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John Neagle

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by John Neagle

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Top leaders of the Medellin drug trafficking ring are believed to be Pablo Escobar, Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha and the brothers Jorge, Fabio and Juan David Ochoa Vasquez. Escobar, who reportedly controls a fortune in excess of $3 billion, ranks among Fortune Magazine's list of the world's 20 richest men. In Cali, a rival organization is led by Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela and Hernan Santacruz Londono, according to unidentified authorities cited by AP. The Medellin and Cali groups are reported to be warring over the New York City drug market. About 200 members of the two organizations have been reported killed in the past 18 months and numerous properties in Medellin and Cali have been bombed or riddled with automatic weapons fire. Gen. Jaime Ruiz Barrera, who spent two years as military commander of Medellin, told AP that profits from New York drug sales are estimated at $35 billion a year. The general was recently sent to Washington as military attache in part to protect him from assassins hired by drug ring leaders. Assassinations attributed to the Colombian drug trafficking organizations are not limited to Colombia, ranging from Hungary to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Colombian drug traffickers are said to have financed the training of 2,000 hired assassins (sicarios) in association with rightist extremist groups. Killings and death threats affecting numerous journalists and politicians have been attributed to drug ring assassins. Judge Antonio Morales, president of the national judicial employees' association, was cited by AP as saying that killers hired by the drug traffickers are blamed for the deaths of a justice minister, an attorney general and 220 judges and judicial aides since 1981. On Aug. 21, NBC broadcast video tape reportedly supplied by Colombian drug traffickers showing training of assassins somewhere in Colombia. NBC said that the tape was meant to warn the Colombian government of what could be expected if it carries out its program against the drug trade. In an apparent error of judgment or logistics, the drug traffickers permitted authorities to confirm the identity of former Israeli and South African soldiers acting as trainers. NBC reported that the faces of two of these supposed foreign advisers and the voice (speaking Hebrew) of a third were decipherable on the video. (Basic data from AP, Notimex, 08/21/89)

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