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Department of State

EXCISE TELEGRAM

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RELEASE DECLASSIFY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 1831
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TS authority to: _____
 CLASSIFY as _____, OADR
 DOWNGRADE TS to S or C, OADR

E.O. 12356: DECL: 2/13/90
TAGS: PTER, PGOV, ASEC, PE
SUBJ: MILITARY CANCELS TOWN MEETING IN EMERGENCY ZONE

1. CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.

2. GENERAL ADRIAN HUAMAN, COMMANDER OF PERU'S POLITICAL/MILITARY EMERGENCY ZONE, DENIED PERMISSION FOR AN OPEN TOWN MEETING IN THE HIGHLAND CAPITAL OF AYACUCHO FEBRUARY 11, CITING POWERS GIVEN HIM CONSTITUTIONALLY BY STATE OF EMERGENCY NOW IN FORCE IN SEVERAL MOUNTAIN PROVINCES. TO REINFORCE THE MEETING'S CANCELLATION, GENERAL HUAMAN CORDONED OFF DOWNTOWN AYACUCHO MORNING OF FEBRUARY 11 USING ARMORED CARS AND SMALL TANKS AS PATROL VEHICLES. TOWN MEETING ("CABILDO ABIERTO") HAD BEEN IN WORKS SINCE LAST YEAR WHEN PERU'S ATTORNEY GENERAL MIGUEL CAYERO CALLED FOR DIALOGUE WITH SENDERO LUMINOSO. THEN CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF AYACUCHO LEONOR ZAMORA PICKED UP CAYERO'S PROPOSAL AND MADE IT PART OF HER PLATFORM. WHEN THE MARXIST LEFT FAILED TO FIELD A CANDIDATE IN AYACUCHO, ZAMORA, WHO IS

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MEMBER OF SPLINTER "PADIN" PARTY, WON IN A CLEAR

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REPUDIATION OF GOVERNING PARTY (ACCION POPULAR). AFTER ONE POSTPONEMENT, THE OPEN TOWN MEETING WAS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 11. PUBLICITY FOR EVENT WAS WIDESPREAD, WITH OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES JUMPING ON BANDWAGON. STRONGEST SUPPORTERS OF MEETING WERE JAVIER DIEZ CANSECO, A LEADING MARXIST POLITICIAN AND A HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE, AND MIGUEL MUFARECH, ERRATIC LEADER OF MAYOR ZAMORA'S SPLINTER PARTY PADIN (PARTY OF NATIONAL INTEGRATION). OPEN TOWN MEETINGS ARE A COMMON FEATURE IN PERU'S SMALLER CITIES, AND CONSIST OF QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSIONS BETWEEN TOWNSPEOPLE AND THEIR LEADERS. INVITATION TO TERRORISTS, HOWEVER, MADE THIS TOWN MEETING OUT OF ORDINARY, AND, RENDERED IT REALISTICALLY, UNLIKELY TO TAKE PLACE. AS DATE APPROACHED, THOUGH, MEETING LOOKED MERELY LIKE A MECHANISM FOR TOWNSPEOPLE TO VENT FRUSTRATION OVER PROBLEMS OF TERRORISM AND MILITARY PRESENCE, WITH NO PARTICIPATION BY SENDERO LUMINOSO LIKELY.

3. INSTEAD OF A TOWN MEETING, MAYOR ZAMORA HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON FEBRUARY 11, AT WHICH SHE, MUFARECH, AND DIEZ-CANSECO DENOUNCED HUAMAN'S ACTION. MUFARECH ANNOUNCED THAT AN AYACUCHO TOWN MEETING WOULD OCCUR ANYWAY, OUTSIDE THE EMERGENCY ZONE AND THAT HE WOULD PERSONALLY PAY THE PASSAGE FOR THOSE ATTENDING. HE MENTIONED HUANCAYO AND CUZCO AS POSSIBLE SITES. PRESS CONFERENCE WAS ATTENDED BY LOCAL AND FOREIGN PRESS, WHO HAD CHARTERED A PLANE TO ATTEND THE TOWN MEETING. THE PRESS, THE MAYOR, FIVE COUNCILMEN, MUFARECH, AND DIEZ-CANSECO WERE ALLOWED TO MOVE FREELY IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA. ALL OTHER MOVEMENT WAS RESTRICTED UNTIL THE AFTERNOON. FOLLOWING DAY GENERAL HUAMAN REPORTEDLY ANNOUNCED HE MIGHT

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GRANT PERMISSION FOR A TOWN MEETING SOMETIME IN MARCH, IF HE FELT IT COULD BE CARRIED OUT SAFELY. IN A FOUR-HOUR INTERVIEW WITH LOCAL AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS, HUAMAN ALSO ASKED REPORTERS NOT TO MAGNIFY TERRORISTS' DEEDS BUT RATHER TO STRESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE. HE ASKED FOR COOPERATION FROM ALL QUARTERS IN PACIFICATION OF THE ZONE SO THAT THE CURFEW COULD END AND LIFE RETURN TO NORMAL.

4. SUBSEQUENT REACTION TO CANCELLATION WAS MIXED IN

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PERUVIAN PRESS, BUT NOT NECESSARILY IDEOLOGICALLY
POLARIZED. CENTRIST WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE "CARETAS",
FOR EXAMPLE, CALLED HUAMAN'S DECISION AN "ERROR" WHICH
MIGHT RESULT IN "A MARKED DETERIORATION IN HIS POLITICAL
IMAGE." CENTRIST NEWSWEEKLY "OIGA" ON THE OTHER HAND
CALLED THE IDEA OF THE MEETING ITSELF "ABSURD" AND
"IRRESPONSIBLE" AND PRAISED GENERAL HUAMAN.

5. COMMENT: [

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