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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Colombia

DATE DISTR. 5 Jan 1949

SUBJECT

Formation of the Partido Democrata ColombianoX1A2q

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

- 1. A new political party has recently been formed in Bogota which is known as the Partido Democrata Colombiano (PDC - Colombian Democratic Party). The principal founder is Roberto Restrepo, a physician. The new Party is essentially rightist and nationalistic. Restrepo believes that the rewalt of 9 April 1948 demonstrated the failure of the traditional Conservative and Liberal Parties and the need for a strong, new party. According to Restrepo, less than one half of the three million qualified voters in Colombia cast their ballot, and it is the nonvoting half which he hopes to win over to his cause.
- Shortly after the events of 9 April 1948, Dr. Restrepo first advanced the idea of a party to be known as Democrata Agraria (Agrarian Democratic Party). He discussed the formation of a new party with the founders of the Partido Integral Colombiano (PIC - Colombian Integralist Party), but stated that it should not include the term "integral" since it had no sociological significance whatever. Two of the principal leaders of the PIC, Alfonso Olaya Zalamea and Julio Enrique Santos, decided to join Restrepo in the formation of the PDC and offered to spread the basic principles of the Party throughout the country.
- 3. In addition to Roberto Restrepo, the directors of the PDC are as follows:

Raimundo Aguirre Agudelo: Economist in the Controller General's office and a cousin of the Communist leader, Carlos Arturo Aguirre; Ernesto Jaimes Becerra: Director of the bi-monthly review Fastos; Julian Castillo:

Ernesto Acero Valenzuela: Editor of Fastos;

Efraim Gomez Leal: Architect and former member of the Communist Party; Alfonso Navia:

Carlos Perez Anzola: Lawyer.

The offices of the PDC occupy one room at Carrera 8, No. 11-92, in Bogota. An information section is maintained there by Perez Anzola for all interested prospective members. The PDC has issued a leaflet explaining the reasons for which it was organized as well as outlining the Party program. The latter includes lessening the bureaucracy in government, revaluation of the peso, equal political rights for women, obligatory vote, protection of national industries, prohibition on the importation of articles which can be produced in the country, and increased immigration. The most radical point in the PDC program calls for a National Congress composed of representatives of cooperatives and syndicates, rather than of politicians elected on a geographical basis.
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5. At present the PDC has a very small following. The leaders state that it will take several years before the Party is sufficiently strong to take an active part in Colombian politics, and that it will not attempt to participate in the 1949 elections.

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