

UNCLASSIFIED

CHANNEL: n/a

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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	ALS-01	CIAE-00	SJK-01	DS-00	HA-09
	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	L-03	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01
	PA-01	PM-01	PRS-01	P-02	SCT-03	SNP-01	SP-01
	SS-01	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	/030W		

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P 150009Z MAY 91
 FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7951
 INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 USAFSO HOWARD AFB
 USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
 USMISSION GENEVA 1719
 DIA HQ WASHDC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE IM/IPS/CR/IR **B** Date: 9/11/97
 RELEASE DECLASSIFY
 EXCISE DECLASSIFY EO Citations _____
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FOIA Exemptions _____ TS authority to
 PA Exemptions _____ () CLASSIFY as () S or () C Sec. _____
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SECTION 01 OF 03 LIMA 06373

DIA FOR OA-5/OS-1D/DB-612/JSI-4B/DB-3C1
DEA FOR AO, DO, OF, OC, OISL, OIOC

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PTER, ASEC, PHUM, ALLOW, PINS, PGOV, PE
 SUBJECT: MRTA ATTACKS AND PEACE FEELERS: A CHANGE
 - IN THE MAKING

REF: LIMA 5744

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1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. THERE IS GROWING EVIDENCE OF A SPLIT
 INSIDE THE TUPAC AMARU REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT
 (MRTA). THE MRTA LEADERSHIP IN THE CENTRAL HUALLAGA
 VALLEY (CHV) SEEMS INTENT ON ESTABLISHING ITSELF AS A
 LEGITIMATE POLITICAL FORCE. ON MAY 10 THE MRTA
 LAUNCHED A SERIES OF ATTACKS ON POLICE STATIONS AND
 COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN SEVERAL CHV TOWNS.

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PERHAPS A THOUSAND "TERRORISTS" WERE INVOLVED. DESPITE THE VIOLENCE, NO POLICE WERE KILLED AND THE MRTA IMMEDIATELY OFFERED TO FREE NINE POLICE IT TOOK AS HOSTAGES IN RIOJA. MRTA HAS ASKED THE RED CROSS TO MEDIATE. IN CONTRAST TO THE MAY 10 VIOLENCE IN THE CHV, A MAY 2 MRTA ATTACK IN CUZCO KILLED THREE POLICE, AND A FAILED CAR BOMB IN LIMA ON MAY 7 WOULD LIKELY HAVE KILLED DOZENS. THE MRTA'S NEGOTIATING POSITION WITH THE GOP IS GROWING STRONGER. UNLIKE SENDERO LUMINOSO, THE MRTA ENJOYS CONSIDERABLE POPULAR SUPPORT, ALBEIT FROM A SMALL POPULATION BASE IN THE HUALLAGA VALLEY. END SUMMARY.

3. THERE IS NEW EVIDENCE THAT AT LEAST A FACTION OF THE TUPAC AMARU REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT (MRTA) IS INTENT ON GAINING POLITICAL LEGITIMACY. ON MAY 10 THE MRTA LAUNCHED A SERIES OF NIGHTTIME ATTACKS IN VARIOUS CENTRAL HUALLAGA VALLEY (CHV) LOCATIONS. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS QUOTING LOCAL WITNESSES, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF TERRORISTS INVOLVED IN THE ATTACKS AGAINST TARAPOTO, MOYOBAMBA, RIOJA, AND

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SAPOSOA MAY HAVE REACHED ONE THOUSAND. ATTACKED WERE POLICE STATIONS IN SAPOSOA, MOYOBAMBA AND RIOJA, SEVERAL COMMERCIAL LOCATIONS IN ALL FOUR TOWNS, AND THE POWER PLANTS IN MOYOBAMBA AND TARAPOTO. THE INCIDENTS PRODUCED MODERATE DAMAGES AND BLACKOUTS IN SEVERAL CHV TOWNS, AND SEVERAL INJURIES. THERE WERE NO CONFIRMED DEATHS.

