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DECAPTIONED

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, PTER, PINR, PE
 SUBJECT: ARMY OFFICERS ON "SHOW OF FORCE;"
 BARRIOS ALTOS AND DEATH SQUADS

REFS: A) LIMA 4558,
 - B) LIMA 4662 AND PREVIOUS

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

SHOW OF FORCE

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2. AN ARMY FIELD-GRADE OFFICER TOLD POLOFF
 APRIL 24 THAT SEVERAL ARMY OFFICERS OF SIMILAR
 RANK HAD MET RECENTLY TO REVIEW THE SITUATION
 FOLLOWING THE RECENT ARMY CHALLENGE TO THE
 CONGRESS AND THE ARMY'S RELATED "SHOW OF FORCE"
 (REFTELS). THE CONSENSUS VIEWS WERE THAT:

-- THE OFFICERS GAVE WIDE SUPPORT TO ARMY
 COMMANDING GENERAL HERMOZA'S STAND AGAINST
 CONGRESS, OSTENSIBLY IN OPPOSITION TO THE

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INVESTIGATION INTO POSSIBLE MILITARY DEATH SQUADS. THE OFFICERS FELT THAT MILITARY MEMBERS SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY FOR "DOING WHAT HAD TO BE DONE IN THE WAR AGAINST THE SUBVERSIVES."

-- SENDING THE TANKS INTO THE STREETS TO DRIVE HOME THAT MESSAGE WAS A REMARKABLY UNWISE AND UNNECESSARY MOVE. THE OFFICERS SAW IT AS HERMOZA PAYING HIMSELF A COMPLIMENT; IT WAS NOT DONE IN SUPPORT OF THE INSTITUTION. IT WAS ANNOYING BUT NOT SURPRISING THAT OTHER GENERALS IN HERMOZA'S "ENTOURAGE" WENT ALONG WITH THE DISPLAY OF FORCE. THE OFFICERS FELT THAT FUJIMORI PROBABLY DID NOT KNOW THAT TANKS WOULD ROLL, BUT KNEW IN GENERAL TERMS ABOUT THE CEREMONY.

-- HERMOZA'S COMMENTS ATTACKING AND THREATENING CONGRESS ON THE STEPS OF CONGRESS BUILDING WERE

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 ALSO UNWISE. HOWEVER, THE OFFICERS FELT THAT HERMOZA'S COMMENTS WERE READ FROM TALKING POINTS PREPARED FOR HERMOZA BY FRIENDS OF PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY ADVISOR VLADIMIRO MONTESINOS. MONTESINOS, IT WAS FELT, WANTED TO HELP HERMOZA HANG HIMSELF. THE OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT FROM MONTESINOS' PERSPECTIVE, HERMOZA'S COMMENTS KNOCKED HIM DOWN A FEW PEGS AT WORST, AND MAY FORCE THE PRESIDENT TO GET RID OF HERMOZA AT BEST. THE OFFICERS WERE DIVIDED ABOUT WHETHER HERMOZA WILL BE FORCED OUT; SOME SAID FUJIMORI HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GET RID OF HIM, OTHERS SAID THAT FUJIMORI RELIED ON HERMOZA TOO MUCH AND THERE WAS NO REPLACEMENT FOR HIM IF HE WERE REMOVED. EITHER WAY, MONTESINOS WON AS FUJIMORI WAS REMINDED, ONCE AGAIN, THAT MONTESINOS WAS THE PRESIDENT'S BEST ADVISOR.

-- THIS ANALYSIS RECONFIRMED THE OFFICERS' CONVICTIONS THAT SHOULD POSSIBLE MILITARY ACTION OCCUR, THE PRIMARY TARGET HAD TO BE MONTESINOS, NOT FUJIMORI. (COMMENT: SEE LIMA 4113 EXDIS. END COMMENT.)

DEATH SQUADS

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 3. CHANGING TOPICS, THE OFFICER SAID THAT ARMY DEATH SQUADS BEGAN IN THE EARLY TO MID-80S, WHEN OFFICERS IN ARMY INTELLIGENCE (DINTE) BECAME INCREASINGLY FED UP WITH THE APRISTA GOVERNMENT

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 LETTING TERRORISTS GO FREE. COLONELS AND MAJORS WERE ALLOWED TO DEVISE OPERATIONAL PLANS, PICK THEIR TARGETS, AND COMPOSE LISTS OF FRIENDS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL THEY KNEW, HAD WORKED WITH, AND TRUSTED WHO WOULD BE GATHERED TOGETHER TO FORM THE HIT SQUAD. IF THE PLAN WAS APPROVED BY THEIR COMMANDING OFFICERS, ORDERS WERE CUT REASSIGNING TEAM MEMBERS TO DINTE AND AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURES. SOME TEAMS WERE

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ONE-TIME AFFAIRS, OTHERS STAYED TOGETHER FOR A WHILE.

4. THE OFFICER DEFENDED MAJ. MARTIN, THE ARMY OFFICER DIRECTLY IMPLICATED IN THE JULY 1992 "LA CANTUTA" DISAPPEARANCE CASE, AS AN EXCELLENT OFFICER WHO WAS BEING SOLD DOWN THE RIVER BY THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND. HE ADMITTED THAT "LA

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 "LA CANTUTA" AND OTHER SIMILAR ARMY OPERATIONS, SUCH AS BARRIOS ALTOS, WERE "STUPIDLY PLANNED AND EXECUTED." HE CLAIMED MARTIN HAD BEEN WARNED ABOUT THE POOR PLANNING IN THE BARRIOS ALTOS OPERATION, BUT MARTIN WAS A "FOLLOW ORDERS" KIND OF OFFICER AND DID NOT QUESTION "COL. RODRIGUEZ'" ORDERS IN THE BARRIOS ALTOS MASSACRE. THE OFFICER ADMITTED THAT "COL. RODRIGUEZ" LED THE BARRIOS ALTOS ATTACK, BUT REFUSED TO FURTHER IDENTIFY RODRIGUEZ.

5. COMMENT: THE ARMY OFFICER WHO PROVIDED THIS INFORMATION APPEARS FAIRLY WELL ATTUNED TO VIEWS WITHIN HIS INSTITUTION. HERMOZA DID USE THE "LA CANTUTA" INVESTIGATION TO TRY TO SHORE UP HIS HOLD ON THE ARMY; AS THE ARMY OFFICER NOTED, MONTESINOS, WHO ALSO ALLEGEDLY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR LA CANTUTA, CAME OUT AHEAD SINCE HERMOZA TOOK THE FLACK FOR OPPOSING THE CONGRESS' INVESTIGATION. BRAYSHAW##

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