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ACTION HA-09

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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PHUM, PTER, PREL, PE
SUBJECT: VISIT TO PERU OF HA/HR DIRECTOR RACKMALES

REF: LIMA 12342

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
 2. SUMMARY: HA/HR DIRECTOR ROBERT RACKMALES VISITED PERU OCTOBER 29 - NOVEMBER 3. HE MET WITH A NUMBER OF PERSONS CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF PRIVATE GROUPS, GOP OFFICIALS, AND JOURNALISTS. MR. RACKMALES UNDERScoreD THAT HIS MISSION WAS TO LEARN. HE EMPHAsIZED DANGER TERRORISTS POSED TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT. POINTING TO RECENT AMERICAS WATCH REPORT, HE CALLED FOR MORE BALANCED TREATMENT OF TERRORIST VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. PRIVATE GROUPS TOOK POINTS, BUT MADE CLEAR THEIR CONCERN THAT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, GOP ANTI-TERRORIST POLICY STILL ACCOUNTED FOR MANY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.
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WHICH THEY ASSERTED PLAYED INTO THE HANDS OF THE

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SUBVERSIVES. PUBLIC MINISTRY OFFICIAL NOTED IMPROVEMENT IN DISAPPEARANCE PROBLEM AND DESCRIBED ONGOING EFFORTS TO CLARIFY THE 2,000 PLUS CASES. RACKMALES' VISIT UNDERScoreD OUR INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

3. PRIVATE HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS: RACKMALES MET SEPARATELY WITH ~~THE ANDEAN COMMISSION OF JURISTS,~~ ~~THE ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (APRODEH), AND~~

~~THE EPISCOPAL COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL ACTION (CEAS).~~ RACKMALES STRESSED HE HAD COME TO LEARN. HE EXPRESSED THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO PRIVATE GROUPS' EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE UNDERScoreD OUR CONCERN THAT SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) TERRORISM ENDANGERED PERUVIAN DEMOCRACY AND THUS POSED BY FAR THE GREATEST THREAT TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN PERU. TERRORISTS' ABUSES OF HUMAN RIGHTS UNFORTUNATELY WERE IGNORED OR UNDERESTIMATED, HE SAID, USING AS AN EXAMPLE THE RECENT AMERICAS WATCH REPORT ON PERU, WHICH DEALT WITH SL VIOLATIONS IN ONLY 10 OF ITS 117 PAGES, AND WHOSE "FIVE MAJOR VIOLATIONS" IN PERU WERE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE GOP.

4. THESE COMMENTS SPARKED LIVELY DISCUSSION IN ALL THREE INSTANCES. THE THREE GROUPS AFFIRMED THAT THEY DID NOT SUPPORT SL VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT ARGUED THAT IT WAS APPROPRIATE FOR THEM TO DEAL MAINLY WITH GOVERNMENT ABUSES, AS THEY COULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE LATTER. SL HAD ACCOUNTED FOR A
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HIGH NUMBER OF KILLINGS, AS WELL AS FORCED RECRJITMENT (BUT APPEARED TO HAVE SHIFTED AWAY FROM EARLIER WHOLESale MASSACRES). THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT AN SL-CONTROLLED PERU WOULD BE UNLIVEABLE AND DISASTROUS FROM A HUMAN RIGHTS STANDPOINT. THEY BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THAT AN SL VICTORY WAS UNLIKELY. MORE LIKELY, THEY SAID, WAS THAT SL COULD CONTINUE TO ATTACK THE GOP, REINFORCE CURRENT GOP ANTI-TERRORIST POLICIES THAT HARMED HUMAN RIGHTS, AND POSSIBLY LEAD THE MILITARY TO STAGE A COUP. THEY

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AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT INSTITUTIONS SHOULD WORK TO CORRECT PERCEPTION THAT ONLY THE GOP WAS COMMITTING ABUSES.

5. ALL THREE GROUPS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT THE NUMBER OF DISAPPEARANCES HAD CONTINUED TO DECLINE IN 1986. THEY NOTED THAT THE NUMBER OF SUMMARY EXECUTIONS ATTRIBUTED TO THE GOP WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO PINPOINT, BUT ESTIMATED THAT IT TOO WOULD HAVE DECLINED IN 1986 HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE JUNE PRISON KILLINGS. CEAS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE GOP MIGHT USE THE MILITARY TO DEAL WITH GROWING (*) HE WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE INABILITY OF CIVILIAN INSTITUTIONS TO ADDRESS ALLEGED MILITARY VIOLATIONS IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE. DESPITE EXISTENCE OF WELL OVER 1,000 DISAPPEARANCE COMPLAINTS IN AYACUCHO, HE SAID COURTS THERE HAD ADMITTED ONLY 14 HABEAS CORPUS REQUESTS.

