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ACTION ARA-00

INFO	OCT-00	COPY-01	ADS-00	INR-10	EUR-00	SS-00	CIAE-00
	DODE-00	H-01	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SY-06	HA-08	L-03
	PM-10	PA-01	MCT-03	OMB-01	A-02	SYE-00	USIE-00
	SP-02	SNP-01	PRS-01	SLPD-01	/051 W		

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P 241942Z AUG 84
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7872
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

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ROME FOR AMEMBASSY VATICAN

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PTER, PREL, PE
SUBJECT: PERUVIAN CHURCH HIERARCHY BREAKS SILENCE ON
TERRORISM AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

REFS: (A) LIMA 9349, (B) LIMA 9928 (NOTAL), (C) LIMA 9929
- (NOTAL), (D) LIMA 9933 (NOTAL)

1. (U) IN SERIES OF DECLARATIONS BY VARIOUS MEMBERS OF
ROMAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY IN PERU WITHIN PAST WEEK, CHURCH
SIGNALLED THAT IT MAY BE READY TO TAKE MORE ACTIVE ROLE
IN POLITICAL LIFE IF REQUESTED TO DO SO, AND EXPRESSED
PARTICULAR PREOCCUPATION WITH VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM.
RESPONDING TO CALL OF EX-PRESIDENT JOSE LUIS BUSTAMENTE
FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY (REF B),
CARDINAL JUAN LANDAZURI RICKETTS, PRIMATE OF PERUVIAN
CHURCH, PRAISED BUSTAMENTE AND SECONDED HIS SUGGESTIONS
WARMLY. SPEAKING AUGUST 19 ON OCCASION OF MASS
ORDINATION OF PRIESTS, LANDAZURI ALSO RECOMMENDED DIALOGUE
WITH SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) TERRORISTS AS ONE WAY TO
RETURN PEACE TO COUNTRY AND OFFERED MEDIATION OF CHURCH
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TO HELP BRING IT ABOUT. AT SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE

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EMPHASIZED DIFFICULTIES OF SUCH PROCESS AND CONDEMNED RECENT ACTS OF TERROR, REFERRING TO RECENT KILLING OF THE 15 PEASANT CHILDREN AT SACHABAMBA (REF C) AS AN "EXTREME ACT OF BARBARISM." WHEN SOME SEGMENTS OF PRESS INTERPRETED THE CARDINAL'S STATEMENT AS CALL FOR GOVERNMENT TO DIALOGUE WITH TERRORISTS, LANDAZURI, ACTING THROUGH ARCHBISHOPAL CHANCELLOR RENE PAREDES, ISSUED CLARIFICATION NEXT DAY, STATING THAT HE HAD SAID ONLY THAT CHURCH WOULD BE WILLING TO ACT AS MEDIATOR IF REQUESTED TO DO SO BY TERRORISTS, AND, IN EVENT OF SUCH REQUEST, WOULD CONSULT FIRST WITH GOP. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE THOUGHT SUCH A REQUEST UNLIKELY DUE TO VIOLENT NATURE OF SENDERO LUMINOSO. IN BOTH STATEMENTS, CARDINAL ALSO MENTIONED HIS PREOCCUPATION WITH VIOLENCE AND LAWLESSNESS IN EMERGENCY ZONE OF AYACUCHO, EXPRESSING PERSONAL REGRET OVER DEATH OF PEASANT ORGANIZER JESUS OROPEZA AND CONCERN FOR SAFETY OF LIMA JOURNALIST JAIME AYALA, WHO VANISHED THREE WEEKS AGO WHILE INVESTIGATING CONDITIONS IN HUANTA (HUANTA PROVINCE, AYACUCHO DEPARTMENT) (REF D). IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, BISHOP LUCIEN METZINGER, HEAD OF EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL COMMUNICATION, ALSO EXPRESSED WORRY OVER OROPEZA AND AYALA CASES, AND ANNOUNCED ON AUGUST 20 THAT CHURCH SUPPORTS "MARCH FOR PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE" TO BE HELD IN LIMA AUGUST 24 (SEPTTEL). BISHOP METZINGER URGED THAT MARCH BE CONDUCTED PEACEFULLY AND NOT DEGENERATE INTO "UNNECESSARY AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE CONFLICTS." FINALLY, CONCERN OVER OROPEZA AND AYALA CASES WAS ALSO EXPRESSED AUGUST 21 BY ARCHBISHOP FEDERICO RICHTER OF AYACUCHO, WHO ADDED THAT, "GOD WILLING, AYALA WILL APPEAR ALIVE" AND IN GOOD HEALTH.

2. (U) UNLIKE PREVIOUS CALLS BY CHURCH FOR DIALOGUE WITH TERRORISM, WHICH PRODUCED HOSTILE REACTIONS FROM

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SOME AP FIGURES, LANDAZURI'S STATEMENTS WERE GENERALLY PRAISED. AP DEPUTY MANUEL ARCE, CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF PARTY SECGEN JAVIER ALVA ORLANDINI, CHARACTERIZED POSITION OF CHURCH AS VERY IMPORTANT AND ADDED THAT IT COULD BE A WAY TO PUT END TO VIOLENCE. UNITED LEFT (IU) SENATOR ENRIQUE BERNALES PRAISED IDEA OF CHURCH MEDIATION AND CHARACTERIZED CHURCH AS INSTITUTION MOST QUALIFIED TO ACT IN SUCH CAPACITY BECAUSE OF HISTORIC ROLE AS "CARRIER OF PEACE."

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3. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ COMMENT: IN CONTRAST TO PREVIOUS CONFLICTS BETWEEN CHURCH AND AP FIGURES OVER ISSUE OF DIALOGUE WITH TERRORISTS, CHURCH AND AP HAVE BOTH REACTED CAUTIOUSLY AND TAKEN MEASURES TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING. CARDINAL WAS CAREFUL TO EMPHASIZE THAT INITIATIVE IN MEDIATION PROCESS WOULD HAVE TO COME FROM SENDERO LUMINOSO, WHICH APPEARS UNLIKELY IN LIGHT OF SL'S PAST BEHAVIOR, AND AVOIDED ANY SUGGESTION OF SEEMING TO CONDEMN GOVERNMENT. AT SAME TIME, EXPRESSIONS OVER OROPEZA AND AYALA CASES SIGNALLED TO GOVERNMENT LEADERS THAT CHURCH IS WATCHING EVENTS CAREFULLY AND, WHILE FIRMLY ON SIDE OF DEMOCRACY, IT WILL NOT ACCEPT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OR BRUTALITY BY ANY GROUP. IN LIGHT OF CHURCH'S SILENCE ON POLITICAL EVENTS OVER LAST YEAR, THESE COMMENTS, AND RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF SHORT VISIT TO AYACUCHO BY POPE JOHN PAUL II DURING HIS TRIP TO PERU (NOW SCHEDULED FOR FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY, 1985), HAVE A CERTAIN SIGNIFICANCE AND SUGGEST THAT CHURCH MAY COMMENT WITH MORE FREQUENCY ON POLITICAL EVENTS AS PAPAL VISIT APPROACHES. AT SAME TIME, STATEMENTS WERE WITHIN TRADITIONAL CHURCH PRACTICE OF COMMENTING ON SOCIAL ISSUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS. LANDAZURI'S STATEMENTS AS CLARIFIED SUGGEST THAT HE INTENDS TO TAKE HIGH GROUND OF MORAL GUARDIAN AND SOCIETAL MEDIATOR AND TO AVOID MANIPULATION OF CHURCH BY ANY PARTY. JORDAN

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