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AIRLINER

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ROUTINE
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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

CITE TDFIR DB-315/11216-76

DIST 9 NOVEMBER 1976

POTENTIAL MATTERS

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COUNTRY: VENEZUELA

DOI: EARLY NOVEMBER 1976

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL EMBARRASSMENT FOR THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT

DUE TO POSSIBLE EXPOSURE OF PROOF THAT RICARDO MORALES

NAVARETTE IS A VENEZUELAN SECURITY OFFICIAL

ACQ: VENEZUELA, CARACAS (1-4 NOVEMBER 1976) FIELD NO. 7537

SOURCE: SEE BELOW.

SUMMARY: DESPITE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT DENIALS, CUBAN-BORN

RICARDO MORALES NAVARETTE IS A HIGH OFFICIAL OF THE

DIRECTORATE FOR THE SERVICES OF INTELLIGENCE AND PREVENTION (DISIP)

FURTHERMORE, HE IS CURRENTLY ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE 6 OCTOBER BOMBING OF A CUBANA AIRLINER AND HE HAS HAD PREVIOUS

CONTACTS WITH SOME OF THE SUSPECTS IN THE BOMBING. A VENEZUELAN NEWSMAN

HAS A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF MORALES'

DISIP ASSIGNMENT, WHICH HE IS ATTEMPTING TO HAVE REPRINTED IN THE

LOCAL PRESS. VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS BELIEVE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF

55 DEC 1976

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THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD PROVE EMBARRASSING TO THE GOVERNMENT, AND, IN AN EFFORT TO COUNTER THIS POTENTIAL DIFFICULTY, HAVE ISSUED A BACK-DATED CIRCULAR OSTENSIBLY RELIEVING MORALES OF HIS DISIP ASSIGNMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. (FIELD COMMENT: THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE PRESS COVERAGE CONCERNING RICARDO MORALES NAVARETTE, A CUBAN-BORN, NATURALIZED VENEZUELAN CITIZEN. MORALES' STATUS WITH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT CAME INTO QUESTION WHEN THE FOREIGN PRESS REPORTED THAT MORALES IS A HIGH-LEVEL VENEZUELAN SECURITY OFFICIAL AS WELL AS BEING CONNECTED WITH VARIOUS AGENCIES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT (USG). VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS HAVE ALTERNATELY DENIED AND ADMITTED MORALES' ASSOCIATION WITH VENEZUELAN SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS, FOR THIS INFORMATION SEE EMBASSY CARACAS TELEGRAM 12667 OF 26 OCTOBER 1976.]

2. SOURCE OF PARAGRAPHS 3 AND 4: A VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE WHOSE POSITION GIVES HIM ACCESS TO OFFICIAL REPORTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS. HIS RELIABILITY HAS NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED. THIS INFORMATION IS NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH ANY FOREIGN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT.

3. DESPITE DENIALS BY SOME OFFICIALS OF THE VENEZUELAN GOVERN-

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(classification)

MENT, RICARDO MORALES NAVARETTE IS CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN ESPIONAGE DIVISION OF THE VENEZUELAN DIRECTORATE FOR THE SERVICES OF INTELLIGENCE AND PREVENTION (DISIP). THIS SECTION IS KNOWN AS DIVISION 54. FURTHERMORE, MORALES IS HEADING THE VENEZUELAN INVESTIGATION OF THE 6 OCTOBER 1976 BOMBING OF A CUBANA AIRLINER. IN THIS CAPACITY, MORALES RECEIVES AND MAINTAINS ALL INFORMATION ON THE CUBANA CASE, INCLUDING INFORMATION WHICH CONNECTS HIM, MORALES, WITH THE CUBAN EXILE MOVEMENT AND INDIVIDUALS IMPLICATED IN THE CUBANA CASE. (FIELD COMMENT: FOR AN EARLIER REPORT ON MORALES' CONNECTIONS WITH CUBAN EXILE LEADER ORLANDO BOSCH, WHO IS CURRENTLY UNDER DETENTION IN CARACAS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CUBANA AFFAIR, SEE 7514, TDFIRDB-315/102656-76, OF 15 OCTOBER, FROM A USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE.)

4. AS HEAD OF THE INVESTIGATING TEAM, MORALES ISSUES PRESS RELEASES ON THE CASE UNDER THE ALIAS "COMMISSIONER JIMENEZ." IN ORDER TO AVOID DIRECT CONTACT WITH NEWSMEN, MORALES IS NOT UTILIZING HIS USUAL DISIP OFFICES, BUT RATHER MAINTAINS SEPARATE FACILITIES.

5. SOURCE OF PARAGRAPHS 6-9: A VENEZUELAN WITH CLOSE CONTACTS AMONG VENEZUELAN SECURITY OFFICIALS. HIS RELIABILITY

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HAS NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED. *Ven*

6. DURING THE WEEK OF 1 NOVEMBER, DISIP DIRECTOR RETIRED
GENERAL RAUL ~~GIMENEZ~~ GAINZA SAID THAT MORALES IS STILL
WORKING AT DISIP AND IS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE CUBANA INVESTI-
GATION. IN AN EFFORT TO MITIGATE ANY FURTHER PUBLICITY CONCERN-
ING MORALES AND HIS CONNECTION WITH THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT,
GIMENEZ SAID HE HAS OFFICIALLY RELIEVED MORALES AS CHIEF OF
DIVISION 54. THE RECORDS ANNOUNCING MORALES' REMOVAL HAVE BEEN
BACK-DATED TO 1 OCTOBER.

7. GIMENEZ SAID THAT HE IS AWARE THAT CIRO ~~MEDINA~~, *Ven*
CHIEF EDITOR OF "BOHEMIA" MAGAZINE, HAS IN HIS POSSESSION A
DISIP CIRCULAR ANNOUNCING THE APPOINTMENT OF MORALES AS CHIEF
OF DISIP'S DIVISION 54. MEDINA, GIMENEZ SAID, IS ATTEMPTING TO
HAVE THE CIRCULAR REPRINTED IN THE VENEZUELAN PRESS, BUT THUS
FAR, HAS BEEN UNABLE TO FIND AN OUTLET WILLING TO PUBLISH IT.

8. MORALES, GIMENEZ SAID, WAS APPOINTED TO DISIP ON
THE RECOMMENDATION OF ORLANDO ~~GARCIA~~, A SECURITY ADVISER
TO PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES ~~PEREZ~~. THE CIRCULAR APPOINTING
MORALES IS SIGNED BY GIMENEZ AND ACCORDING TO GIMENEZ, WAS APPROVED
BY OCTAVIO ~~LEPAGE~~, MINISTER OF INTERIOR, AND PRESIDENT PEREZ. *Ven*

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