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Ramirez

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DATE : 14 APR 61

ROUTING			
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TO : BELL
 FROM : JMWAVE
 ACTION : BELL 15
 INFO : DOP 2, COP, ADOP/A, DPD 2, FI/D 4, WH, BELL S/C

APR 14 2049Z 61

ROUTINE

IN 3437

BELL CITE WAVE 5647

JMZIP ZRPERUSAL

11-3437

REF A. BELL 1184

HB. WAVE 3593 *(CINATIC)*

1. RICARDO RODRIGUEZ RAMIREZ, "MEREJO" OF ESCAMBRAY FAME AND FORMER LIEUTENANT OF OSVALDO RAMIREZ, ARRIVED IN WAVE ARE 6 APR ACCOMPANIED BY WIFE, JUAN CONSUEGRA VALDES, AND THREE FISHERMEN.
2. PRELIMINARY DEBRIEFING OF "MEREJO" INDICATES THAT HE WAS ABLE TO DO VERY LITTLE DURING THE ESCAMBRAY FIGHTING, MOST OF HIS TIME BEING SPENT IN AVOIDING THE MILITIA WHILE TRYING TO RECEIVE AIR DROPS WHICH NEVER MATERIALIZED. MEREJOS TOTAL TIME AS AN INSURGENT IN THE ESCAMBRAY FRONT TOTALED ABOUT THREE MONTHS. HIS AREA OF OPS WAS CONFINED MAINLY TO THE SIERRA DE SANCTI SPIRITUS AND AROUND THE TOWNS OF SANCTI SPIRITUS AND JATIBONICO.
3. "MEREJO" WENT TO THE HILLS IN THE LATTER PART OF DECEMBER 60 ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF AMDIP/3 WHO AT THIS TIME WAS TRYING TO ORGANIZE AND SUPPLY THE INSURGENTS IN THE ESCAMBRAY AREA. BY 1 JANUARY 61 MEREJO WITH [] LT [] AND

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OSVALDO RAMIREZ WERE ABLE TO GATHER A FORCE OF ABOUT FIVE TO SIX HUNDRED MEN IN THE SAN AMBROSIO AREA OF WHICH ONLY ABOUT ONE HUNDRED WERE ARMED. THIS FORCE WAS MOBILIZED ON THE BASIS OF INFORMATION FROM AMDIP/3 WHO SAID THAT THEY WOULD RECEIVE AN AIR DROP ON 6 JAN. THE DROP NEVER CAME AND DUE TO THE ACTIVITY OF THE INSURGENTS IN THE AREA OF THE DZ THE GOC BROUGHT IN A FORCE OF ABOUT 30,000 MILITIA IN A PERIOD OF ABOUT FOUR DAYS WHICH FORCED THE REBELS TO DISPERSE. IN MEREJO'S OPINION THIS WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST SETBACKS OF THE ENTIRE ESCAMBRAY FIGHTING AND WAS A MAJOR CAUSE OF THE FINAL COLLAPSE OF THE ESCAMBRAY FRONT.

4. ON 8 JAN MEREJO AND OSVALDO RAMIREZ WERE FORCED TO DIVIDE THEIR DWINDLING FORCES IN ORDER TO BREAK OUT OF A THREATENED ENCIRCLEMENT BY THE MILITIAL. AFTER SEPARATING FROM OSVALDO, MEREJO AND HIS MEN WERE CONTINUALLY ON THE RUN FROM 9 JAN UNTIL 8 FEB AT WHICH TIME HE HAD A SHORT RESPITE TO TAKE THE AIR DROP OF PARA 1 A, REF A. IN ADDITION TO INFORMATION ABOUT THE DROP IN REF B MEREJO SAID THEY HEARD THE PLANE AT THE APPOINTED TIME BUT WERE NOT ABLE TO SEE IT BECAUSE OF THE CLOUDS WHICH COVERED THE DZ AREA. THE PLANE PASSED OVER AND NOTHING WAS DROPPED.

ALTHOUGH THE DZ WAS LIGHTED WITH THE PROPER SIGNAL, A CROSS OF SEVEN LIGHTS. MEREJO ASSUMED THAT THE PLANE HAD NOT DROPPED AND WOULD COME BACK THE FOLLOWING NIGHT. HOWEVER, NEXT DAY HE HEARD THAT A LARGE DROP HAD BEEN MADE ON THE TOWN OF SANTA LUCIA SOME 12 KMS AWAY FROM THE DZ AND THAT THE MILITIA RECOVERED EVERYTHING.

