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Eigil X Hansen 11/20/2003 07:32:24 AM From DB/Inbox: Eigil X Hansen

Cable Text:

UNCLAS MANAGUA 03492

CXMANA:

ACTION: POL

INFO: MLO ECON DCM DAO CONS AMB PAS RSO

DISSEMINATION: POL

CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:BCM Moore

DRAFTED: POL:EHANSEN

CLEARED: DCM:PSAXTON POL:CGARCIA DEA:PWELCOME

VZCZCMUI069

RR RUEHC RUEHBH RUEHSJ RUEHTG

DE RUEHMU #3492 3222116

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

R 182116Z NOV 03

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7534

INFO RUEHHH/AMEMBASSY NASSAU 0062

RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 3640

RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 2602

BT

UNCLAS MANAGUA 003492

DEPT FOR INL/LP AND INL/RM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, NU

SUBJECT: SUCCESSFUL NICARAGUAN POLICE DRUG DOG PROGRAM
CONTINUES

1. Summary: Nicaraguan Police Director, Edwin Cordero, used the occasion of the second dog handler graduating class to highlight the achievements of the INL sponsored program. Since its inception, the dog teams have already brought about the detection of 26 kilograms of heroin and 568 kilograms of cocaine as well as lesser amounts of crack and marijuana. The INL contractor has already trained 19 teams and expects to train 19 more. End Summary

2. On November 12, the Ambassador, accompanied by the INL/POLOFF and DEA, attended the graduation ceremony for the second group of dogs/dog handlers from the INL sponsored Nicaraguan Police (NNP) school. Nine dog/handler teams completed the rigorous program and notched several firsts: the first Nicaraguan dog to complete the course (all previous dogs have been INL imports) and the first female dog handler. Additionally, a police lieutenant became the first certified assistant dog trainer. The NNP is working to fully qualify a number of its trainers in order to make the dog program self-sustaining.

3. Since its inception in September of 2002, the program has graduated 19 dog/handler teams and expects to train 19 more in CY 2004. The Palm Beach based contractor, Consolidated Security International (CSI), has been careful to program the training so that dog teams are not produced faster than the NNP system can absorb them.

4. As NNP Commissioner Edwin Cordero pointed out in his comments to the graduating class, the teams have already found 26 kilograms of heroin (more than half of that was encountered at the INL sponsored inspection station, Penas Blancas, on the Costa Rican border) and 568 kilograms of cocaine. The dogs are a presence at the international airport, the border crossings, the remote Atlantic coast sites of Bluefields and Corn Island, and--most importantly--with the Mobile Inspection Unit (also INL funded) that sets up random vehicle inspection checkpoints throughout Nicaragua.

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5. The training contractor also handles the INL dog programs in Costa Rica, Panama, the Bahamas, and other countries in the Caribbean Basin. He has expressed great satisfaction with the training environment in Nicaragua in general, so much so that he is considering proposing a hemisphere wide dog training school in Nicaragua for all his training. Both the NNP and the Nicaraguan military have offered him sites if he chooses to locate here. The Nicaraguan military is negotiating with him for training dogs for drug, bomb, and mine detection. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has proposed funding additional dog teams (probably through the NNP) for enhanced airport security.

6. Comment: We have been careful not to produce new drug dog teams faster than the NNP system can absorb them. Among other requirements, the contractor has insisted that the NNP provide increased infrastructure (e.g., dog kennels, transport) as each programmed class comes on line. At the same time, we are making provisions for self-sustainment, including training the trainers for future classes and, possibly, helping the NNP to breed its own search dogs.

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End Cable Text

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