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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

45



AUG 22 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Visit to Colombia and Honduras, August 19-20, 2003

I have just returned from Colombia and Honduras—both steadfast friends and allies in the Global War on Terror.

COLOMBIA

- I met with President Uribe and his national security team. The President is impressive. I believe he has the vision, drive, determination and personal courage to win his nation's war with the narco-terrorists. (According to (b)(1), there have been 15 credible assassination attempts against him). He has made significant progress in a year, and is preparing for the second stage of the war: bringing the battle to the terrorists by going after the guerrilla leaders in their jungle sanctuaries. I assured him we will do all we can to help him succeed.
- The Colombian side broke into applause when I informed them of your decision to resume the Air Bridge Denial program. President Uribe said, "Tell President Bush we have the determination to defeat terror and drugs. Terrorism is not a problem to be reduced—it is a problem to be defeated. I don't believe in appeasement. We have a joint cause to destroy terror and drugs."
- As you know, in Colombia, terror and drugs are intertwined—the terrorists, drug traffickers and hostage-takers are part and parcel of the same problem. The Colombian military expressed legitimate frustration that so much of our military assistance has been tied up with conditions stipulating that it be used for "counter-drug" but not "counter-terrorism" efforts. They need greater flexibility in how they use our assistance. Congress gave us some added flexibility last year—we need to make sure we are using it fully, and then go to Congress and make the case for more flexibility. Uribe's war to defeat terrorism is effective. He needs and merits our support.
- Uribe has strong suspicions that Venezuela is helping FARC guerrillas. At last week's inauguration of Paraguay's president, both Hugo Chavez and Fidel Castro assured Uribe separately that Venezuela was not in collusion with the FARC. Uribe is not reassured!

Classified by: Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense

Reason: 1.4(d)
Declassify: 22 Aug 2013

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- I stressed the importance of concluding an Article 98 agreement on the International Criminal Court (intending, by implication, to discourage any expectation of a waiver of penalties in our law). President Uribe said he shares our concern about politicized prosecutions. He said they have problems with their Congress and Constitutional Court, but that they are determined to reach an agreement with us.

HONDURAS

- We had excellent meetings with President Maduro and Minister of Defense Breve. Honduras was the first country in the Hemisphere to complete ratification of an Article 98 agreement, and they have committed forces to Iraq. They now have a battalion of infantry and military police on their way to join Coalition forces—370 soldiers, each of whom volunteered to serve in Iraq. It is a significant commitment for a poor nation with just 8,000 soldiers under arms. The President said, "It is a matter of principle to send our troops to Iraq. The U.S. has been our friend in good times and bad. We did it out of conviction."
- He noted that Honduras has a big stake in a Central American Free Trade Agreement. He made the wise observation that it was especially important for small nations like his that want to benefit from global trade to also contribute to global stability and security. "If we are to be a part of the world community economically, we need to participate in the world," he said.
- He also used the phrase "effective sovereignty" in discussing the need for governments in the Hemisphere to restore their authority over ungoverned areas—a phrase that comes straight out of your National Security Strategy. The idea is catching on. He has championed campaign finance reform to keep drug money out of politics, saying, "We don't want to end up like Colombia."

Colombia and Honduras are solid and reliable allies, with impressive presidents who are willing to take risks to help win the global war on terror.

Respectfully,



cc: Vice President
Secretary of State (by hand)
White House Chief of Staff
Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Director of Central Intelligence

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
EF-6266

23 I-03/010302
July 21, 2003

18/15

TO: Gen. Myers
Doug Feith

FROM: Donald Rumsfeld *DR*

SUBJECT: Hostages in Colombia

What should we do about the DoD contract hostages in Colombia?

I would appreciate it if the two of you would come back to me with a proposal.

Thanks.

Attach.