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5. DUE TO THE LARGE AMOUNT OF MATERIAL DROPPED THE GOC APPARENTLY ASSUMED THAT IT WAS INTENDED FOR A LARGE FORCE OF INSURGENTS AND IMMEDIATELY POURED MILITIA INTO THE AREA TO FERRET THEM OUT. MEREJO HAD TO DISPERSE HIS REMAINING FORCE, ABOUT 200 MEN OF WHICH ONLY 26 WERE ARMED, IN ORDER TO BREAK OUT OF THE ENCIRCLEMENT. MEREJO WITH ELEVEN MEN TRIED TO MAKE HIS WAY TO CAMAGUAY. ON THE WAY HE STOPPED TO GET FOOD AND CLOTHING IN THE HOUSE OF A FRIEND [REDACTED] NEAR SANCTI SPIRITUS. WHILE THEY WERE THERE THE HOUSE WAS RAIDED BY THE LOCAL CHIEF OF THE G-2, BERNARDO ARIAS, AND SEVEN MILITIA MEN. IN THE ENSUING FIGHT MEREJO AND HIS MEN KILLED ARIAS, HIS BODY-GUARD AND TWO MILITIA MEN. THE REST OF THE MILITIA MEN RAN AWAY AND MEREJO AND HIS GROUP ESCAPED WITH ONLY ONE MAN WOUNDED.

6. AFTER KILLING ARIAS MEREJO MADE HIS WAY TO LAS TOSAS HOPING THAT THE AREA WOULD HAVE COOLED OFF AND THAT HE COULD

ESTABLISH HIMSELF THERE AND BEGIN OPERATIONS AGAIN. A FRIENDLY FARMER TOLD HIM THAT A SPECIAL MILITIA FORCE NUMBERING ABOUT 3000 MEN WAS ROAMING LAS TOSAS LOOKING FOR MEREJO PERSONALLY. MEREJO DECIDED HE WOULD HAVE TO GIVE UP THE FIGHT IN ESCAMBRAY AND LEAVE THE AREA ENTIRELY. HE CONTACTED [REDACTED] AN AMDIP/3 ORGANIZER IN CAIBAGUAN WITH WHOM MEREJO'S WIFE WAS HIDING, AND ASKED HIM TO HELP HIM ESCAPE. [REDACTED] PROVIDED TWO AUTOMOBILES WHICH ENABLED MEREJO, HIS WIFE AND EIGHT OF HIS MEN TO GET TO HAVA WHERE THEY WERE HIDDEN BY THE AMDIP/3 HAVA ORGANIZATION WHICH WAS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] MEREJO STAYED IN HAVA UNTIL ABOUT 22 MAR UNTIL HE

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WAS MOVED TO LA ISBELA ON THE NORTH COAST OF LAS VILLAS WHERE HE WAS PUT IN THE HANDS OF FISHERMEN WHO WERE TO EFFECT HIS RECEPTION WITH A BOAT FROM PBPRIME.

7. MEREJO AND HIS WIFE STAYED WITH THE FISHERMEN FOR ABOUT 14 DAYS, BEING SHIFTED FROM BOAT TO BOAT, WHILE TRYING TO MAKE RECEPTIONS WITH BOATS FROM PBPRIME. CONTACT WITH THE BOAT FROM PBPRIME WAS PREVENTED EACH TIME BY THE PRESENCE OF A GOC PATROL CRAFT WHICH HUNG AROUND THE RECEPTION AREA AT CAYO DUTTON. (WAVE COMMENT: MEREJO WAS TO BE EXFILTRATED VIA OPS CARROT, TURNIP, RUTABAGA AND BOWLINE ALL OF WHICH FAILED BECAUSE OF

NO RECEPTION.) MEREJO AND THE FISHERMEN BELIEVED THAT THE GOC PATROL CRAFT WAS AWARE THAT A RECEPTION IN THE DUTTON AREA WAS TO TAKE PLACE.

8. WHEN THE DUTTON AREA BECAME TOO HOT THEY MOVED TO THE AREA OF CAYO JUTIA AND TRIED TO SET UP A RECEPTION AT THIS POINT (WAVE COMMENT: DISCUSSION OF THE DIFFICULTIES WITH RECEPTION AT CAYO DUTTON AND ATTEMPTS TO ARRANGE RECEPTION AT JUTIA ARE REFLECTED IN THE AMDIP/3 W/T TRAFFIC PASSED TO WAVE.)

9. ON 25 MARCH WORD WAS RECEIVED BY COURIER FROM HAVA THAT AMDIP/3'S RADIO IN HAVA HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY THE GOC ALONG WITH THE FILES AND THAT THREE OF THE FISHERMEN'S NAMES HAD BEEN COMPROMISED. IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE FISHERMEN WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE CUBA TO AVOID ARREST. ON 4 APR MEREJO, HIS WIFE AND CONSUEGRA LEFT CUBA WITH THE FISHERMEN IN ONE OF THEIR BOATS ARRIVING IN THE WAVE AREA ON 6 APR.

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13. FAILURE OF THE RECEPTION AT CAYO DUTTON APPRARS TO
BE A DEFINITE INDICATION THAT THE GOC HAS BEEN READING THE
ANDIP/3 V/T TRAFFIC TO HAVA ALL ALONG AND IS A PRIME EXAMPLE
OF HOW AN INSECURE INDIGENOUS COMMO NET CAN JEOPARDIZE AND BLOW
CENTER OPS WHICH ARE OTHERWISE SECURELY MOUNTED.

END OF MESSAGE

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