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FROM - Bogota

SUBJECT - Monthly Report of Public Safety Division, Colombia (March)

REFERENCE - Report Control No. U-127

THE NATIONAL POLICE

I. Situation

A. Under the general plan for the control of violence, police personnel and police posts in the violence areas are under control of the Military. The Military in these areas is responsible for the campaign to eradicate violence and banditry, with the understanding that when an area is cleared of banditry the police will assume the responsibility of maintaining law and order. The police posts generally are considered to be stationary posts and the personnel are used in pursuit of bandits only when instructed to do so by Military commanders.

Although relations between the police and the Military have generally been good, Public Safety believes that there is growing discontent among police commanders over the manner in which police are being used in the violence areas, and that this could lead to deterioration of the present good relations. Police officials claim that they have lost all control over personnel in the violence areas and, despite the fact that a number of police are being killed by bandits, they can use little initiative in combatting banditry. Their major complaint, however, is that police squads sent into the violence areas are broken up into small groups and assigned to small police posts with only three or four men to a post. It is their contention, and in the opinion of PS a valid one, that such small posts serve no useful purpose and the personnel cannot defend itself against surprise

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DRAFTED BY

Laughlin, Jr

OFFICE

Public Safety

PHONE NO.

DATE

1 Apr 63

APPROVED BY

Charles P. Fossum, Director

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SDEaton, DD/USAID

cc: Ambassador  
Col. Vallery  
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attacks from larger groups of bandits. General Ramirez, Director of the National Police, recommends that (1) the Police be withdrawn from the violence sectors, or (2) the violence areas be divided into zones with the Police assuming responsibility in certain zones and the Military having responsibility in the other zones. General Ramirez requested that the Chief Public Safety Advisor discuss this with the Minister of War.

At the present time, the Chief Public Safety Advisor has discussed this only with Colonel Vallery, Senior U.S. Military Advisor and Chief of the U.S. Army Mission. It was agreed that the Chief P.S. Advisor would obtain factual information on the number and location of police posts in the violence areas and the number of personnel assigned each post. The Chief Advisor and Colonel Vallery will study this data and, if the study warrants, will prepare a joint recommendation for the Minister of War.

## II. OPERATIONS

A. Public Safety still is receiving requests to discuss Police operation with Police personnel of the various stations and training schools. Last month the Chief Advisor conducted conferences at the following locations:

1. The training school in Barranquilla.
2. The training school in Tulua.
3. The training school for carabineros.
4. Station #8 in Bogotá
5. Station #4 in Bogotá

B. A report regarding the small percentage of Police personnel on patrol and in general Police work was completed and submitted to Police officials and to the Minister. The report was discussed in detail with Colonel Camacho, Deputy Director of the National Police, and with the Minister. A summary of the report and results of the discussions are attached to this report as an annex.

C. The Minister of War and the Director of National Police concur with a P.S. recommendation concerning the need for a well-organized Public Relations Program. Colonel Llaña has been appointed Director of Public Relations and has been given a staff of four. His office in the National Police adjoins that of Public Safety and he has been instructed to maintain close contact with Public Safety. Preparations are being made to bring police officials from all Departments to Bogotá for a one week conference at which time plans will be made for a Public Relations Program throughout the Republic. Public Safety has been asked to take an active part in this conference.

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D. As previously reported, a P.S. Advisor gave a week of intensive training to police instructors in the use of the police baton and its use in riot control. There has been rapid implementation of this program. A special unit of the police (Policia de Control) has completed intensive training and is now equipped with the type of baton recommended by P.S. Training in the use of the baton is now underway in all nine police training schools and in many stations, and will become a permanent part of the curricula of all schools. A draft of a pamphlet on the use of the baton, illustrated with photos taken locally, has been completed, and copies will be issued to all police personnel.

### III. Evaluation

No change.

### IV. Recommendations and Other Comments

A. The attention of AID/W is directed to PIO/C 514-S-71-AA-5-30715. Due to the nature of the commodities, special shipping instructions must be followed. It is recommended that O/PS AID/W contact GSA concerning this.

B. The Mission appreciates the promptness of O/PS AID/W in forwarding the book on railroad police. Major Medina, Chief of the Unit of the National Police assigned to railroads, speaks and reads English fluently and will make effective use of this book.

