

UNCLASSIFIED

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RELEASED IN FULL

[REDACTED]

n/a

Case Number: S200200010

PTQ6996

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ACTION SCT-00

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-10	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AID-00	ARA-01	A-00
	CA-02	CCO-00	CG-00	SMEC-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-01
	OASY-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-01	EB-00
	EUR-01	FAAE-00	H-01	IMMC-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-01	MCO-01	ADS-00	MMP-00	M-00
	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02	OIS-01	OMB-01
	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	CIO-00	SP-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	DRL-09	G-00	/040W			

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 FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5077
 INFO DOJ WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM IMMEDIATE
 FBI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
 JCS WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
 AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY
 USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY
 DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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 AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
 AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
 DEAHQS WASHDC

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: WILLIAM E. LANDFAIR
 DATE/CASE ID: 13 AUG 2002 S200200010

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[REDACTED] SECTION 01 OF 02 LIMA 011087

JUSTICE FOR TVCS -- J LANCASTER
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/23/01

TAGS: PTER ASEC PREL PGOV PE

SUBJECT: PERU'S HOSTAGE CRISIS UPDATE: DECEMBER 31

1. CLASSIFIED BY THOMAS HOLLADAY, ACTING DCM, REASON: 1.5 (D).

2. [REDACTED] SUMMARY. IN AN EXTRAORDINARY AND UNANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENT, THE GOP ALLOWED THE PRESS TO COVER MRTA COMANDANTE NESTOR CERPA'S ANTI-GOVERNMENT DIATRIBE FROM THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHAT THE GOP, IF ANYTHING, WILL RECEIVE IN RETURN. THE ICRC REFUSED TO BE A PARTY TO THE LONG DISTANCE "PRESS OPPORTUNITY," WHICH QUICKLY BROKE DOWN WHEN MRTA ALLOWED SOME 15 MEMBERS OF THE PRESS TO VISIT THE HOSTAGE SITE FOR ALMOST TWO HOURS. IN HIS FIRST DIRECT MESSAGE TO THE PRESS, CERPA SAID MRTA IS IN NO HURRY AND WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD HOSTAGES UNTIL THE GOP ADDRESSES THE "SITUATION" OF ITS IMPRISONED MEMBERS. END SUMMARY.

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CERPA ADDRESSES PRESS CIRCUS

3. (U) IN A SEEMING REFUTATION OF PRESIDENT FUJIMORI'S DECEMBER 30 INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE CALLED THE MRTA "TERRORISTS", MRTA COMANDANTE NESTOR CERPA CARTOLINI DELIVERED AN EMOTIONAL, INFLAMMATORY SPEECH TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESS THIS MORNING. SPEAKING FROM A SECOND STORY WINDOW AND USING A MEGAPHONE, CERPA DENIED THAT MRTA IS A TERRORIST GROUP AND ACCUSED THE FUJIMORI GOVERNMENT OF "STATE TERRORISM." HE SAID THERE CAN BE NO RESOLUTION OF THE HOSTAGE CRISIS UNTIL THE GOP ADDRESSES "THE SITUATION OF MRTA COMRADES IN JAIL." HE ALSO ASSERTED THAT THE GOP HAS BEEN "DEAF" AND "OVERBEARING" IN ITS DEALINGS WITH MRTA. CERPA SAID THE MRTA IS STILL WILLING TO ENGAGE IN A DIALOGUE TO REACH A PEACEFUL SOLUTION, BUT INDICATED "NO ADVANCES CAN BE MADE IF THE GOP REPEATS THE SAME DECLARATIONS."

4. (U) THE GOP PERMITTED GROUPS OF JOURNALISTS TO WALK PAST

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POLICE LINES AND TO POSITION THEMSELVES IN FRONT OF THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE SHORTLY AFTER 10:00 A.M. EST. DUE TO SECURITY CONCERNS, ICRC CHIEF DELEGATE MICHEL MINNIG TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE ICRC WOULD NOT FACILITATE THE PRESS BRIEFING AND THAT THE JOURNALISTS THEMSELVES WOULD HAVE TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPROACHING THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. THE FIRST GROUP OF NATIONAL PRESS MEMBERS PHOTOGRAPHED AND RECORDED CERPA'S DIATRIBE TO THE PRESS FROM THE OUTSIDE THE RESIDENCE PERIMETER. A SECOND GROUP OF INTERNATIONAL PRESS MEMBERS WERE SIMILARLY ALLOWED TO APPROACH THE FRONT OF THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE.

