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Department of State

EXCISE

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TELEGRAM

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C O N F I D E N T I A L L I N A 13070

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E.O. 12356: OADR
SUBJECT: TERRORISM IN PERU; ANALYSIS BY FIVE
PROFESSIONAL OBSERVERS

2. (U) IN ATTENDANCE AT A PRIVATE LUNCH WITH PAD, CAO AND ACAD/X NOVEMBER 9 WERE FEDERICO VELARDE, DIRECTOR OF LEFTIST THINK-TANK DESCO; DIEGO GARCIA SAYAN, LEADING HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND MEMBER OF GARCIA'S NOW DEFUNCT PEACE COMMISSION; ALBERTO SIESECHE, LEADING SCIENTIST, MEMBER OF GARCIA'S PEACE COMMISSION, FORMER INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FOR THE SENATE, AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF THE LIMA BINATIONAL CENTER; MARIANO VEGA CENTENO, DEAN OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, AND MISER LUCIANO METZINGER, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PERU, A CONSERVATIVE WHO REJECTS LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND WHO HAS BEEN INCLUDED WITH FORMER LATIN AMERICAN PRESIDENTS AS AN INVITEE TO THE UPCOMING MEETING IN MENDOZA, ARGENTINA, ON VIOLENCE AND DEMOCRACY.

3. (U) IT BEARS MENTION THAT ALL FIVE ARE MEMBERS OF THE 35-MEMBER GROUP CODEP, A PRIVATE GROUP FORMED TO PROMOTE PEACE AND CIVIL RIGHTS. THIS GROUP WAS FORMED IN 1984 AND TRIED VALENTLY TO GET ALL FOUR MAJOR PRESIDENTIAL CONTENDERS TO AGREE ON A STRATEGY FOR COUNTERING TERRORISM BEFORE OPT BEFORE THE ELECTIONS IN ORDER TO DE-POLITICIZE THE ISSUE. MEMBERS OF CODEP COME FROM ALL PARTIES AND HAVE THUS FAR MANAGED TO REMAIN APOLITICAL.

5. (U) ACCORDING TO GARCIA SAYAN, DATA ON DISAPPEARANCES IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE HAYACUCHO AREA IN THE PAST THREE MONTHS SHOW THAT THEY ARE RISING DRAMATICALLY, TO LEVELS REACHED DURING THE BELLAUROS GOVERNMENT. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT EVERY SINGLE PERSON STILL IN HAYACUCHO PAYS A REGULAR FEE TO SENEDRO LUMINOSO. ANOTHER MAJOR SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR SENEDRO IS THE DRUG TRAFFIC. ACCORDING TO VELARDE, SENEDRO HAS OFFERED PROTECTION TO CULTIVATORS FROM SCAVENGERS AND RAIDERS. THIS HAS THE EFFECT OF STABILIZING THE SUPPLY OF COCA PURCHASED BY THE COLOMBIANS, AND IT IS REPORTED THAT THE COLOMBIANS ARE PAYING DOLS 5,000 TO \$L FOR EVERY PLOTLLOAD OF DRUGS THEY FLY OUT.

6. (U) RECENT MRTA ACTIVITIES IN THE UPPER HUALLOSA VALLEY WERE THE SUBJECT OF EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION. IT IS THE GROUP'S BELIEF THAT THIS ACTIVITY, FOLLOWING AS IT DOES SEVERAL RECENT SEVERE BLOWS TO THE GROUP (ARRESTS AND RAIDS ON THEIR SAFE HOUSES), WAS INTENDED AS A SHOW OF FORCE AND NOT AS THE FIRST STEP IN A MOVE TO "OCCUPY" THE AREA. THEY BELIEVE THE 80-MAN ARMED COLUMN WILL DISBAND, NOW THAT THEY HAVE CAPTURED A SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY OF ARMS FROM THE POLICE. SINCE POLICE ARMS IN PERU ARE STANDARD ISSUE, THIS CAPTURE MEANS THAT MRTA CAN NOW REPLENISH ITS AMMUNITION STORES SIMPLY BY RAIDING ANY POLICE HEADQUARTERS IN THE COUNTRY.

7. (U) THIS RECENT ACTION BY MRTA, IN VELARDE'S OPINION, WILL PROBABLY LEAD TO AN OFFENSIVE BY \$L. WHEN ASKED WHY \$L HAD NOT MOUNTED ANY ACTION ON OR NEAR THE JUNE ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRISON TAKEOVERS, SIESECHE CAUTIONED THAT HE SHOULD NOT JUDGE THEIR ACTIVITY BY CONVENTIONAL STANDARDS. BECAUSE THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED OF THEIR ULTIMATE SUPREMACY, THERE IS NO SENSE OF URGENCY TO THEIR ACTIVITIES. WHAT WOULD TRADITIONALLY BE SEEN AS LOSS OF MOMENTUM OR LACK OF PROGRESS IS NOT VIEWED AS SUCH BY \$L. VEGA CENTENO EMPHASIZED THAT \$L IS FANATICAL -- THEY ARE TRUE BELIEVERS IN THEIR CAUSE. THEIR LEADER, COMPAGNATE GONZALO, HAS BECOME PRESIDENTE SENCILLO, AND THEY VIEW HIM AS LEADER OF A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT WHICH SIMPLY HAS NOT YET COME TO POWER.