C. For Mr. Herbert Hardin O/PS, attached is an envelope containing:

1. A newspaper article complimenting the National Police on their handling of recent civil disturbances.
2. Two 35 mm slides taken during a demonstration of the police baton before all top police officials.
3. One slide of a vehicle in which a police captain and several agents were killed in an ambush by bandits. This occurred in Tolima in November when Mr. Hardin was in Colombia on a survey.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT OF SECURITY (DAS)

### I. Situation

A. The internal situation in DAS has not changed materially during the past month. Dr. Heriberto Tamayo Medina was named Chief of the Judicial Office of DAS after the resignation of Dr. Jordan Jimenez. Dr. Jordan was

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named Chairman of the National Election Board. Dr. Tamayo, in whose section the Investigations Advisor has his office, seems very friendly and cooperative with the program of Public Safety.

B. The Advisor has pointed out in his various visits and studies of the operations of DAS that very little of DAS effort is spent in intelligence work. This is readily admitted by those field chiefs with whom the Advisor has talked. The invariable answer is that in view of the shortage of personnel and the numerous demands made upon DAS there isn't time for intelligence work. Several instances were noted in which DAS field offices were spending time outside DAS jurisdiction, claiming that they were "collaborating" with the police or military authorities as required by law.

C. An encouraging note has been the complete cooperation by DAS officials with the Advisor in furnishing factual information about DAS operations. This is especially evident in the case of Mr. Constantino Galindo, the Chief Coordinator (Chief Inspector), who has accompanied the Advisor on inspection trips. Mr. Galindo seems to be aware of many of the problems that prevent DAS from exercising its role as an intelligence service. He has readily admitted that the intelligence role has been de-emphasized in recent years to the point where it is threatened with extinction, and other operations of varying degrees of importance have been favored. The Advisor believes that most of the top DAS officials will be sympathetic to his recommendations, since they will be designed to add to the prestige and importance of DAS and will be associated with a program of material aid and training.

## II. Operations

A. The Investigations Advisor, accompanied by Mr. Galindo, has now visited the DAS Field Offices (Seccionales) at Ibagué, Cali, and Manizales, and the Sub-Field Offices (Sub-Seccionales) at Girardot, Fusagasugá, Buenaventura, Tuluá, Cartago, Pereira, and Fresno. He intends to visit Santa Marta and Barranquilla, and finally the headquarters of the Rural Security Service at Yopá before submitting his definitive report and recommendations regarding DAS.

B. On the favorable side the Advisor noted that the maintenance of technical equipment and vehicles in all offices was good in spite of the fact that equipment is old and parts are hard to obtain. The communications by FM and CW radio between the Field Offices and Headquarters was found to be functioning well in every office visited, and the system seems to be adequate. Mobile radio communications, however, are completely lacking in all the cities except Bogotá and is urgently needed.

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C. These visits have not only confirmed the observations made by the Advisor in the previously monthly reports, but have brought to light a new area in which DAS forces are being dissipated in the name of "collaboration" with other authorities. In Cartago, for example, the local DAS Chief stated that because of the shortage of police personnel in the town his agents had undertaken to patrol the streets at night. In Cali, an Army captain asked the DAS chief to assign an agent to him for seven days to investigate some matters and was accommodated. This kind of "collaboration" shows that DAS operations have become almost completely disorientated from intelligence work, and that DAS chiefs even though competent and extremely hardworking have lost sight of their basic mission.

D. Because of the numerous administrative functions assumed by DAS the Field Offices and Sub-Field Offices are top heavy with administrative and specialized technical personnel. This situation is aggravated by the lack of technical capability on the part of the agents. For example, the Sub-Field Office at Fresno, a town of about four thousand population in the middle of the worst violence area, has an assigned personnel of 23 people, six of whom are detectives. Because of the violence situation in this area these detectives are justifiably afraid to go into the rural zone on their own to develop information. Therefore they stay in the town, or accompany police or military units and have little opportunity to develop intelligence. The rest of the personnel are concerned with administrative and technical work in the office and are of little value in obtaining intelligence or conducting investigations. The answer to the problem, in addition to eliminating useless and inappropriate activity, is that each DAS agent should be a well rounded representative of the institution in the area where he works. He should be capable of conducting investigations and reporting the results, capable of doing any necessary photography or fingerprint work in the field, able to handle any necessary communications equipment, able to handle with skill whatever firearms are available, and should be able to call on the local police to assist him in any arrests. Several resident agents of this type in a community the size of Fresno could produce more intelligence and investigate more criminal matters than the present force of 23, and at a fraction of the cost. The raw material for such agents is readily available in the surplus of young lawyers graduating from the National University every year.

