



EXCISE

153

# Department of State DECLASSIFIED TELEGRAM

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AN: DB50742-0536

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PAGE 01 LIMA 11850 172134Z  
ACTION MCT-04

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 AID-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00  
NSCE-00 ARA-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 SY-06 L-03 TRSE-00  
PM-10 PA-01 INRE-00 CA-02 A-02 USSS-00 SYE-00  
USIE-00 FBIE-00 FAIM-01 SLPD-01 /041 W  
-----067661 172203Z /62-R

P 172134Z OCT 85  
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7322  
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
USAFSO HOWARD AFB PN  
DIA WASHDC

CONFIDENTIAL LIMA 11850

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, PTER, SHUM, PE  
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON LURIGANCHO KILLINGS

REFS: (A) LIMA 11485, (B) LIMA 11467

1. (U) THE OCTOBER 4 DEATHS OF 30 SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) INMATES IN LIMA'S LURIGANCHO PRISON (REF A) HAVE RECEIVED INTENSE SCRUTINY FROM THE MEDIA AND CONGRESS. JUSTICE MINISTER LUIS GONZALES POSADA LED THE GOP'S DEFENSE OF ITS HANDLING OF THE INCIDENT, APPEARING IN CONGRESS ON OCTOBER 10, AND GRANTING SEVERAL INTERVIEWS TO THE PRESS.

2. (U) BASIC ELEMENTS OF GOP POSITION ON LURIGANCHO KILLINGS ARE:

(A) SL INMATES HAD BEEN ARMING THEMSELVES SURREPTITIOUSLY  
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PAGE 02 LIMA 11850 172134Z  
AND WERE PLANNING AN ESCAPE. LOCAL MEDIA HAS GIVEN.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED by Pugh DATE OCT 3 1988  
( ) RELEASE ( ) DECLASSIFY  
(X) EXCISE (X) DECLASSIFY in PART  
( ) DENY ( ) Non-responsive info.  
FOI EO or PA exemptions (b)(1)  
( ) CLASSIFY as \_\_\_\_\_ TP authority to: \_\_\_\_\_, OADR  
( ) DOWNGRADE TS to ( ) S or ( ) C, OADR

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BROAD COVERAGE TO CAPTURED SL WEAPONS AND DOCUMENTS THAT  
LEND CREDENCE TO GOP CLAIM.

(B) VAST MAJORITY OF DEATHS (26 OF 30) WERE CAUSED BY  
FIRE, WHICH WAS STARTED BY SL INMATES. TESTIMONY OF  
OFFICIALS PRESENT AT THE SL CELL BLOCK, AND TELEVISION  
FOOTAGE, THUS FAR SUPPORT THIS CLAIM. FURTHERMORE,  
AUTOPSIES OF FIVE VICTIMS REPORTEDLY REVEALED NO  
EVIDENCE OF BULLET WOUNDS. (HOWEVER, THE BODIES OF  
TEN UNIDENTIFIED PRISONERS BURIED OCTOBER 10 HAVE BEEN  
ORDERED EXHUMED AND MAY UNDERGO ADDITIONAL EXAMINATION.)  
IN ADDITION, ONE TELEVISION STATION BROADCAST AN  
INTERVIEW ON OCTOBER 15 WITH A SUPPOSED SL INMATE WHO  
CONFIRMED THAT SL HAD STARTED THE FIRE (HOWEVER, HE  
ALSO CLAIMED THAT WHEN THE POLICE ENTERED THE CELL BLOCK,  
THEY "SHOT TO KILL").

(C) CLAIMS TO THE CONTRARY NOTWITHSTANDING, APPROPRIATE  
GOP OFFICIALS WITNESSED THE ATTACK ON THE CELL BLOCK,  
INCLUDING THE PRISON DIRECTOR, A JUDGE, AND A PROSECUTOR  
(FISCAL).

3. (C) COMMENT: COMING CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF THE  
GARAGAY SQUATTER EVICTION (REF B) AND TWO RECENT  
PROVEN CASES OF MILITARY ATROCITIES, THE LURIGANCHO  
DEATHS LED MANY PERUVIANS TO SUSPECT THE WORST  
INITIALLY. SEVERAL UNITED LEFT (IU) POLITICIANS AND THE  
MARXIST DAILY "EL DIARIO" SOUGHT TO PLAY ON THIS  
REACTION AND TO SEEK MAXIMUM POLITICAL ADVANTAGE ON THE  
KILLINGS. NEVERTHELESS, AT THIS TIME IT APPEARS THAT  
GOP HAS BEEN ABLE TO DEFEND ITS ACTIONS CONVINCINGLY.  
HOWEVER,

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PAGE 03

LIMA 11850 172134Z

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