8. (U) IN DISCUSSIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF \$L AND MRTA, VELARDE NOTED THAT THE APPEAL OF BOTH GROUPS WAS IRREVOCABLY LINKED TO THE SPANISH COLONIAL HERITAGE AND THE MOTHER CULTURE'S REVERENCE FOR MARTYRDOM. THERE IS NO GREATER GLORY THAN DEATH IN FIGHTING NOBLY FOR A CAUSE. AS EVIDENCE OF THIS, VELARDE CITED COMMENTS BY PRISONERS INTERVIEWED AT EL FRONTON ONE YEAR BEFORE THE TAKEOVERS AND SUBSEQUENT DEATHS. THEY SAID THEY WOULD DIE IN EL FRONTON RATHER THAN BE MOVED TO A NEW PRISON. WHEN ASKED WHY THEY WOULD DIE OVER SUCH A MINOR POINT, THEY SAID THEY WOULD BE DYING ON "THE FIELD OF BATTLE" AND THEREBY ACHIEVE A GREATER GAIN FOR THE CAUSE THAN THEY COULD BY CONTINUING THEIR LIVES. THIS MENTALITY, SAID VELARDE, IS WHAT MAKES TERRORISM IN PERU ATTRACTIVE TO THE EDUCATED, NOT THE PEASANTS. THE GROUP SECONDED HIS OPINION THAT NEITHER MRTA NOR \$L ENJOYS A SOCIAL BASE. BUT RATHER THAT BOTH GROUPS IMPOSE THEIR STRONGS ON PEASANT COMMUNITIES. IN THE CASE OF SENEDRO LUMINOSO VIOLENCE IS THE PRIMARY WEAPON. YOU ACQUIESCE, YOU MOVE OR YOU DIE.

9. (U) MRTA HAS CULTIVATED A SORT OF BOBBI-HOOD IMAGE

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TRYING TO CONTRAST WITH THE BRUTALITY OF THE POLICE, THE
MILITARY AND SENATORS. AT LEAST, SAY POLICE FROM THESE
COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED. THE
TERRORISTS GIVE YOU A CHANCE, WHICH IS MORE THAN THE
MILITARY DOES WHEN THEY ARRIVE IN ONE OF THESE
COMMUNITIES. THIS SUBSTANTIATES INFORMATION WHICH HAS
REACHED US FROM CHURCH SOURCES.

B1

11. (C) CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT FROM THE PUBLIC SCENE
HERE IS MASSIVE DISPLAY OF OUTCRY AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS
ABUSES BY EITHER THE TERRORISTS OR THE GOVERNMENT, THE
GROUP LAMENTED. READERSHIP STUDIES CONDUCTED BY THE
LEADING CIRCULATION DAILY "OJO" SHOW THAT PERUVIANS DO
NOT WANT TO HAVE GRAPHIC DETAILS OF TERRORISM SPLASHED
ACROSS THE FRONT PAGE -- VIOLENCE IS FINE, AS LONG AS IT
IS IMPERSONAL AND DISMEMBERED, BUT TERRORISM VIOLENCE IS
POTENTIALLY THREATENING TO EACH CITIZEN AND THEREFORE
UNDESIRABLE.

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MAJOR PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION WAS IN 1965, THE LAST
THEY NOTED.

12. (M) ACCORDING TO GARCIA SAYAN, IDEAS EXPRESSED AT
A RECENT CLOSED SESSION OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN
REPRESENTATIVES FROM PERU, COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR ON
DEALING WITH TERRORISM RANGED FROM THE "UTOPIAN AND
INGENUOUS" HANDING OUT OF CANDIES TO CHILDREN IN
INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES TO INCREASING LEVELS OF
REPRESSION AS A NECESSARY TRADE-OFF TO ASSURE PUBLIC
SAFETY.

13. (M) IN DISCUSSING WHAT KIND OF POSITIVE ROLE USIS
COULD PLAY IN PROGRAMMING ON THE TERRORISM ISSUE, VEGA
CENTENO SAID HE BELIEVED THAT A NEUTRAL CATALYST, SUCH
AS A SPEAKER ON VIOLENCE AS A PHENOMENON, WOULD ELICIT
CANDOR FROM PARTICIPANTS IN WHAT THEY WOULD DEEM A
NON-THREATENING ENVIRONMENT. THEY WERE UNANIMOUS IN THE
OPINION THAT NO ONE FROM THE OUTSIDE CAN TELL PERUVIANS
ANYTHING ABOUT THEIR OWN TERRORISM PROBLEM THAT THEY
DON'T ALREADY KNOW. AND SINCE SL HAS NO LINKS WITH
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, ANALYSIS OF IT AS A MULTI-
NATIONAL PROBLEM WOULD NOT BE USEFUL. ON THE CONTRARY,
WHAT IS NEEDED HERE IS AN EMPHASIS ON DIAGNOSIS, SAID
GIESECKE. THEY HAVE THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE, BUT SO
FAR THEY HAVEN'T BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL AT FITTING THEM
TOGETHER.

14. (M) POST OPINION IS THAT PROGRAMS IN CONFLICT
RESOLUTION WOULD BE MOST USEFUL. THEY SHOULD EMPHASIZE
THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS OF THE
PROVIDE PERUVIANS WITH A PATTERNS TO THEIR PROBLEM
LOVERIDGE

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