE AND THAT OF HIS FAMILY, AND THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING MOVING HIS FAMILY TO BOGOTA. HE HAS NOT CONSIDERED LEAVING THE COUNTRY BECAUSE HE COULD NOT AFFORD IT, AND HE HIMSELF CANNOT LEAVE MEDELLIN BECAUSE OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE THERE.

10. DURING A FEBRUARY 3 LUNCH, LIBERAL MEDELLIN SENATOR LUIS GUILLERMO VELEZ TOLD POLOFF HE BELIEVES IT WAS URIBE WHO INITIATED THE CONTACT WITH ESCOBAR'S MOTHER. VELEZ REMINDED POLOFF THAT URIBE IS A COUSIN OF THE OCHOAS VASQUEZ NARCO TRAFFICKING FAMILY (MANY OF WHOM ARE IN PRISON AT ITAGUI), WHO HAVE FINANCED HIS POLITICAL CAMPAIGN. ESCOBAR, THROUGH THE OCHOAS, IS NOW DEMANDING URIBE RETURN THE FAVORS BY TRYING TO OPEN A COMMUNICATION CHANNEL TO GAVIRIA. IN A SEPARATE MEETING FEBRUARY 4, FORMER ANTIOQUIA SENATOR ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ REITERATED VELEZ'S CHARGES THAT URIBE FEARS FOR HIS LIFE BECAUSE HE WAS UNABLE TO DELIVER FOR HIS MEDELLIN CARTEL MENTORS.

11. FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION OF ESCOBAR'S LETTER REFERRING TO THE MEETING, THE THREE INVOLVED SCRAMBLED TO PUT THE BEST LIGHT ON THE EVENT. VILLEGAS INSISTED THE MEETING WAS PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BY ALL OF ANTIOQUIA'S CONGRESSMEN, WHICH WAS DENIED BY AT LEAST ONE OTHER CONGRESSMAN, AND WHICH URIBE TOLD POLOFF WAS
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UNTRUE. VILLEGAS ALSO CLAIMED THE VISIT WAS INSTIGATED
BY PROCURADOR GENERAL CARLOS GUSTAVO ARRIETA, A CHARGE
ARRIETA DENIED.

12. COMMENT: WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE MEETING WAS NOT
SANCTIONED BY THE GAVIRIA ADMINISTRATION AND THAT
NOTHING EVER CAME OF IT. MOST LIKELY ALL THREE WERE
ACTING OUT OF WHAT THEY SAW AS THEIR INDIVIDUAL

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SELF-INTEREST. ALTHOUGH URIBE'S INVOLVEMENT COULD WELL
HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE
OCHOAS, WE HAVE NO RECENT INFORMATION LINKING HIM TO
TRAFFICKERS. BUSBY

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