4. SHORTLY AFTER DARK THE MRTA ATTACKED THE POWER PLANT ON THE RUNWAY AT THE TARAPOTO MUNICIPAL AIRPORT. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS THE TERRORISTS BLOCKED ACCESS TO THE AIRPORT WITH BURNING TIRES, FORCED THE POLICE GUARDING THE AIRFIELD TO SURRENDER, DYNAMITED THE DOOR ACCESSING THE GENERATOR, THEN WALKED IN AND THREW THE SWITCH BLACKING OUT TARAPOTO AND SURROUNDING AREAS. THOUGH THE MILITARY HQ FOR THE UPPER HUALLAGA FRONT IS IN TARAPOTO, THERE WAS NO MILITARY REACTION DURING THE MORE THAN ONE HOUR ATTACK. WHEN THE MILITARY ARRIVED ON THE SCENE LATER THEY HAD ONLY TO CLOSE THE BREAKER TO RESTORE ELECTRICITY TO THE TOWN.

5. THE ATTACK ON THE POLICE STATION IN RIOJA OCCURRED ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY TO THE TARAPOTO INCIDENT. AT APPROXIMATELY 1900 HOURS A GROUP OF "SEVERAL HUNDRED" SUBVERSIVES SURROUNDED THE POLICE STATION AND CALLED ON THE POLICE TO SURRENDER. THE POLICE INITIALLY REFUSED AND A GUN BATTLE ENSUED. AFTER AN HOUR OR SO OF GUNFIRE THE POLICE SURRENDERED. SEVERAL POLICE WERE WOUNDED. THESE WERE GIVEN EMERGENCY FIRST AID BY THE TERRORISTS AND

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LEFT BEHIND. NINE POLICEMEN WERE TAKEN HOSTAGE BY THE TERRORISTS.

6. THE FOLLOWING DAY, MAY 11, AN MRTA REPRESENTATIVE CONTACTED THE MAYOR OF RIOJA TO INFORM HER THAT THE NINE POLICEMEN WERE ALIVE AND WELL AND THAT THE MRTA WAS PREPARED TO RELEASE THEM. THE ONLY CONDITION SET BY THE TERRORISTS WAS THAT THE NINE BE TURNED OVER TO THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS (ICRC) OR TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, NOT TO THE ARMY OR TO THE POLICE.

7. DR. ARMIN KOBEL, HEAD OF THE ICRC'S MISSION IN

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SS-01 TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 /030W
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P 150009Z MAY 91
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7952
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY QUITO
USAFSO HOWARD AFB
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
USMISSION GENEVA 1720
DIA HQ WASHDC

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LIMA, CONFIRMED TO POLOFF EARLY MAY 13 THAT THE ICRC
HAS BEEN CONTACTED BY PERSONS CLAIMING TO REPRESENT

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THE MRTA. KOBEL SAID HE BELIEVES THE CONTACT IS
LEGITIMATE. THE MRTA ASKED THAT THE ICRC ARRANGE THE
PRISONER TRANSFER. KOBEL SAID THE ICRC WAS WILLING
TO PLAY SUCH A ROLE ON TWO CONDITIONS: THAT IT OCCUR
ONLY WITH THE CONSENT OF THE TWO PARTIES INVOLVED
(MRTA AND THE GOP) AND THAT IT BE DONE QUIETLY, AWAY
FROM THE GLARE OF THE MEDIA. KOBEL SAID HE HAD YET
TO HEAR BACK FROM THE PERUVIAN MILITARY, ADDING, "THE
BALL IS IN THEIR COURT."

