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## CONTROLS

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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

## TEXT

TAGS: PHUM, CO  
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT REPORT ABSOLVES TWO ARMY OFFICIALS  
IN PUEBLO BELLO MASSACRE

1. (U) TWO ARMY OFFICERS CHARGED WITH COMPLICITY IN THE JANUARY 1990 MURDERS OF 43 CAMPESINOS IN PUEBLO BELLO (URABA REGION OF ANTIOQUIA) WERE ABSOLVED OF WRONGDOING IN A REPORT ISSUED DECEMBER 2 BY THE NATION'S PROCURADOR (ATTORNEY GENERAL). ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, ONLY CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE EXISTED TO TIE THE TWO OFFICERS, CAPTAIN ALVARO GOMEZ LUQUE AND LIEUTENANT NESTOR ENRIQUE BARRERA, TO THE MURDERS.
2. (U) THE 1990 MURDERS HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO PARAMILITARY FORCES HEADED BY FIDEL CASTANO (AKA RAMBO). IN THE MASSACRE, 43 FARM WORKERS WERE KIDNAPPED, TRANSPORTED IN STOLEN TRUCKS TO A LOCAL FARM, AND MURDERED. THE CASE AGAINST THE SOLDIERS WAS BASED

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ON INFORMATION THAT THE TRUCKS PASSED A MILITARY CHECKPOINT THAT GOMEZ AND BARRERA COMMANDED. THE REPORT CONCLUDES, HOWEVER, THAT "SUFFICIENT GROUNDS DO NOT EXIST TO DETERMINE WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THAT THE TRUCKS PASSED BY THE CHECKPOINTS AT WHICH THE TWO OFFICIALS WERE IN CHARGE."

3. ~~let~~ OLGA SAMPER, AN OFFICIAL IN THE PROCURADOR'S OFFICE, TOLD POLOFF DECEMBER 5 THAT THE ONLY EYE WITNESS AGAINST THE ARMY OFFICERS, A FIDEL CASTANO ASSOCIATE KNOWN BY THE ALIAS "RELAMPAGO" (LIGHTENING), GAVE SUCH CONTRADICTORY EVIDENCE IN THE CASE THAT IT ULTIMATELY PROVED WORTHLESS. SHE ADDED THAT THE PROCURADURIA IS CONTINUING TO STUDY RELAMPAGO'S TESTIMONY FOR POSSIBLE USE AGAINST OTHER ARMY PERSONNEL.

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END OF MESSAGE

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