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5. (U) WHEN THE FOURTH GROUP POSITIONED ITSELF OUTSIDE THE FRONT GATE OF THE RESIDENCE GROUNDS, A KYODO NEWS SERVICE JOURNALIST HELD UP A SIGN IDENTIFYING HIMSELF AND WALKED DIRECTLY THROUGH THE GATE TO THE FRONT DOOR. AFTER HE PRESENTED HIS PRESS CREDENTIALS AT THE DOOR, MRTA ALLOWED THE JAPANESE JOURNALIST TO ENTER. NOT TO BE OUTDONE, A GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 14 OTHER JOURNALISTS FOLLOWED SUIT AND WERE EVENTUALLY ALLOWED INTO THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE BY THE MRTA AFTER IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES. THE JOURNALISTS REMAINED IN THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE FOR ALMOST TWO HOURS. THE PERUVIAN POLICE CHALLENGED AND TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO DIRECT THE PRESS TO POLICE BUSES AFTER THEY LEFT THE RESIDENCE. MINUTES AFTER THE JOURNALISTS' RETURN TO THEIR PRESS VANS, LOCAL TV BEGAN AIRING FOOTAGE FROM INSIDE THE RESIDENCE.

6. (U) IN HIS IMPROMPTU PRESS CONFERENCE, CERPA APPEARED ON PERUVIAN TELEVISION AND REITERATED SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY MRTA'S DETERMINATION TO KEEP HOSTAGES UNTIL THE GOP MAKES CONCESSIONS REGARDING IMPRISONED MRTA MEMBERS. CERPA ALSO SAID MRTA HAS NO SPECIFIC TIME FRAME FOR RESOLVING THE HOSTAGE CRISIS. PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FRANCISCO TUDELA, FLANKED BY CONGRESSMAN GILBERTO SIURA, THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR AND A JAPANESE EMBASSY INTERPRETER, WAS ALLOWED TO SPEAK TO REPORTERS AS WELL. TUDELA

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DISAVOWED HIS INVOLVEMENT IN GOP-MRTA NEGOTIATIONS. THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR ALSO SPOKE BRIEFLY AND TOOK PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SECURITY LAPSE WHICH LED TO THE TAKEOVER OF HIS RESIDENCE. SIURA ALSO SPOKE AND EXPRESSED HOPE FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONG PERUVIANS IN THE NEW YEAR.

7. [REDACTED] THE ICRC TOLD US THAT THIS "PRESS OPPORTUNITY" WAS NEGOTIATED BETWEEN GOP EDUCATION MINISTER AND OFFICIAL INTERLOCUTOR WITH THE MRTA DOMINGO PALERMO AND CERPA DURING THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 30. ICRC, HOWEVER, DID NOT WANT TO BE A PARTY TO THE PRESS ARRANGEMENTS. ICRC CHIEF DELEGATE MINNIG REAPPEARED AT THE SCENE AFTER 12:00 P.M., BUT ICRC DID NOT RESUME ITS SUPERVISION OF THE HOSTAGE SITE UNTIL THE PRESS DEPARTED.

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FINANCE MINISTER JORGE CAMET TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE PRESS WERE ONLY SUPPOSED TO APPROACH THE OUTSIDE OF THE RESIDENCE.

HONDURAS SENDS FOREIGN MINISTER

8. (U) HONDURAS IS REPORTEDLY SENDING ITS FOREIGN MINISTER TO MEET WITH GOP OFFICIALS ON DECEMBER 31. THE HONDURAN FOREIGN MINISTER WILL BE THE THIRD FOREIGN MINISTER (AFTER JAPAN AND MALAYSIA) TO TRAVEL TO PERU IN THE WAKE OF THE HOSTAGE CRISIS. MRTA CONTINUES TO HOLD HOSTAGE THE HONDURAN AMBASSADOR, ALONG WITH THE AMBASSADORS FROM JAPAN AND BOLIVIA, AND THE CONSUL GENERAL FROM ARGENTINA.

COMMENT

9. [REDACTED] MRTA COMANDANTE CERPA'S SHRILL REITERATION OF MRTA'S ORIGINAL DEMAND THAT THE GOP RELEASE MRTA PRISONERS INDICATES THAT GOP-MRTA NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOT FAR ALONG. WE EXPECT THAT

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PRESIDENT FUJIMORI'S FRUSTRATION WITH THE MRTA WILL ONLY BE EXACERBATED BY MRTA'S LATEST, UNEXPECTED PRESS APPEAL. ALSO OF CONCERN, THE ICRC WITHDRAWAL FROM THIS "PRESS OPPORTUNITY" INDICATES THAT FISSURES EXIST BETWEEN THE ICRC, THE PRINCIPAL STABILIZING FORCE RIGHT NOW, AND THE GOP, AS WELL AS BETWEEN THE GOP AND MRTA.

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