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TO: INM - Melvyn Levitsky (original)
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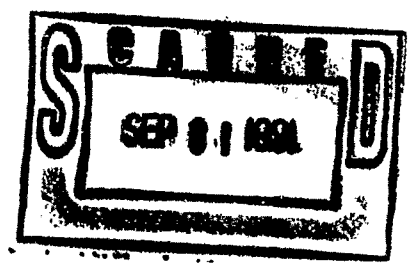
SUBJECT: Congressional Testimony

The attached Congressional testimony has been reviewed by the appropriate Seventh Floor Principal(s) and is cleared for delivery to the Congress. Any questions should be referred to at extensions 7-8349.

Thank you.

[Signature]
W. Robert Pearson
Executive Secretary

Attachment: Approved Congressional Testimony



STATEMENT OF
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS MATTERS
MELVYN LEVITSKY
BEFORE A JOINT HEARING OF
THE TASK FORCE ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL,
THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS
AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
September 12, 1991

MR. CHAIRMEN:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the committee to discuss the President's determination on Peru, and the facts and circumstances which led us to make this decision. We carefully evaluated the situation in Peru and the progress of the Fujimori Government, and firmly believe that Peru meets the requirements under Section 4(a) of the International Narcotics Control Act (INCA).

It is now essential to move ahead with the program that we have outlined in order to continue the fight against drug trafficking. President Fujimori is strongly committed to that effort and with our assistance we can make a difference.

Let us be clear: failure to continue our counter-narcotics program in Peru seriously jeopardizes our whole effort to deal with the cocaine threat, in Peru, in the region--and here in the United States. Two years ago we presented an integrated strategy outlining a multi-year effort for the countries of the Andes, the components of which are inextricably linked. We now face the possibility that a central element in that effort will have to be abandoned, with serious consequences for what we are trying to do, not only in the Andes but on the streets of this country.

Peru produces over 60 percent of the cocaine coming to the United States. If we walk away from that reality, we must be prepared to give up any claims that we have of a serious effort to deal with the drug problem. As I have testified before, we are making progress, but it is a delicate enterprise, one of the key elements of which is our ability to sustain our effort and thereby our credibility.

It is not just that our strategy is interconnected, but that the problem itself is highly interwoven. The traffickers have constructed a system that ignores national boundaries, creating a regional base of operations. To deal with this, we must address the broad nature of the threat.

In Peru, two issues are at stake, two values: a realistic, achievable human rights effort; and a supportable, practical counter-narcotics policy. The challenge we face is how to deal effectively with both those concerns, indeed, how to devise an approach that will achieve progress on both fronts.

The situation in Peru is desperate. President Fujimori has instituted bold reforms to halt the downward slide of the Peruvian economy. Nevertheless, the economy is staggering under years of mismanagement; institutions of government suffer from neglect and lack of resources; a vicious insurgency is ripping the country to pieces; and narcotraffickers, thriving on the confusion and institutional weaknesses, are corrupting society itself. While U.S. assistance is not designed, in and of itself, to solve all these concerns, it is our commitment and willingness to support the present government of Peru that constitutes that country's only realistic opportunity to address the dismaying array of problems, and by so doing to work with us to cope with the abuses of authority and the perils of drug production and trafficking.

Clearly, all of these problems are interrelated; therefore, we must address them all simultaneously. Peru, unaided, is not likely to be able to achieve its goals. The economy will continue its downward spiral and violence fueled by narcodollars will persist. We will have done nothing to improve the human rights position, nothing to stop the flow of drugs to this country.

By arguing this, I am not claiming that we will suddenly see these problems evaporate. They are serious difficulties deeply rooted that are not open to swift or facile solutions. What is certain, however, is that it is only by being engaged that we have any hope to achieve the outcome that we desire.

There is a positive role for U.S. assistance in supporting the Fujimori Government's efforts to develop a strong and comprehensive response to the dire and complex situation in Peru today. The present government of Peru is ready to cooperate. It is committed to working with us to address common concerns.

