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ARA/AND:B Williamson;BW
08/26/91 X73360
EUR/FO: ~~X~~ Des

(Coldwell)

ARA/FO:J P Mclean, ARA/AND:A W Patterson, EUR/SE: ~~X~~ ~~X~~,
S/CT:T Thompson, ARA/PPC:R Jacobson; HA: M Jacobson

Paul Berg

priority

s/s:

s/s-o:

IMMEDIATE ROME

ROUTINE LIMA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, PTER, PINS, RE P#U.H.

SUBJECT: Sendero Luminoso Attacks upon Religious Workers
in Peru

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1. (u) This is an action cable. See PP 9.
2. (C) Summary. The Sendero Luminoso guerrillas in Peru have murdered six religious workers so far this year. Embassy is requested to bring the issue of attacks upon religious workers in Peru to the Vatican's attention. Department would see it as desirable if the Vatican could release a statement denouncing Sendero's practice of targetting religious workers. End Summary.
3. (C) In Peru two active guerrilla groups, the Sendero Luminoso (SL) and the more orthodox Marxist Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), threaten Peruvian society. Sendero, by far the more serious threat, has spread to

United States Department of State
Office of FOI, Privacy, & Classification Review
Review Authority: MOSKOWITZ, SAM
Date: 04/24/95
Case ID: 93006854

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virtually every region of Peru and shows no sign of being defeated.

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4. (U) ~~The Sendero Luminoso~~ (SL) specifically targets foreigners active in development projects. They have committed violent acts against religious and development workers on a number of occasions. Indeed, the practice of murdering such workers is already well established. So far this year, seven foreigners connected with religious institutions have been killed by Sendero.

5. (U) For instance, on May 17, 1991, Norman Tattersall, a Canadian official with the Protestant social services and evangelization organization known as "World Vision," was killed by the SL in front of World Vision's Lima office. Jose Chuquin, a Colombian national who was Tattersall's companion and is a fellow member of World Vision, was also fatally wounded at the same time. World Vision has several offices in a number of interior regions of Peru. According to Protestant missionaries, the group has received several warnings in the interior for its beneficence toward Peru's rural poor. The killing of Tattersall has evoked great concern among other church groups working in Peru with foreign funding or leadership connections.

6. (U) U.S. Baptist missionaries working in northern Lima have received SL threats against their mission. The Mormons have had two chapels bombed in Huancayo, and on August 22, 1990 the SL killed two young Mormon missionaries there. One of these youths had a knife driven through his neck.

7. (U) On May 18 of this year, Sendero Luminoso terrorists murdered Sister Irene Teresa Alarconigo Miaga, an Australian national working with the Catholic church relief organization known as Caritas, in a remote village near Tarma, Junin Department. Sister Irene was assassinated in for the sin of being a "Yankee" who actively served the poorest of Peru's poor. The Catholic church in Peru has been an occasional threat of SL violence during the last three years, especially in Puno and Junin departments where the church is particularly active in community work. There have been bombings directed against Catholic churches in Huancayo and Tarma, and a priest and at least two nuns in Junin have been killed by SL violence. The church's social services work via Caritas and local women's clubs has suffered increasing threats from the SL due to their use of U.S. donated food. According to the SL, the food that Caritas provides is said to be poisoned, to enslave the masses. However, the SL has no problem with stealing Caritas food

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and distributing it among themselves. Last September, Peruvian nun Maria Rivas Lopez was executed by the SL for her Caritas work.

8. (U) More recently, on August 9, two Polish priests working in the Pariacoto district of Ancash department were killed by Sendero. These two priests had been working on social welfare programs aimed at benefiting the district's poor children. At that time it was discovered that four Peruvian officials of World Vision had apparently been missing since mid-July. Finally, on August 25, an Italian priest was shot dead by presumed terrorists as he was returning from a mass in the township of Tablone, also in Ancash department.

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