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Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM (X67)

PAGE 01 LIMA 13238 302230Z
ACTION ARA-00

1058

PRISONER ABUSE BY GUARDS ATTEMPTING TO BREAK THE STRIKE, NO SPECIFIC CASES HAVE COME TO LIGHT.

RELEASED

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 HA-00
PA-01 HCT-02 USIE-00 SP-02 SPRS-01 /041 W
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P R 302150Z DEC 82
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6423
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY PAHAMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCSOUTH QUARRY HTS PN
DIA WASHDC

6. (C) SENDERO LUMINOSO ASSERTIONS THAT DETAINED MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO BE RECOGNIZED AS POLITICAL PRISONERS RUNS IN THE FACE OF THE PERUVIAN JURISPRUDENCE UNDER WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN DETAINED, INVESTIGATED AND TRIED. THE GOVERNMENT CONTENDS THAT SUSPECTS ARE CHARGED WITH CONCRETE TERRORIST ACTS AND ARE BEING HELD FOR THESE CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES, NOT FOR THEIR BELIEFS.
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PINS, SHUN, PE

SUBJ: (U) PERUVIAN TERRORIST SUSPECTS ON HUNGER STRIKE

1. (U) 270 OF THE MORE THAN 400 INMATES AT PERU'S "EL FRONTON" ISLAND PRISON OFF CALLAO DECLARED A HUNGER STRIKE DECEMBER 24. THEY BARRICADED ONE SECTION OF THE PRISON AND REFUSED TO ALLOW FOODSTUFFS IN. OF THREE CELL-BLOCKS ONLY THE CENTRAL PART OF THE LARGEST IS UNDER SENDERO LUMINOSO'S (SL) CONTROL. THE OTHER TWO HOUSE COMMON CRIMINALS AND LEFTISTS CHARGED WITH TERRORIST ACTIONS WHO DENY ALLEGIANCE TO SL.

2. (U) ALL THE HUNGER STRIKERS ARE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF THE TRIAL PROCESS, CHARGED WITH TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. THEY DEMAND TO BE RECOGNIZED AND TREATED AS "PRISONERS OF WAR." THEY ALSO WANT RESUMPTION OF FAMILY VISITS (SUSPENDED "DUE TO FEAR FOR VISITORS' SAFETY"), PRESENCE OF "DEMOCRATIC ATTORNEYS," AND ACCESS TO THE PRESS.

3. (U) PRISON SYSTEM DIRECTOR MIGUEL GONZALEZ DEL RIO DESCRIBES "EL FRONTON" AS A "UNIVERSITY OF TERRORISM" AND ACKNOWLEDGES THAT SL MEMBERS HAVE COMPLETE INTERNAL CONTROL OVER THE CELLBLOCK. INDEED THE PRESS HAS AMPLY REPORTED ON SL'S DE FACTO ADMINISTRATION: CLASSES IN MARXIST THEORY, INDOCTRINATION AND TERRORIST METHODS ARE TAUGHT ON A RIGID DAILY SCHEDULE. THE CURRENT STRIKE BEGAN WHEN GUARDS STARTED A SHAKEDOWN OF THE CELL BLOCK AFTER THE INMATES SUCCEEDED IN CRACKING THE WALLS BY RYTHMIC POUNDING WITH STONES SHUGGLED INTO THE BUILDING.

4. (C) COMMENT: ALTHOUGH IN MANY PRISONS--NOT JUST IN PERU--THE INMATES ARE GIVEN DE FACTO CONTROL OVER THE INTERNAL MANAGEMENT OF CELLBLOCKS, THE EL FRONTON EXAMPLE WAS AN EXTREME CASE EVEN BEFORE THE STRIKE. IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND, HOWEVER, THAT THE IDEA OF PUTTING ALL THE PRIME SL SUSPECTS IN ONE CELLBLOCK WAS TO PREVENT THEM FROM PROSELYTIZING NON-SL SYMPATHIZERS--SO FAR FRONTON HAS SERVED THIS PROPOSE. STILL THE DEGREE OF SL DISCIPLINE IS REMARKABLE: GONZALEZ DEL RIO SAYS THAT AT LEAST SIX OF THE STRIKERS KNOW THEY ARE FREE TO LEAVE BECAUSE FOUND INNOCENT BY FIRST INSTANCE COURTS.

5. (C) ALTHOUGH CONDITIONS ARE HARSH AT EL FRONTON, THEY SEEM NO WORSE THAN THOSE AT MOST PERUVIAN PRISONS ACCORDING TO THE FAIRLY CONSTANT STREAM OF PRESS VISITING THE AREA AND REPORTS FROM FAMILY MEMBERS. IN SPITE OF ALLEGATIONS BY THE MARXIST PRESS OF

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