BASIS FOR THE DETERMINATION: We based our decision to provide Peru with assistance on an assessment of the political will of the present government to seriously address common concerns; on achievement on both counter-narcotics and human rights; and on the reality that it is only by working with President Fujimori that we see our best chance to achieve more.

There is no deliberate policy on the part of the Peruvian Government to abuse human rights. That there are individuals and groups within Peru and within the government that engage in horrendous barbarity is only too clear. Years of violent civil war, there, as it did here and elsewhere, have encouraged cruelty and insensitivity. To a degree, social, economic, and political institutions are collapsing and with that respect for the rule of law. What we are dealing with is an environment of violence, much of it the deliberate actions of insurgents and traffickers, not a policy of violence by the government or its key institutions.

Nevertheless, and perhaps most significantly, the government and its key institutions have the will to deal with the range of problems that beset the country. It is an integral part of our effort to reinforce that will to do what is right and help them with the training and resources that they need to give body to intent.

MILITARY RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS: President Fujimori's commitment and our efforts to assist his government have led to: unprecedented access by prosecuting attorneys to all military (and police) detention centers to verify that detainees' human rights are respected; permission for the ICRC to staff and operate additional offices in emergency zones; the creation of a presidential peace commission to develop a national pacification plan; and military receptivity toward U.S. efforts to advise and reform the Peruvian military judicial system and expand human rights training.

We hope to see even more progress in the form of greater access by the ICRC to police and military detention centers, further purges of police and military (to date, over 500 police and 61 military have been dismissed for abuse of authority and other crimes), and the incorporation of human rights training at the cadet and officer levels of the Peruvian military.

These are recent efforts which are significant when compared to the decades of human rights abuses and corruption that Peru has suffered. Furthermore, these are actions that form the basis for a long-term reform program and are, therefore, significant, measurable advances for inculcating human rights values in the Peruvian police and military.

This type of cooperation demonstrates the responsiveness of the military to the policy decisions of the Fujimori Administration, which is a strong advocate of human rights reforms. These achievements have come as the result of our determination to work with the Peruvians to establish a new set of standards; but we put these efforts at risk if we cut off our programs.

If we do not sustain our efforts in Peru, we seriously undercut our counter-narcotics strategy for the entire region while doing little to eliminate the institutional weaknesses of the government of Peru that limit its ability to improve the human rights situation.

POLITICAL WILL: President Fujimori is implementing a narcotics strategy which provides for law enforcement action, coupled with sound economic reform and alternative development. The military assistance is intended to provide the government with the capability to protect these efforts as it moves into Peru's coca growing regions where the insurgencies are strong. Murderous attacks by the insurgents on Peruvian and international aid workers, designed specifically to terrorize the government and the international community into giving up assistance programs, only too clearly demonstrate the need for security to undertake development activities.

The Peruvian National Police (PNP) has neither the manpower nor expertise to deal with the Sendero Luminoso (SL) alone. Their job is to interdict the various stages of cocaine production to the point that the price of coca leaf in the UHV falls below the costs of production. At that point, economic assistance and an alternative development program will become a viable alternative for the coca-growing campesino in areas like the UHV.

I and many other Administration officials who have met with President Fujimori have come away from our meetings with the clear sense that he is sincere and strongly committed to the fight against narcotics, and to human rights. In the past several months, he has demonstrated his resolve, translating ideas into action in all areas of mutual concern. This, in spite of an economy that has hit rock bottom, decades of bureaucratic mismanagement, corruption, human rights abuses, and two savage insurgencies.

The overall progress he has achieved in his first year in office has already far exceeded what was accomplished during the five years of the Garcia Administration.

MILITARY NARCOTICS PERFORMANCE: Part of this progress has been President Fujimori's effort to engage the Peruvian military in a constructive, supporting role in counter-narcotics law enforcement operations. These accomplishments are worth relating in order to understand the seriousness and comprehensiveness of the effort despite a serious shortfall in resources.