8. THE MRTA'S MAY 10 ACTIVITY IN THE CENTRAL
HUALLAGA IS IN STARK CONTRAST TO THE LETHALITY OF
RECENT MRTA ACTIVITY ELSEWHERE IN PERU. ON MAY 2
MRTA ATTACKED POLICE UNITS IN CUZCO AND PUNO,
DELIBERATELY TARGETTING AND KILLING AT LEAST THREE
POLICE. THIS IS THE FIRST SIGNIFICANT MRTA VIOLENCE
WE ARE AWARE OF IN THESE TWO DEPARTMENTS, THOUGH
POLICE BUSTED AN MRTA CELL IN CUZCO IN MAY 1990. ON

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MAY 7 THE MRTA ATTEMPTED TO EXPLODE A CAR BOMB NEAR A MILITARY BARRACKS IN LIMA. THE DEVICE INVOLVED THE LARGEST EXPLOSIVE CHARGE EVER ATTEMPTED BY EITHER MRTA OR SL. EXCEPT FOR A FUSE MALFUNCTION, EXPLOSIVES EXPERTS BELIEVE THAT DOZENS COULD HAVE DIED FROM THIS BLAST.

9. THE INCIDENTS OF THE PAST WEEKS LEND PERSUASIVE SUPPORT TO THE GROWING BELIEF THAT THERE ARE TWO COMPETING FACTIONS INSIDE THE MRTA. IN CUZCO THE MRTA METHODICALLY KILLED THE POLICE AT THE STATION AT OLLANTAYTAMBO AND IN LIMA THE DESTRUCTION FROM THE CAR BOMB WOULD HAVE BEEN MASSIVE, WITH DOZENS OF

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PAGE 03 LIMA 06373 02 OF 03 150017Z FATALITIES LIKELY. IN CONTRAST, IN THE CHV THE TERRORISTS TOOK POLICE HOSTAGES AND IMMEDIATELY OFFERED TO RELEASE THEM, ASKING APPARENTLY NOTHING IN RETURN.

10. IN FACT, THE PLOY OF THE CHV FACTION OF THE MRTA SEEMS TO US AN EFFORT TO GAIN AN ADDITIONAL MEASURE OF LEGITIMACY BY IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS WORTHY OF DIRECT CONTACT. THE ICRC'S KOBEL RUEFULLY ADMITS THAT BY TAKING UP A DIRECT MEDIATING ROLE BETWEEN THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT AND GUERRILLAS THE ICRC AIDS THE LATTER'S SEARCH FOR POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND FORMAL "BELLIGERENT" STATUS. BUT KOBEL ADDED, "THE KEY NOW IS TO RESOLVE THIS WITHOUT FURTHER BLOODSHED."

11. THE ONLY FORMAL GOP REACTION TO THE MRTA HOSTAGE RELEASE OFFER HAS BEEN FROM THE MILITARY JOINT CHIEFS WHO INITIALLY REJECTED THE MRTA'S CONDITIONS. BOTH THE ARMY AND NATIONAL POLICE HAVE SENT ADDITIONAL TROOPS TO THE CHV TO "RESTORE ORDER TO THE TOWNS" AND TO "RESCUE" THE HOSTAGES. A NIGHTTIME CURFEW HAS BEEN IMPOSED THROUGHOUT SAN MARTIN DEPARTMENT. TWO ICRC DELEGATES ARRIVED IN TARAPOTO ON MAY 13 AND CHV COMMANDER GENERAL JAIME RIOS REACTED CAUTIOUSLY WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE ICRC'S PARTICIPATION IN THE HOSTAGE NEGOTIATIONS.

12. DESPITE THE ARMY'S BLUSTER, THE SENSE HERE IN LIMA IS THAT THE CHV MRTA, STILL FLUSH FROM ITS ROLE IN THE REGIONAL AUTONOMY CAMPAIGN, IS MOVING

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IRRESISTIBLY TOWARD POLITICAL LEGITIMACY. THE GOP IS

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REACTING CAUTIOUSLY. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST MRTA
PEACE GESTURE (SEE REF C AND PREVIOUS) AND THE ONLY
SEMI-OFFICIAL GOP POLICY ON NEGOTIATING WITH
TERRORIST GROUPS IS PRESIDENT FUJIMORI'S JULY 1990
STATEMENT THAT AN ESSENTIAL PRECONDITION FOR PEACE
TALKS IS THAT THE TERRORISTS LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS.
LIKE THE REST OF THE GOP'S ANTI-TERRORISM POLICY,
THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN POORLY ARTICULATED BY THE GOP.
FOR AT LEAST A PART OF THE MRTA, THE GOVERNMENT MAY
SOON HAVE TO REFINE AND FURTHER DEFINE ITS POLICY.
THE MAY 10 OFFENSIVE IS ONE WAY OF TELLING THE GOP

