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Case Number: S200200010

RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D)

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6117  
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AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/28/20  
TAGS: PTER, ASEC, PREL, PINR, KJUS, PE, JA  
SUBJECT: GOP-MRTA TALKS: GETTING DOWN TO THE CORE

REF: A) TOKYO 1809, B) STATE 33159, C) LIMA 1639

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR DENNIS JETT, EMBASSY LIMA,  
FOR REASON 1.5 (D).

[REDACTED]  
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2. [REDACTED] SUMMARY: OUR [REDACTED] INTERLOCUTORS BELIEVE THAT  
BOTH THE GOP AND THE MRTA ARE SERIOUSLY ENGAGED IN  
NEGOTIATIONS WHICH MAY LEAD TO THE HOSTAGE TAKERS' DEPARTURE  
TO CUBA. IN RECOUNTING THE SEVENTH ROUND OF TALKS ON  
FEBRUARY 27, [REDACTED] TOLD AMBASSADOR  
JETT THAT THE MRTA WOULD PROPOSE A "POLITICAL ARMISTICE" OF  
ONE YEAR WITH THE GOP AND THAT THE RED CROSS'S CHIEF  
DELEGATE WAS ALREADY WORKING ON LOGISTICS FOR THE HOSTAGE  
TAKERS' DEPARTURE. THE OVERALL SENSE OF FORWARD MOTION  
ACHIEVED IN THE SEVENTH ROUND WAS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE  
"BITTER" ATMOSPHERE OF THE SIXTH ROUND. THE SOLE TOPIC  
DISCUSSED AT THE FEBRUARY 25 SESSION WAS THE CORE ISSUE OF  
THE RELEASE OF IMPRISONED MRTA MEMBERS, PRODUCING A CLASH  
FROM THE BEGINNING AS EACH SIDE SOUGHT TO DEFINE THE OTHER'S

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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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BOTTOM LINE. OUR [REDACTED] INTERLOCUTORS BELIEVE SUCH DIFFICULTIES ARE INEVITABLE, BUT HOPE THAT TALKS WILL CONCLUDE WITHIN ANOTHER MONTH. HOW QUICKLY (AND HOW SUCCESSFULLY) THE TALKS WILL CONCLUDE, HOWEVER, REMAINS DEPENDENT ON RESOLUTION OF THE CORE ISSUE. THE EIGHTH SESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 3. END SUMMARY.

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TALKS HOME IN ON CORE ISSUE OF PRISONER RELEASES  
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3. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] THAT GOP-MRTA TALKS HAD TAKEN A NEGATIVE TURN DURING THE FEBRUARY 25 ROUND, BUT THAT SUCH A STEP BACKWARDS WAS EXPECTED. THE TALKS LASTED FROM 1615-1900 HRS. WITH TWO BREAKS. FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTH SESSION, MRTA LEADER NESTOR CERPA CARTOLINI APPEARED "TIRED"  
[REDACTED]

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AND STIFF." GOP INTERLOCUTOR DOMINGO PALERMO CABREJOS LATER TOLD THE GUARANTORS THAT A LONG, HEATED DISCUSSION AMONG THE MRTA HOSTAGE TAKERS THE NIGHT BEFORE MAY HAVE BEEN THE REASON FOR CERPA'S HAGGARD APPEARANCE AND LACK OF SOCIABILITY. THE JAPANESE SPECULATED THAT DIFFERENCES AMONG THE MRTA MEMBERS OVER THE TERMS OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT COULD HAVE GENERATED SUCH AN EXCHANGE.

SIXTH ROUND OF TALKS TENSE, EVEN "BITTER"  
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4. [REDACTED] IN CONTRAST TO THE "CORDIAL" AND "CONSTRUCTIVE" FIFTH ROUND, THE FEBRUARY 25 TALKS FOCUSED EXCLUSIVELY ON THE SENSITIVE THEME OF "LIBERATION" OF INCARCERATED MRTA MILITANTS. AFTER INFORMING THE MRTA REPRESENTATIVES THAT HE HAD WORKED ON THE PROJECT UNTIL THREE IN THE MORNING, GOP INTERLOCUTOR PALERMO PRODUCED A LIST OF OVER 400 IMPRISONED MRTA MEMBERS, APPARENTLY BROKEN DOWN BY THEIR PRISON LOCATIONS. PALERMO HANDED THE LIST TO DE FACTO GUARANTOR CHAIRMAN ARCHIBISHOP JUAN LUIS CIPRIANI WHO LATER GAVE IT TO CERPA AND MRTA LIETENANT ROLI ROJAS FERNANDEZ ("EL ARABE") TO STUDY DURING A 15-MINUTE BREAK. PALERMO MADE CLEAR THAT HE WOULD NOT PERMIT THE MRTA LEADERS TO COPY THE LIST.