The Peruvian Air Force (FAP) has taken a proactive role in assigning intercept aircraft in and outside of the UHV to interdict narcotics trafficking aircraft. To date, the FAP has forced down and inspected over 50 aircraft, leading to large coca base seizures and a number of arrests on the ground by Peruvian marines and police units. The threats and pressure exerted by trafficking interests on the FAP to halt these operations merely served to reinforce FAP resolve and boost morale, as it became clear to FAP officers that the substantial narcotics air traffic to and from Colombia was a direct threat to Peruvian sovereignty and democracy.

Our Embassy reports that the FAP operations lowered the price of coca derivatives and started to dry up the supply of narco-dollars, illustrating the important connection between effective enforcement operations and coca leaf price. These efforts, however, have been limited, due in large part to serious shortfalls in equipment, spare parts, fuel, and sufficient manpower.

The Peruvian Army, however, has not engaged with the same intensity as the FAP because of an even worse set of deficiencies and the demands of dealing with the Sendero Luminoso (SL) and Tupac Amaru (MRTA) insurgent groups in over half the country. Nevertheless, there have been significant improvements in supporting police counter-narcotics efforts and in responding to human rights concerns.

In the UHV, police counter-narcotics operations have been freed from army prior notification requirements; incidents of confrontations between army units and counter-narcotics police have subsided; requests for army security squads at the Santa Lucia narcotics base have been approved; the army has agreed to support major police counter-narcotics operations where necessary; and the army leadership is responding more vigorously to control corruption and curb abuses.

Clearly, however, these efforts are still limited. Poor training, years of neglect, an environment of brutal violence, and ready money from drug traffickers have taken their toll on operational effectiveness, integrity, and simple morality. These are problems not susceptible to easy redress, but things will not get better if we walk away. Experience has shown us that it is by being engaged that we can make a positive change. We have seen this in the responses of the Fujimori Government and of the military. For example, police and military cooperation has improved in the UHV due in part to prompt USG efforts to engage the Peruvians on this issue.

COUNTER-INSURGENCY: We recognize that bringing the Peruvian military into the counter-narcotics picture poses risks. While the ultimate purpose of the military assistance and training is to combat narcotics trafficking and production, it is inevitable that counter-narcotics activities will at times require counter-insurgency efforts by the military to regain government control over certain areas. Every effort is being made to ensure that there is no spillover between the fine line that exists between narcotics and insurgents. The agreements signed for this assistance and training to the military makes clear that the assistance is for counter-narcotics purposes.

End use monitoring in the field and review procedures will be set up so that we can assure compliance with the agreement. Finally, we have made it clear at all levels of the Peruvian Government that the substantial economic assistance planned for FY 91 and beyond will be conditioned, in part, on the military's conduct and performance in support of overall counter-narcotics goals and other objectives mutually agreed upon, such as human rights.

Let us not lose sight of the plain reality that Peru is a battleground, that one of the world's most violent and cruel insurgency organizations, with a policy of systematic human rights abuses, contests the government's control of the country and cooperates with drug traffickers as a means to increase its influence and resources. Neither development efforts nor counter-narcotics programs can function in an environment of threat and intimidation. While we focus on supporting the counter-narcotics efforts and train the forces to deal with this problem, we must keep in mind the other war and the accompanying atmosphere of coercion and violence.

U.S. TRAINING: The only role for DOD personnel in Peru is in a training and technical capacity. This is necessary because of the quality and quantity of equipment which we will be supplying. It also allows the U.S. to upgrade the effectiveness of the Peruvian military--while at the same time imprinting U.S. values in areas such as human rights. There will be no DOD presence on field operations.

POLICE NARCOTICS PERFORMANCE: I have spent considerable time addressing President Fujimori's actions to direct and reform the military, as well as the military role in supporting counter-narcotics operations because these are concerns that we all share. But we should remember that this remains a law enforcement effort--restoring government control to coca growing areas is a preliminary step to counter-narcotics progress and alternative development. The police counter-narcotics effort is central to breaking up the trafficking business and making alternative development an attractive alternative for coca cultivating campesinos.

