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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-01	INR-05	SS-01	OIC-02	CIAE-00
	DODE-00	H-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-01	HA-09
	L-03	CTME-00	TRSE-00	PM-01	PA-01	SJK-01	OMB-01
	INM-01	INRE-00	CG-00	USIE-00	JUSE-00	DEAE-00	FBIE-00
	SP-01	SNP-01	PRS-01	DS-01	OIG-01	SCT-03	P-02
	T-01	SB-01	DPR-01	/061 W			

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O 130017Z SEP 90
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1354
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY QUITO
USAFSO HOWARD AFB PM
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM

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USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MASS, PGOV, SNAR, PHUM, PTER, PE
SUBJECT: THE DEFENSE MINISTER ON U.S. MILITARY AID

1. (U) SUMMARY: DEFENSE MINISTER JORGE TORRES TOLD THE PERUVIAN PRESS SEPTEMBER 9 THAT THE NEW BILATERAL MILITARY AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. HAD NOT YET BEEN SIGNED, BUT THAT HE HOPED IT WOULD BE. HE DENIED THAT THE AGREEMENT WOULD BRING U.S. TROOPS TO PERU, EXCEPT AS TRAINERS. THE SIGNING OF THE MILITARY AID PACKAGE WAS INCLUDED AS A "MINOR ISSUE" IN WIDE-RANGING INTERVIEWS WHICH PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON ARMY CORRUPTION, HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, AND ILLEGAL WIRETAPS. END SUMMARY.

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2. (U) DEFENSE MINISTER JORGE TORRES ACIEGO SAID SEPTEMBER 8 THAT PERU SHOULD SIGN THE NEW MILITARY

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J. OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 8 AUG 2001 200003853

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AID AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES. GENERAL (RET.) TORRES DID NOT SPECULATE, HOWEVER, AS TO WHETHER THE AGREEMENT WOULD ACTUALLY BE SIGNED. THE COMMENT APPEARED IN INTERVIEWS APPEARING IN LEFTIST DAILY "LA REPUBLICA" AND WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE "SI".

3. (U) TORRES NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT YET SIGNED THE AGREEMENT, BUT THAT HE "SAW NOTHING BAD IN IT." HE PROMISED "ABSOLUTELY" THAT THE AGREEMENT WOULD NOT PERMIT THE PRESENCE OF U.S. TROOPS IN PERU, EXCEPT FOR TRAINING PURPOSES, AND ONLY "SO LONG AS THEY DO NOT INTERVENE DIRECTLY." HE ALSO DENIED THAT THE AGREEMENT INCLUDED THE SPECIFIC MENTION OF THE SALE OF HELICOPTERS TO PERU.

4. (U) THE DEFENSE MINISTER CHARACTERIZED THE PENDING AGREEMENT AS INTENDED TO BATTLE THE TWIN PLAGUES OF NARCO-TRAFFICKING AND SUBVERSION. BUT HE ALSO PROMISED THAT THE GOP WOULD NOT ABANDON ITS COMMITMENT TO DEVELOP ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES TO COCA CULTIVATION EVEN WHILE IT PURSUED AN AGGRESSIVE ANTI-TERRORISM/SUBVERSION EFFORT.

5. (U) BOTH WEEKEND INTERVIEWS COVERED A WIDE VARIETY OF SUBJECTS. THE QUESTION OF THE MILITARY AGREEMENT WAS ACTUALLY SECONDARY TO ISSUES OF ARMY CORRUPTION, HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, AND THE STATE OF HEALTH OF THE GOP'S ANTI-SUBVERSION STRUGGLE. RESPONDING LIKE A SEASONED POLITICIAN, TORRES ADROITLY SIDESTEPED POINTED QUESTIONS ON NARCOTICS

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CORRUPTION IN THE MILITARY AND THE ILLEGAL WIRETAPPING OF PHONE CONVERSATIONS.

-- ON HUMAN RIGHTS: "WHOEVER VIOLATES HUMAN RIGHTS WILL RECEIVE THE MOST DRASTIC PUNISHMENT."

-- ON NARCOTICS CORRUPTION: "DURING MY MINISTERIAL TENURE, NO CHARGE HAS BEEN PRESENTED AGAINST ANYONE FOR ILLEGAL ENRICHMENT."

-- ON ILLEGAL WIRETAPS: "THE ARMED FORCES HAVE NEVER INTERCEPTED TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS."
-- ON THE WAR WITH SENDERO LUMINOSO: "WE EXPECT,

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WITHIN FIVE YEARS, TO HAVE LARGELY ELIMINATED
SUBVERSION."

6. (C) THE INTERVIEWING JOURNALISTS TRIED, BUT WERE
UNABLE, TO SCORE ANY DIRECT BLOW AGAINST THE SLIPPERY
TORRES ACIEGO. THE PRINCIPAL ITEM ON THE DEFENSE
MINISTER'S AGENDA APPEARED TO BE TO ATTEMPT TO
DISTANCE THE MILITARY FROM CHARGES THAT THE NATIONAL
INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (SIN) HAS BEEN EAVESDROPPING ON
THOUSANDS OF CONVERSATIONS OF DOZENS OF POLITICAL AND
MILITARY FIGURES DURING THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. AS
THE INVESTIGATION INTO THESE WIRETAPS PROCEEDS, AND
SINCE MOST SIN OFFICERS ARE ACTIVE DUTY OR RETIRED
MILITARY, THE DEFENSE MINISTER AND THE JOINT CHIEFS
WILL HAVE A MAJOR PUBLIC RELATIONS BATTLE ON THEIR
HANDS AS THEY TRY TO SHIELD THE THREE ARMED SERVICES
FROM CHARGES THAT THE MILITARY HAS BEEN COMPLICIT IN
THE VIOLATION OF THE PERUVIAN CONSTITUTION.

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