5. [REDACTED] CERPA'S INITIAL REACTION TO PALERMO'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE LIST OF MRTA PRISONERS WAS TO REPEAT THAT THE MRTA WANTED ALL/ALL OF ITS PRISONERS OUT.  
[REDACTED]

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CERPA SPECIFIED HIS REQUIREMENT THAT A PRINCIPLE OF "SIMULTANEITY" BE OBSERVED DURING THE EXCHANGE OF MRTA-HELD HOSTAGES FOR GOP-HELD PRISONERS. PALERMO REPORTEDLY COUNTERED WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT THE GOP COULD NOT USE THE [REDACTED]

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WORD "EXCHANGE/SWAP" ("CANJE"). ITS USE WOULD DAMAGE THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY. PALERMO SUGGESTED THAT THOUGH "SIMULTANEITY" WAS UNACCEPTABLE, THE GUARANTORS COULD GUARANTEE THAT "SOMETHING" WOULD HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. (COMMENT: THE IDEA OF "SOMETHING" LATER IN EXCHANGE FOR HOSTAGES WAS MENTIONED TO US BY CIPRIANI IN MID-JANUARY. THE DETAILS OF "SOMETHING" HAVE NEVER BEEN MENTIONED. END COMMENT.)

DANGLING A POSSIBLE PRISONER RELEASE PACKAGE BEFORE CERPA  
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6. [REDACTED] AFTER CERPA AND ROJAS RETURNED FROM STUDYING THE LIST, THE MRTA COMANDANTE "TOOK OFF AGAIN," REPEATING HIS BASIC DEMAND. CERPA ARGUED THAT THE LIBERATION OF IMPRISONED MRTA MEMBERS WAS THE "PRICE" THE GOP MUST PAY FOR HAVING ALLOWED THE HOSTAGE CRISIS TO HAPPEN. PALERMO THEN BEGAN PROBING CERPA AS TO WHAT THE MRTA'S BOTTOM LINE WAS. [REDACTED] PALERMO SAID, "I NEED TO KNOW

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WHAT YOUR REAL DEMAND IS SO I CAN MAKE A PACKAGE IF NECESSARY." CERPA RESPONDED THAT HE DID NOT EVEN HAVE DETAILED INFORMATION ON WHO OF HIS IMPRISONED COMRADES WAS WHERE. AFTER PALERMO REPEATED HIS QUESTION, CERPA STATED THAT THE MRTA WANTED ITS TOP LEADERSHIP ("CUPULA") FROM THE [REDACTED]

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PRISONS IN CALLAO, CAJAMARCA, YANAMAYO, LIMA, AND HUANCAYO. CERPA ADDED THAT HE WAS REALLY STILL INTERESTED IN SPRINGING ALL OF HIS MRTA COLLEAGUES.

7. [REDACTED] AFTER CERPA'S DISCLOSURE, PALERMO DID NOT DEVELOP HIS ARGUMENT; HE SIMPLY REPEATED WHAT HE HAD SAID EARLIER. AT THAT JUNCTURE, THE GROUP TOOK A SECOND BREAK DURING WHICH CIPRIANI CONSULTED WITH CERPA AND ROJAS. WHEN THE PARTICIPANTS REASSEMBLED, THE AYACUCHO ARCHBISHOP SUGGESTED THAT THE SESSION BE ADJOURNED AFTER A DATE WAS SET FOR THE NEXT MEETING. HAVING AGREED TO TAKE A DAY OFF BEFORE THE NEXT ROUND--ESPECIALLY FOR THE MRTA TO CONSIDER ITS OPTIONS, THE GROUP DISBANDED FOR THE DAY. WHEN THE RED CROSS'S CHIEF DELEGATE MICHEL MINNING THEN BROUGHT IN COLD BEER--WHICH HAD BEEN REQUESTED AFTER THE LAST SESSION WHEN ONLY SOFT DRINKS WERE AVAILABLE--CERPA DEPARTED WITHOUT JOINING IN THE SOCIALIZING WHICH HAD CHARACTERIZED THE END OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