Despite this central role, the Peruvian National Police (PNP) are in a more difficult situation than their armed forces counterparts because of an even greater lack of resources and their vulnerability to the insurgency threat. Corruption also has undercut their effectiveness. Nevertheless, during the one-year period ending in March 91, the PNP arrested 1832 people for narcotics-related offenses, seized over 5 metric tons of coca base, 250 kilos of HCl, and destroyed 149 labs. While these statistics are not impressive by Colombian standards, the PNP does not enjoy the same resource allocations or military support that their police colleagues in Colombia have used to good effect. This gap between police and military efforts is what we are trying to address in Peru through this assistance.

MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID: As long as the Sendero Luminoso is an active force in the Upper Huallaga Valley, there can be no effective law enforcement, nor the sustained implementation of any alternative development program. The level of violence and intimidation that the SL brings to the UHV precludes any long-term progress. It is for these reasons that the military and economic assistance must go hand-in-hand.

Alternative development programs are a priority target of the SL and the traffickers, since they provide the legitimate income and central government presence that campesinos have been seeking for decades. These programs undermine SL's reason for existence and destroy the coca trafficking network that extends into Colombia and onward to the U.S. We consider military assistance to be an integral part of the program to sever SL from the trafficking interests, thereby allowing the police to dismantle trafficking organizations and alternative development to take root among the coca growing campesinos that currently have no other options.

I have recently discussed the situation of the coca growing campesinos of the UHV and other river valleys with Peruvian officials who are well acquainted with the desires and needs of the people in these disenfranchised, insurgent-occupied areas. The point that they make to me about U.S. assistance is that polls indicate over 70% of the people believe there is a role for U.S. counter-narcotics assistance. These campesinos have organized themselves into coca unions, and are prepared to give up coca cultivation in exchange for the means to make a secure and legitimate living. The traffickers and insurgents terrorize them daily, killing their leaders when discussions on alternative development progress too far, and branding them as fools for trusting Peruvian and U.S. promises of assistance.

I cannot stress to you enough the damage and disillusionment that will result if we do not make good on our obligations to these campesinos. They are an essential part of making our counter-narcotics strategy work. We would be handing the traffickers and insurgents a major psychological victory if we disengaged from Peru and cut off assistance. It may also be our only opportunity to elicit a sincere and motivated response from these people.

WHY PERU: We should not forget why we are intent on remaining engaged with Peru, despite a multitude of problems. Peru remains a key country in our strategy to reduce the amount of cocaine coming to the U.S. The drug problem in the U.S. has improved considerably during the past several years as drug abuse levels have declined. We have also made significant strides against trafficking organizations operating in the United States and elsewhere. To deny Peru these much-needed funds will signal drug traffickers everywhere that a new safehaven is open for business.

Moreover, we are certain that abandoning Peru will increase the flow of cocaine to the U.S., destabilize the Andean region, and erode counter-narcotics progress in Colombia and Bolivia. Both the Colombians and Bolivians are adamant that Peru must remain in the Andean Strategy and receive substantial and comprehensive counter-narcotics assistance. There is no rivalry or competition for these resources in the Andes--there is, however, a fear of an unstable and narcotics-ridden Peru that could adversely affect other democratic governments in the region.

It is also apparent that progress on narcotics and human rights will only come through a policy of engagement. Peruvian resources are inadequate to deal with the intertwined and critical problems of narcotics, terrorist insurgents, human rights and alternative economic development. Our integrated narcotics assistance package is a substantial and positive contribution that the Peruvians are depending upon to energize their counter-narcotics and human rights efforts, and to lay the basis for long-term economic reform and a brighter future for all Peruvians.

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United States Department of State
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Narcotics Matters*
Washington, D.C. 20520

September 6, 1991

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TO: S/S - W. Robert Pearson
FROM: INM - Melvyn Levitsky
SUBJECT: Testimony Before the House Foreign Affairs
Committee Task Force on International Narcotics
Control September 12

Attached for your clearance is the draft text of my statement for a hearing of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Task Force on International Narcotics Control on September 12.

Attachment:

Statement