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RELEASE IN PART
B6

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ACTION INM-01

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 AID-01 ARA-01 CG-00 CTME-00 DEAE-00
EUR-01 FBIE-00 INRE-00 INR-05 IO-19 JUSE-00 L-03
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02 OIG-01 OMB-01 PM-01 P-02
SP-01 TRSE-00 USIE-00 /039W
-----3E4E64 051839Z /46

R 051727Z FEB 91
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2575
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
DIA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 01880

ROME FOR USMISSION VATICAN

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, SOCI, SNAR, PINR, CO
SUBJECT: [REDACTED] GAVIRIA IS TOO SOFT ON NARCOS;
- CHURCH FEARS CHANGES IN ITS LEGAL STATUS

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REF: BOGOTA 1666

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
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2. SUMMARY: OVER LUNCH WITH POLOFFS, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] PULLED NO PUNCHES IN EXPRESSING HIS PERSONAL
DISGUST WITH PRESIDENT GAVIRIA'S POLICY OF COMPROMISING
WITH THE COUNTRY'S NARCO-TRAFFICKERS. IN A WIDE-RANGING
CONVERSATION, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ALSO DISCUSSED CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, INCLUDING
THE RECENT ELECTORAL SUCCESS OF THE COUNTRY'S
EVANGELICALS, RELIGIOUS ISSUES BEFORE THE CONSTITUENT
ASSEMBLY, AND POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE COLOMBIA-VATICAN
TREATY THAT ESTABLISHES THE LEGAL ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN
COLOMBIAN SOCIETY. END SUMMARY.

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[REDACTED] GAVIRIA'S NARCO POLICY

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REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior
Reviewer

3. [REDACTED] WHOSE PROPENSITY TO SPEAK HIS MIND IS WELL-KNOWN TO EMBASSY OFFICERS, TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LUNCH WITH POLCOUNS AND POLOFFS TO ATTACK PRESIDENT GAVIRIA'S NARCO POLICY. [REDACTED] PERCEIVED GAVIRIA'S PLEA-BARGAIN, NO-EXTRADITION DECREES (THE MOST RECENT WAS ANNOUNCED JANUARY 29--REFTEL) TO BE APPEASMENT. HE DID SUPPORT GAVIRIA'S STEADFAST REFUSAL TO GRANT THE MEDELLIN CARTEL POLITICAL STATUS, THAT IS, INVITING NARCOS TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE AND OFFERING AN AMNESTY COMPARABLE TO THAT GIVEN GUERRILLA MOVEMENTS.

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EVANGELICALS SUCCESS AT POLLS CAUGHT CHURCH BY SURPRISE

4. [REDACTED] THE CHURCH WAS SURPRISED BY THE ELECTION DECEMBER 9 OF TWO EVANGELICALS TO THE
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CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY. WITHOUT DOWNPLAYING THE EVANGELICALS' POLITICAL SUCCESS, [REDACTED] THE EVANGELICALS' RELIGION PERMITTED SUCH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, WHEREAS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FROWNED ON SUCH PARTISAN POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT. THAT ROLE, HE SAID, BELONGED TO THE LAITY. (FYI: [REDACTED] FAILED TO MENTION THAT ARTICLE 54 OF THE CONSTITUTION STATES THAT "PRIESTLY MINISTRY IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC OFFICE." THE ARTICLE LIMITS THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION AND WELFARE. END FYI.) WHILE MENTIONING THAT CATHOLIC CLERGY HAD PARTICIPATED IN PAST CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLIES, HE SAID THAT THE CHURCH APPROVED PRIESTS PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT NOT PARTISAN PROSELYTIZING OR INVOLVEMENT.

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CHURCH FEARS LESSER ROLE UNDER NEW CONSTITUTION...