NOTE BY OCT: (*) OMISSION. CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LIMA 13248

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6. [REDACTED]

BRIEFED

RACKMALES ON TERRORISM. THEY FORESAW NO QUICK SOLUTION IN THEIR OPINION, MILITARY ACTION ALONE COULD NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM; THE GOP HAD TO BRING ABOUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREAS NOW AFFECTED BY TERRORISM. [REDACTED] DWELT ON THE ARMY'S RELUCTANCE TO USE PUBLIC RELATIONS TO ITS ADVANTAGE, CITING A CASE WHERE HE HAD SOUGHT TO DO A FAVORABLE PIECE ON THE DEATH OF AN ARMY LIEUTENANT, ONLY TO BE STONEWALLED BY THE ARMY. REGARDING SO-CALLED "NARCO-TERRORISM", [REDACTED] STATED THAT SL HAS LINKS TO THE COCA GROWERS IN THE ALTO HUALLAGA AREA, BUT THAT THE TRAFFICKERS DO NOT GIVE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO SL. [REDACTED] EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE AMERICAS

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WATCH REPORTS, SAYING THAT THEY WERE MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND OBJECTIVE THAN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S. THEY

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ASSERTED (PROTECT) THAT THE PERUVIAN HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS WE HAD MET WITH WERE POLITICIZED, AND LEANED TOWARD THE LEFT. (COMMENT: MOST HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP MEMBERS IDENTIFY TO SOME EXTENT WITH THE UNITED LEFT (IU), AND THEIR CRITICISMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE MORE MODERATE IU ELEMENTS. IN GENERAL, THEY ARE CREDIBLE. END COMMENT.) THE NOV. 3 ISSUE OF CARETAS REPORTED RACKMALES VISIT, DRAWING ON THIS CONVERSATION AND AN EMBASSY PRESS RELEASE. IT NOTED THAT THE 1986 STATE DEPARTMENT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON PERU WOULD TREAT PERU WITH "OBJECTIVITY" BUT ALSO "IN THE CONTEXT OF A YOUNG DEMOCRACY UNDER ATTACK." (FULL TEXT POUCHED TO ARA AND HA).

7. UNFORTUNATELY, RACKMALES' COUNTERPART IN THE MFA WAS ON VACATION. SECOND SECRETARY LUCIA TRINDADE MET WITH HIM INSTEAD, BUT WAS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO DISCUSS MFA'S ROLE VIS-A-VIS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS (SHE CLAIMED NOT TO HAVE SEEN AMNESTY MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT GARCIA - SEE REF A) OR TO DEFEND PERUVIAN CO-SPONSORSHIP OF MEXICAN RESOLUTION ON EL SALVADOR. IN A SEPARATE LUNCHEON WITH THE MFA DEPUTY AMERICAS CHIEF (GILBERT CHAUNY) AND THE CHILE DESK OFFICER (LUIS QUESADA), RACKMALES GAVE AN OVERVIEW OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS ON CHILE AND CENTRAL AMERICA, AND DESCRIBED THE PURPOSE AND COVERAGE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS.

8. PUBLIC MINISTRY (ATTORNEY GENERAL) [REDACTED] DISCUSSED IN DETAIL THE

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DISAPPEARANCE PROBLEM AND [REDACTED] EFFORTS TO CLARIFY SOME 2,000 PLUS PENDING DISAPPEARANCE ALLEGATIONS. [REDACTED] ADMITTED THAT SOME CASES (WHICH OCCURRED MAINLY IN 1983-84) UNDOUBTEDLY HAD INVOLVED THE SECURITY FORCES' SUMMARY KILLING OF REAL OR IMAGINED SL MEMBERS. SOME CASES, HOWEVER, COULD INVOLVE PERSONS WHO JOINED SL AND WHOSE RELATIVES REPORTED THEM MISSING; OTHERS WERE EXPLAINED BY DETAINEES' FREQUENT FAILURE TO RETRACT DISAPPEARANCE CLAIMS ONCE THEY WERE RELEASED. OTHER CLAIMS COULD BE FICTITIOUS. [REDACTED] NOTED THAT A PROMINENT SL MEMBER (CLAUDIO BELLIDO) RECENTLY KILLED IN A CONFRONTA-

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TION WITH THE ARMY HAD BEEN REPORTED YEARS AGO AS "DISAPPEARED". THE PUBLIC MINISTRY WAS CARRYING OUT AN EXHAUSTIVE SEARCH OF VOTING RECORDS, PRISONS, AND MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS, AND HAD RESOLVED SOME 400 CASES. RACKMALES POINTED OUT THAT HE HAD JUST MET IN COLOMBIA WITH [REDACTED] AND SUGGESTED THEY GET IN TOUCH. [REDACTED] ALSO OBSERVED THAT ALLEGED TERRORIST GUADALOUPE CCALLOCCUNTO (SUBJECT OF CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES) WAS RELEASED SEPTEMBER 9; CHARGES AGAINST HER LIKELY WOULD BE DROPPED.

9. AT A COCKTAIL HOSTED BY CONTROL OFFICER, RACKMALES MET ABOUT 25 OTHER PERSONS CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING APRA AND AP LEGISLATORS, UNITED LEFT MEMBERS, JOURNALISTS, DIPLOMATS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF ADDITIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS. RACKMALES' VISIT UNDERSCORED THE USG'S INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS IN PERU AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. HIS CONVERSATIONS AT THE MFA WERE ESPECIALLY USEFUL IN COVERING THE OBJECTIVES AND PROCESS OF OUR ANNUAL REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS. WATSON

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