

## Operation Dragon

Terrorist Plan to assassinate opponents of the current administration discovered

Press Bulletin by Congress Representative ALEXANDER LOPEZ

Bogotá, 27th August 2004

Two raids carried out by officers from the Technical Research Unit [CTI - Cuerpo Técnico de Investigaciones] of the Attorney General's office [Fiscalía General de la Nación] in Calí and Medellín have led to the discovery that the Colombian Army supplied classified information to an international corporate consultancy expert in security investigations.

The connection was made through Lieutenant Colonel Julian Villate, military identity number 7217167. The purpose was to obtain precise details on the political positions, habits, activities and above all the vulnerability in the daily movements of opposition leaders who have death threats against them, including political, trade union and social movement leaders as well as human rights defenders.

It seems that the Fiscalía found what amounts to a parallel intelligence network that operates not only with the collaboration of the Army's 3rd Brigade, but also involves the Superintendent of Public Services, the management of Calí Municipal Corporation, EMCALI; the Intelligence Service of the National Police, SIPOL; the National Electrical Finance body, FEN; the Ministry of the Interior; the Administrative Security Department, DAS and the Calí Metropolitan Police.

These state bodies knew about, collaborated with, endorsed, and above all gave full support to the intelligence gathering operations of CONSULTORIA INTEGRAL LATINOAMERICANA, CIL and an associated company by the name of SERASYS with which they exchanged special information on the processes to liquidate several public corporations. The corporations include the Barranquilla Telephone Company; Tolima Electric and the public service corporation EMCALI all of which are in the process of liquidation and privatisation.

The army officer tried to justify his presence in the place where the raid took place and his possession of various confidential documents - now included in the case ñ arguing that he had been part of CIL, to which he referred as "our company". This circumstance is causing concern for the Fiscalía. By this statement the officer recognised his double role: on the one hand as a member of the National Army and on the other as a private investigator paid by CIL.

Villate maintained that CIL was contracted by EMCALI and the Superintendent of Public Services to carry out an analysis of the economic, financial and political- social reality of the corporation, that would try and suggest actions in strategic terms to guarantee its viability.

In the raid on apartment 301, Castle Buildings Number 8N-37 on 4th Avenue North in Calí, the investigators found a folder marked "SECRET" with 21 files inside. The manuscript had been forwarded on 24th May 2003 from Santiago de Calí by the MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OF ARMY REGIONAL INTELLIGENCE No 3 to the colonel Central Director of Intelligence in Bogotá. The document was numbered internally under the reference: 093 CIME-RIME3-INT4-252.

Several mobile telephones were found as were hand written notes alluding to "Operation Dragon". Besides, the Fiscalía found a black leather notebook that included 38 pages recording such information as the names, telephone numbers and addresses of individuals. There was a specific note on the campaign headquarters of Congressman ALEXANDER LOPEZ, which had a detailed description of the property.

The Fiscalía raided this residence because it was explicitly mentioned in a secret report received by Congressmen that affirmed, amongst other things, the existence of a plan to assassinate the Congress Representative that would be carried out that same week and that a large sum of money had been paid to those due to execute the operation.

In all the documents found in the Calí raid including those of the Army - curiously, emphasis is made on the political activities of members of the Polo Democrático [Democratic Pole], the Frente Social y Politico [Social and Political Front], the Alternativa Democrática [Democratic Alternative], the MOIR [Revolutionary and Independent Workers Movement] and Congress Representatives WILSON BORJA, GUSTAVO PETRO, MARIA ISABEL URRUTIA, CARLOS GAVIRIA, JORGE ENRIQUE ROBLEDON, LUIS CARLOS AVELLANEDA, the Governor of Valle department ANGELINO GARZON, Mayor of Bogotá, LUIS EDUARDO GAZON marked out in these reports as supporting the objectives of the insurgency and creating spaces to advance humanitarian interchange [a reference to exchange of prisoners held by the FARC and the state authorities.

Days before Congress Representative ALEXANDER LOPEZ had been advised of a definite plan to assassinate first himself, then followed on the list by BERENICE CELEYTA the President of NOMADESC [Association for Research and Social Action], and LUIS HERNANDEZ the president of SINTRAEMCALI. This triggered Lopez's denouncement to the Fiscalía of the threatened assassination attempt.

Most serious of all is that the person who provided the said information was categorical about the direct relation between active and retired military personnel. This source highlights in particular the action of Colonel GERMAN HUERTAS CABRERA, chief of security at EMCALI who has launched a strong polemic in the interests of President ALVARO URIBE VELEZ concerning the privatisation of the public services corporation.

The documents found in the raid corroborate that in effect there are parallel organisations contracted by the government to eliminate the political and social opposition in Colombia.

See also article on "Operación Dragón" at <http://colombia.indymedia.org/news/2004/08/16141.php>