6/16/03 SecDef memo and 7/18/03 CJCS response re: Message from General Hill

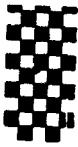
DHR:dh
072103-2

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Please respond by 8/16/03

✓ 8/18

Sir,
Response attached.
Coordinated with
DASD NHA and DASD CN
8/13/03.
Vr / CDR Nosenzo
8/15

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

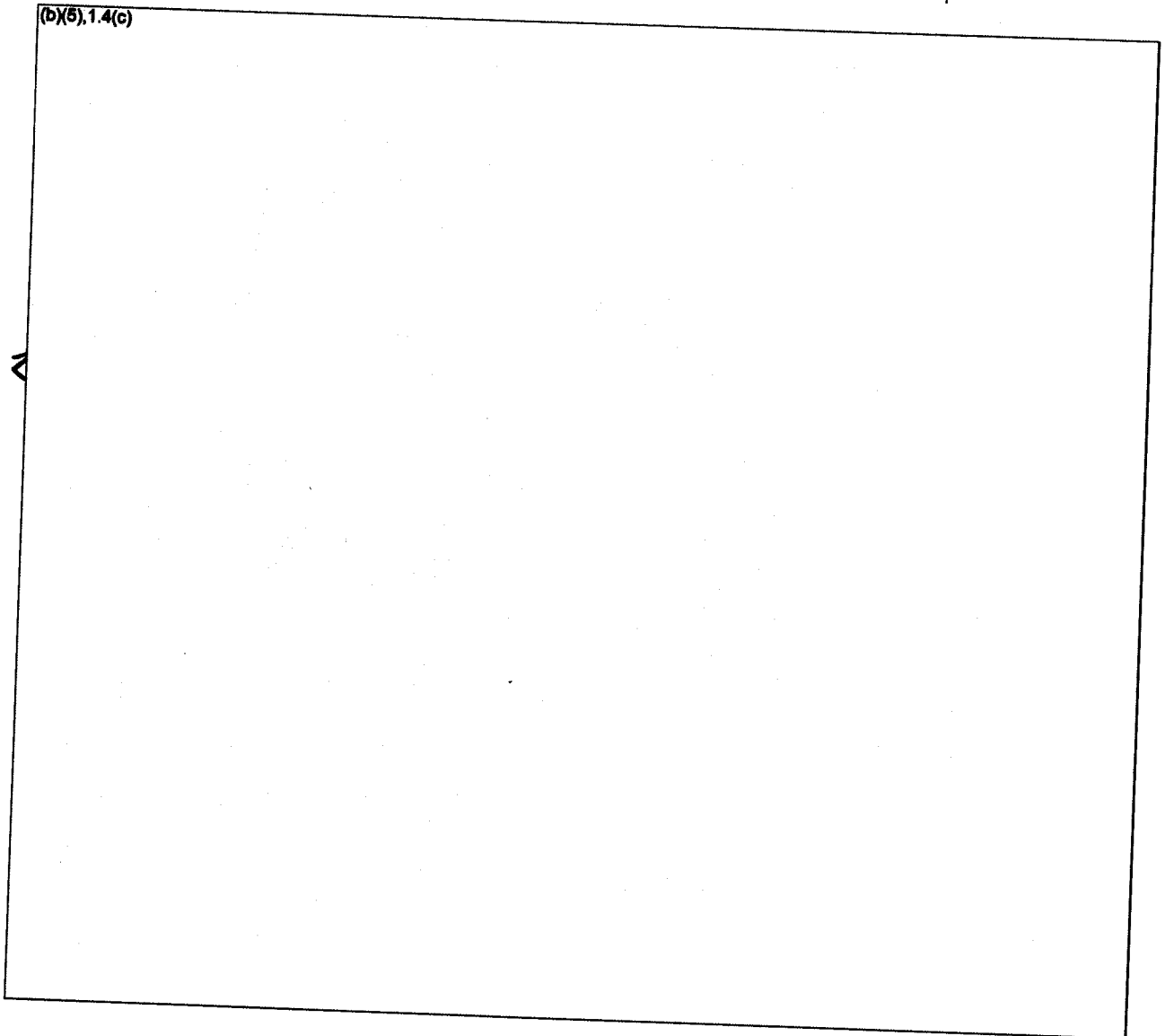
From: Donald Rumsfeld

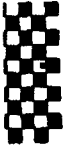
Date: August 21, 2003

Subject: Visit to Colombia and Honduras

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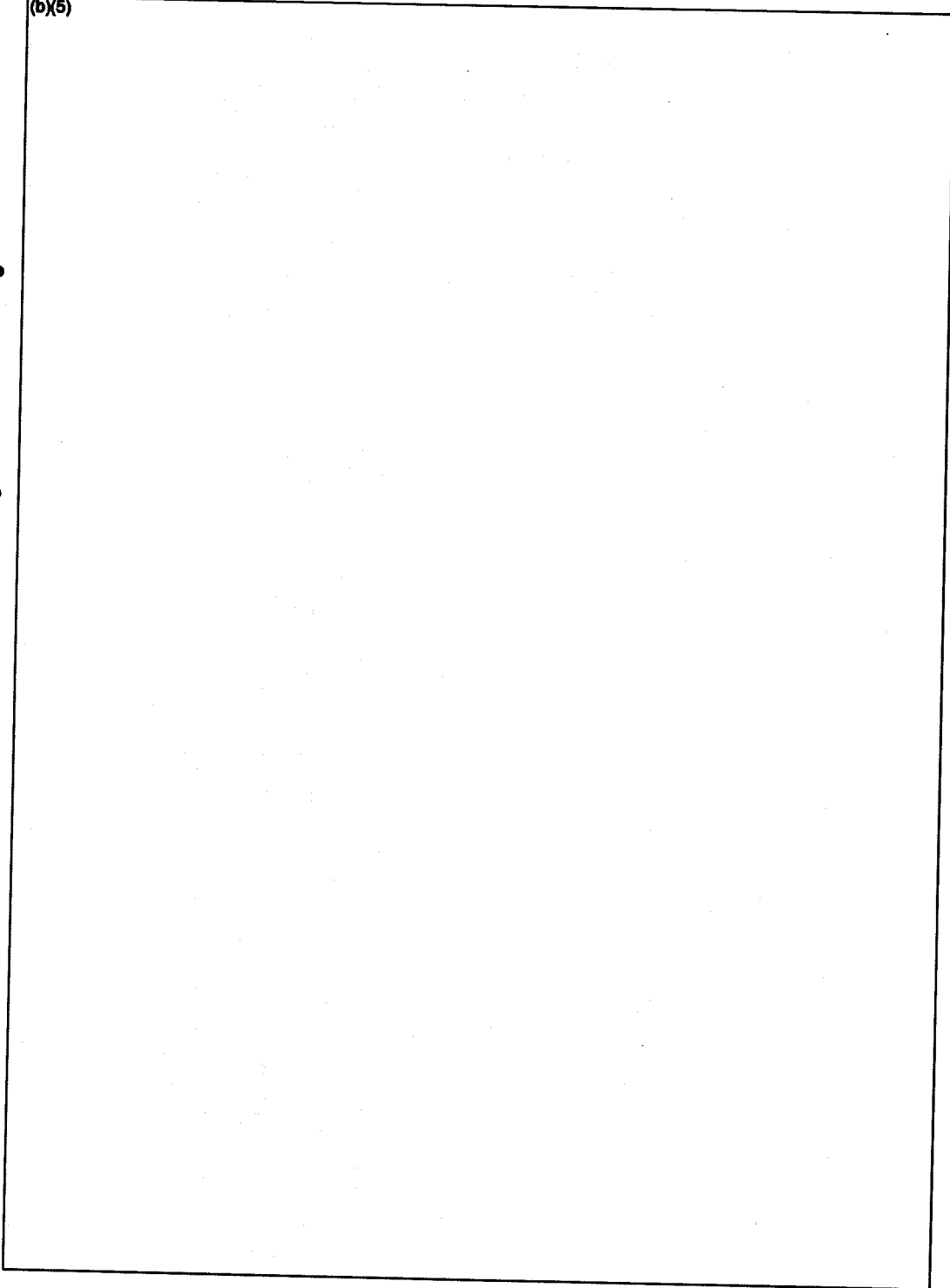
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