

RELEASED

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

415

Department of State

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ACTION HCT-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3097

SECRET LIMA 0229

E.O. 12356: DECLC OADR  
TAGS: PTER, PE, ASEC  
SUBJECT: ANTI-TERRORIST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

REF: 83 STATE 368513

1. S - ENTIRE TEXT

2. PERU FACES A SERIOUS, PERHAPS WORSENING, TERRORIST PROBLEM. THE FANATICAL MAOIST GROUP, SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL), REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL FABRIC OF THE COUNTRY. BEYOND ORGANIZED TERRORISM, THE LEVEL OF CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IS INCREASING IN GENERAL IN PERU. THE POLICE FORCES, WHICH BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE COUNTERTERRORIST AND LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORT, ARE DISORGANIZED AND INADEQUATELY TRAINED FOR COPING WITH IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE CHALLENGE. DESPITE THE EXISTING TERRORIST THREAT, THE GOP DOES NOT POSSESS AN EMERGENCY ACTION ENTITY OR STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH KIDNAPPINGS AND CERTAIN OTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF URBAN TERRORISM. IN SHORT, PERUVIAN SECURITY FORCES NEED HELP. THE NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANT PROGRAM WOULD, IN PRINCIPLE, BE APPLICABLE AND BENEFICIAL HERE. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF PROGRAM, AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM (REFTEL), WOULD NOT PERMIT COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE IN DEALING WITH SENDERO LUMINOSO PHENOMENON, WHICH HAS ATTRIBUTES OF AN INSURGENCY, BUT PROGRAM COULD HELP CORRECT SOME EXISTING DEFICIENCIES OVER A MULTI-YEAR PERIOD. WE WOULD BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN SEEING DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT COMMAND/OPERATIONS CENTER TO COORDINATE AND DIRECT ALL CIVILIAN ENTITIES INVOLVED IN COUNTER-TERRORISM.

3. GOP HOWEVER HAS REFRAINED THIS FAR FROM REQUESTING USG ASSISTANCE IN COUNTERTERRORIST AREA. IN MID-1983 PUBLIC COMMENTS, PRESIDENT BELAUNDE, PRIME MINISTER SCHWAB AND INTERIOR MINISTER PERCOVICH ALL MADE CLEAR THAT GOP WAS LOOKING TO COUNTRIES WITH SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH DOMESTIC TERRORISM FOR ASSISTANCE. THEY DID NOT MENTION U.S. AS SOURCE OF POSSIBLE HELP. PRIMARY EXPLANATION FOR THIS WAS PROBABLY DESIRE ON PART OF BELAUNDE ADMINISTRATION TO AVOID AN IDENTIFICATION WITH U.S. IN A SENSITIVE AREA WHICH COULD BE EXPLOITED PUBLICLY BY DOMESTIC OPPOSITION. IN ADDITION, GOP WAS CERTAINLY AWARE OF U.S. LEGISLATIVE RESTRAINTS ON ASSISTANCE TO FOREIGN POLICE. IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR THAT GOP HAS ALTERED ITS APPROACH AND IS NOW INTERESTED IN OBTAINING COUNTERTERRORIST ASSISTANCE FROM US. ALTHOUGH 1983 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ARE PAST, 1985 NATIONAL ELECTIONS ARE ON HORIZON AND SIMILAR POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS EXIST. BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME DEVELOPMENTS IN SITUATION WHICH MIGHT LEAD BELAUNDE ADMINISTRATION TO ACCEPT U.S. COUNTER-TERRORIST ASSISTANCE, IF OFFERED DURING 1984.

-- COUNTERTERRORIST CAMPAIGN IS NOT GOING AS WELL AS DESIRED. IT WILL BE POLITICALLY IMPORTANT IN 1984 FOR BELAUNDE ADMINISTRATION TO DEMONSTRATE PROGRESS, OR AT LEAST INITIATIVES TAKEN TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS, IN

ORDER TO PROTECT DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.  
-- GOP HAS INCREASINGLY SEVERE OVERALL RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS. ANY ASSISTANCE OFFERS FOR PRIORITY AREAS WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.  
-- COUNTERTERRORIST ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES HAS BEEN VERY LIMITED TO DATE.  
-- U.S. NOW HAS AN ANTI-TERRORISM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

4. WE HAVE NOT HERETOFORE ENCOURAGED GOP TO LOOK TO US FOR COUNTERTERRORIST ASSISTANCE. TO BEGIN WITH, OPTIONS FOR PROVIDING EFFECTIVE HELP HAVE BEEN LIMITED. BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, OUR VIEW HAS BEEN THAT RAISING THE U.S. PROFILE IN THIS CONTEXT WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE POSSIBILITY OF A SPECIFIC RETALIATORY STRIKE BY SENDERO LUMINOSO AGAINST THIS MISSION OR OTHER U.S. FACILITIES OR CITIZENS IN PERU. THIS REMAINS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION. SENDERO LUMINOSO, HOWEVER, IS LIKELY TO REMAIN AN ONGOING DANGER TO US AS LONG AS IT RETAINS ITS DESTRUCTIVE CAPABILITY. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT U.S. FACILITIES WERE TARGETED FOR TERRORIST STRIKES WHICH DID NOT MATERIALIZE DURING DECEMBER. WE MAY WELL BE TARGETED AGAIN. IN PRINCIPLE, THE BEST WAY FOR US TO DEAL OVER THE LONG TERM WITH THIS THREAT IS TO HELP GOP TO ERADICATE IT. HOWEVER, UNCLASSIFIED CONGRESSIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NEW PROGRAM ENSURE THAT PROVISION OF COUNTERTERRORIST ASSISTANCE WOULD FACE OUR PROFILE AND INCREASE SECURITY RISK IN SHORT TERM TO JUSTIFY ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH RISK, ASSISTANCE WE OFFER WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSEQUENTIAL. WORST SCENARIO, FROM EMBASSY VIEWPOINT, WOULD BE OFFER OF MINIMAL ASSISTANCE WHICH NOT REALLY HELPFUL RESOLVING PROBLEM BUT WHICH LIKELY BECOME POLITICAL ISSUE HERE WITH INCREASED RISK TO ALL MISSION STAFF EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT DEPARTMENT PROVIDE US, IN THIS CONTEXT, WITH REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF RESOURCES WHICH MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE IN PERU UNDER THIS PROGRAM, ASSUMING GOP WERE INTERESTED.

5. GOP WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT BE IN POSITION TO CONTRIBUTE SUBSTANTIALLY TO FINANCING, TRAINING FOR GROUPS OF PERUVIANS. WOULD HAVE TO BE CONDUCTED IN SPANISH.  
ODGEN

*OPATER  
Peru*

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