E. On the other hand, the problem of collecting intelligence in the rural zones can only be resolved through a group like the Rural Security Service (Servicio de Seguridad Rural) which is now occupied almost entirely in the Llanos with cattle rustling (abigeato) cases. This section of DAS has shown hopeful results in the few instances it has been utilized in the violence areas, and with intensive training and application could be very effective as a rural intelligence service. Here again the rural agents, who

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are largely and necessarily indigenous personnel, are often sent on other than intelligence missions and have sometimes been sent to attack superior forces of bandits with tragic results. More important, however, is the fact that the main body of the Rural Service is devoted to relatively unimportant matters in an area where no violence has occurred for considerable time. The Rural Service will be the subject of a special study in a later report.

F. Seven DAS agents will attend the Army Bomb Disposal Course in Panama in April followed by the General Course at the IAPA beginning April 22.

III. Evaluation

No change.

IV. Recommendations

None.

Attachment: Annex I

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A N N E X I(NATIONAL POLICE)

Public Safety prepared a special report concerning the very low percentage of police personnel engaged in patrol and general police work, and the inability of the police to provide the public with adequate protection. This report was submitted to and discussed with police officials and the Minister of War.

The report lists the three most important contributing factors to this situation as: (1) the fact that the National Police Department is far below authorized strength, (2) the fact that throughout the Republic approximately 75% of available personnel are assigned to fixed posts, and (3) the creation of small police stations that further disperse and weaken the police forces.

Major recommendations of the report are:

- (1) Measures to bring the police to authorized strength.
- (2) A drastic reduction in the number of fixed posts.
- (3) A reduction of academic subjects in the training schools and an increase in basic police materials such as "Patrol".
- (4) A regulation or policy that would establish a minimum number of agents for a station.
- (5) Adjustment of working schedules so that agents will be on active duty an average of 8 hours a day instead of 6.

This report was discussed in detail with Colonel Camacho, Deputy Director of the National Police and, at a later date, also was discussed with the Minister of War. Colonel Camacho and the Minister had the same reaction concerning the first four recommendations but had different attitudes toward the last one mentioned.

In regard to authorized strength, both officials agreed that this has never been reached and, under present economical conditions, cannot be attained. Present strength compared to the authorized strength indicates there are many thousand vacancies in the police ranks. Present strength compared to the highest number of personnel yet attained, however, indicates only a few hundred vacancies. There are no funds available to increase the number of police beyond that of 25,000 (Police Personnel) that existed January 1st of this year.

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Colonel Camacho was in complete agreement that the number of fixed posts should be reduced in order to have more men on patrol but correctly stated GOC must support the police in this. The Minister of War also concurred and said that he would discuss this with the Director-General of National Police.

Both the Minister and Colonel Camacho readily agreed to substitute basic police materials for academic subjects in the nine police training schools. Colonel Camacho, who has direct control of all training schools, is studying a number of basic police training materials submitted by Public Safety. These materials, as soon as they are edited by the Colonel, will be integrated into the curricula of the schools.

Colonel Camacho is opposed to increasing the working hours because of the extra hours that policemen must work during emergencies. The Minister, on the other hand, strongly supports the idea that agents should average 8 hours a day on active duty.

In summary, therefore, it is believed that immediate action will be taken to provide the police with more basic training. Whether and to what extent the number of fixed posts will be reduced remains to be seen. This, as previously mentioned, will require strong support from GOC but, in the opinion of Public Safety, is absolutely essential if the National Police is to fulfill its function of maintaining law and order.

It also is difficult to determine at this time whether a general order will be issued increasing the working hours. It is known, however, that in a number of stations in Bogotá and in the Departments, Police Commanders on their own initiative and due to necessity have established 8 hour shifts. Due to economic conditions, an increase in police personnel appears impossible at this time.

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