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COUNTRY Colombia

SUBJECT Control of Arms in Colombia

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.



- Members of the General Staff of the Colombian Army advise that stringent controls are being placed on arms and ammunition imported into Colombia. The Ministry of War has taken over the handling and control of dynamite and other explosives from commercial dealers and is supervising the importation, storing, and delivery to private individuals.
- Because of the lack of mechanized equipment, huge quantities of dynamite and other explosives have been utilized annually in Colombia, particularly in mountain sections for road construction, clearing of farm lands, fishing on the coasts, and extensively in the petroleum industry. High Army officials state that the Army is more concerned with the public obtaining dynamite than fire arms, since the use of the latter has been restricted, but the handling of explosives is familiar to a large portion of the working class.
- Of the 1200 rifles seized by the mobs during the 9 April insurrection, approximately 900 have been returned to the authorities. The 32 automatic rifles which were seized have all been recovered.
- During the past four months the Ministry of War has approved licences for importation of quantities of small arms, mainly of .38 caliber revolvers for the various police units. The use of rifles, which have been used by the police, is to be restricted to the Army.

This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 13 October 1977 from the Director of the CIA and the Archivist of the Department of State. Next Review Date: 2003

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NO CHANGE in Class.

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Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C

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