THAT THE MRTA IS A FORCE TO RECKON WITH, WHILE AT THE
SAME TIME REPEATING, "WE CAN BE REASONABLE WHEN

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H-01 INRE-00 INR-01 L-03 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OMB-01
PA-01 PM-01 PRS-01 P-02 SCT-03 SNP-01 SP-01
SS-01 TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 /030W
-----66239A 150032Z /66

P 150009Z MAY 91
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7953
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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NECESSARY."

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13. AN MRTA IN THE CENTRAL HUALLAGA READY TO TALK
PEACE DOES NOT MEAN THE MRTA SHOULD BE VIEWED AS LESS
OF A THREAT THERE OR ELSEWHERE IN PERU, EITHER TO
U.S. OR PERUVIAN INTERESTS. SO LONG AS NEITHER OF
THE TWO FACTIONS IS COMPLETELY DOMINANT, THE MORE
RADICAL FACTION WILL LIKELY FEEL COMPELLED TO USE
VIOLENCE TO COUNTER THE PROPAGANDA EFFECTS OF THE
ACTIONS OF THE MODERATE FACTION. NOR SHOULD WE BE
LULLED INTO THINKING THAT SINCE THE RADICAL FACTION
IS APPARENTLY LOSING DIRECT INFLUENCE IN THE CENTRAL
HUALLAGA, THERE WILL BE NO MRTA REACTION TO ANY MAJOR
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ANTI-NARCOTICS ARENA.
14. AS AN ASIDE, IT IS INTERESTING TO OBSERVE THE
MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER DISPLAYED BY THE MRTA'S
WEEKLY PAPER "CAMBIO." ON APRIL 25 THE NEWSPAPER
FRONT-PAGED THE LUCY CUMPA INTERVIEW IN WHICH SHE
PROPOSED A POSSIBLE DIALOGUE WITH THE GOP. IT WAS
THAT INTERVIEW IN WHICH THE ESCAPED, CONFESSED MRTA
FIGURE STATED THAT THE MRTA COULD SUPPORT THE
ANTI-NARCOTICS UMBRELLA AGREEMENT, ASSUMING CERTAIN
CONDITIONS WERE MET (REF B). IN CONTRAST, ON MAY 9
THE PAPER BANNERED IN VERY BELLIGERENT COVERAGE THE
MOVEMENT'S NEW FRONT IN THE SOUTH AND BOASTED OF COPS
KILLED AND THE NARROW MISS WITH THE LIMA CAR BOMB.

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15. A FINAL ISSUE. THE RESPONSIBLE LIMA PRESS IS SATISFIED THAT THE MRTA MOBILIZED HUNDREDS (PERHAPS A THOUSAND) IN ITS MAY 10 ATTACKS. UNLIKE SL, WE ARE AWARE OF NO INSTANCE WHERE MRTA HAS USED UNWILLING CONSCRIPTS AS FORCE MULTIPLIERS. POLOFFS' RECENT VISIT TO THE CHV CONVINCED THEM THAT THE MRTA IS

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ACHIEVING THERE THAT WHICH SL HAS NEVER GAINED IN ITS CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE: A MEASURE OF REAL ACCEPTANCE BY THE LOCAL POPULATION. THE MRTA'S INFLUENCE EXTENDS TO ITS APPARENT HAND IN SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL, SOCIAL AND SELF-DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A SMALL POPULATION (PERHAPS 300,000) IN A SMALL GEOGRAPHIC AREA. NEVERTHELESS, THE PHENOMENON OF THE MRTA IN THE CHV BEARS CLOSE WATCHING AND WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF ADDITIONAL COMMENT IN FOLLOWING EMBASSY REPORTS.

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*** Current Classification *** [REDACTED]

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