5. [REDACTED] WORRIED ABOUT CHANGES THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, WHICH BEGINS FEBRUARY 5, MIGHT MAKE AFFECTING CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS. HE SAID THERE WERE TWO PARTS OF THE CONSTITUTION DEALING WITH CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS WHICH HE FEARED MIGHT BE ALTERED, THE PREAMBLE AND ARTICLE 53. THE PREAMBLE ESTABLISHES CATHOLISM AS THE NATIONAL RELIGION, AND REQUIRES THE GOVERNMENT TO ENFORCE RESPECT FOR THE CHURCH "AS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF THE SOCIAL ORDER." [REDACTED] CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE CHURCH OF EVEN THE REMOVAL OF THE WORD "ESSENTIAL." ARTICLE 53 GRANTS THE EXECUTIVE THE POWER TO CELEBRATE CONVENANTS, SUBJECT TO CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL, WITH THE HOLY SEE, REGULATING CHURCH-STATE

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RELATIONS. [REDACTED] THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY
MIGHT LIMIT THE PRESIDENT'S POWER TO REACH ACCORDS WITH
THE VATICAN, THUS POTENTIALLY LIMITING THE CHURCH'S
LEGAL ROLE IN COLOMBIAN SOCIETY.

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...AS WELL AS UNDER A NEW ACCORD WITH THE VATICAN

6. [REDACTED] WAS RELIEVED THAT BECAUSE THE
ASSEMBLY COULD NOT TAKE RETROACTIVE ACTIONS, IT WOULD BE
UNABLE TO TOUCH THE PRESENT GOC-VATICAN CONCORDAT,
SIGNED IN 1973. NEVERTHELESS, THE GOVERNMENT AND

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ROME FOR USMISSION VATICAN

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, SOCI, SNAR, PINR, CO

SUBJECT [REDACTED] GAVIRIA IS TOO SOFT ON NARCOS;
VATICAN HAVE AGREED TO BEGIN TALKS EARLY THIS YEAR TO
REVISE THE CONCORDAT TO REFLECT THE GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE
FOR A GREATER SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] PREOCCUPIED ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THOSE
SESSIONS.

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7. [REDACTED] ONLY TWO PROVISIONS OF THE PRESENT
CONCORDAT WERE IMPORTANT TO THE CHURCH--THE ARTICLES
REGARDING THE CIVIL LEGITIMACY OF CATHOLIC MARRIAGES AND
CATHOLIC INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. ON THE MARRIAGE
FRONT [REDACTED] THE GOC MIGHT LEGALIZE ONLY CIVIL
CEREMONIES AND REMOVE THE LEGALITY OF THE CHURCHS BAN
ON DIVORCE. ARTICLE XII ESTABLISHES CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS
INSTRUCTION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AS WELL AS CHURCH CONTROL
OF THAT INSTRUCTION. [REDACTED] THE GOVERNMENT'S
INTENDS TO SEPARATE RELIGION FROM PUBLIC EDUCATION.
REGARDING THE LATTER, [REDACTED] COLOMBIA HAD A
MAJORITY CATHOLIC POPULATION, AND THAT IT WAS THE WILL
OF THE PEOPLE THAT THEIR CHILDREN RECEIVE CATHOLIC
TEACHING AT SCHOOL.

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8. THAT SAME DAY, PRESIDENT GAVIRIA ANNOUNCED HIS
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM PROPOSAL (SEPTTEL). GAVIRIA'S
PROPOSAL WOULD MAINTAIN MENTION OF THE CHURCH IN THE
PREAMBLE, AS WELL AS THE LEGLITY OF CATHOLIC WEDDINGS,
BUT WOULD REMOVE FROM THE CHURCH THE POWER TO REGULATE
CATHOLIC MARRIAGES, IN EFFECT MEANING THAT CATHOLICS
WOULD BE ABLE TO GET DIVORCES IN COLOMBIA. SHOULD THE
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY APPROVE GAVIRIA'S RECOMMENDATION
GIVING THE STATE CONTROL OVER CATHOLIC MARRIAGES, THE
CONCORDAT WOULD HAVE TO BEEN RENEGOTIATED TO REFLECT
THAT CHANGE.

8. COMMENT: [REDACTED] PRIVATE CRITICISM OF THE
GOVERNMENT'S NARCO POLICY IS IN CONTRAST TO THE CHURCH'S
PUBLIC SILENCE ON THE ISSUE. HE IS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT

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GOVERNMENT MOVES TO LESSEN THE CHURCH'S LEGAL ROLE IN
COLOMBIAN SOCIETY. HISTORICALLY, BECAUSE OF THE CLOSE
ASSOCIATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE IN COLOMBIA, THE
CHURCH HIERARCHY HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO CRITICIZE THE
GOVERNMENT OUT OF FEAR OF JEOPARDIZING ITS PRIVILEGED
POSITION. THAT CONTINUES TO BE THE CASE. END COMMENT.
MCNAMARA

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