COMMENT  
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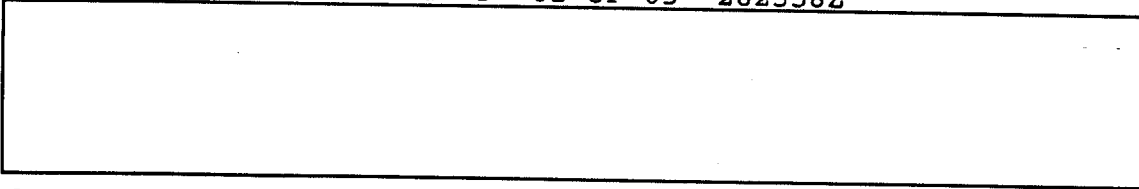
8. [REDACTED] IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE GOP MAY BE CONSIDERING SOME SORT OF DELAYED RELEASE OF SOME OF THOSE IN JAIL. WHAT IS NOT CLEAR IS WHETHER THE GOP IS TALKING ABOUT INNOCENTS FALSELY ACCUSED OF MRTA-RELATED TERRORIST ACTS, MINOR MRTA PRISONERS NEARING THE END OF THEIR SENTENCES, OR MRTA PRISONERS AWAITING TRIAL FOR NONVIOLENT OFFENSES. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE GOP WOULD EVER ACCEDE TO MRTA'S DEMAND THAT ITS LEADERS BE RELEASED. [REDACTED]

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SEVENTH ROUND FOCUSES ON PRISON VISITS AND MRTA "SALIDA"  
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9. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TOLD AMBASSADOR JETT FEBRUARY 28 THAT COMANDANTE CERPA HAD THREATENED TO CANCEL MRTA PARTICIPATION IN THE SEVENTH ROUND OF TALKS AS AN INDICATION OF HIS UNHAPPINESS WITH GOP TREATMENT OF HUNGER-STRIKING PRISONERS AT LIMA'S CASTRO CASTRO PRISON. THE ICRC'S MICHEL MINNIG WAS ABLE TO PERSUADE CERPA THAT IT WAS WORTH HIS WHILE TO CONTINUE THE TALKS ON SCHEDULE. THE FEBRUARY 27 SESSION LASTED FROM 1630-1915 HRS. AND WAS DIVIDED INTO THREE SEGMENTS.

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10. [REDACTED] THE FIRST AND LAST MEETINGS LASTED ABOUT 40 MINUTES EACH AND INCLUDED CERPA, PALERMO, AND CIPRIANI. IN THE HOUR-LONG MIDDLE SESSION WITH ALL OF THE GUARANTORS, INCLUDING MINNIG, AND THE GUARANTOR-OBSERVER PRESENT, THE MRTA CHIEF REQUESTED MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON PRISON CONDITIONS. CERPA SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY PRISON VISITS BY NEUTRAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE ICRC HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED. PALERMO REPLIED THAT SUCH VISITS HAD BEEN SUSPENDED BY PERU'S POLITICAL LEADERS. THE MRTA COMANDANTE ASKED WHY THE GOP HAD FAILED TO MAKE GOOD ON ITS PROMISE TO ALLOW CATHOLIC PRIESTS TO VISIT IMPRISONED MRTA MEMBERS.

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AFTER SOME DISCUSSION, IT WAS AGREED THAT THE COMMISSION OF GUARANTORS WOULD WORK OUT A DRAFT ACTION PLAN TO FACILITATE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH AND THE ICRC TO VISIT PRISONERS. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ON THE SAME TOPIC ENSUED, THEN CIPRIANI ASKED MINNIG TO LEAVE SO THE GROUP COULD MOVE ON TO THE NEXT TOPIC.

REVISED MRTA PRISONER LIST LEAVES CERPA AND ROJAS "RELAXED"  
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11. [REDACTED] PALERMO PRESENTED CERPA AND ROJAS WITH A REVISED LIST OF IMPRISONED MRTA. AFTER TEN MINUTES OF STUDY, THE

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TWO MRTA LEADERS NOTED DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THE NAMES ON THIS LIST AND ONES THEY HAD SEEN PREVIOUSLY. THE JAPANESE OBSERVER, AMBASSADOR TERADA TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES THAT CERPA AND ROJAS SEEMED TO RELAX AFTER EXAMINING THE LIST. CERPA NOTED HIS STRONG INTEREST IN HAVING 47 OF HIS IMPRISONED COMRADES RELEASED FROM THE PRISONS AT CALLAO NAVY BASE, YANAMAYO, CASTRO CASTRO AND CHORILLOS. SAYING HE NEEDED A

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6119  
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LITTLE MORE TIME, PALERMO OFFERED TO PROVIDE A NEW REVISED TEXT AT A FUTURE MEETING.

A "POLITICAL ARMISTICE" AND "NOTHING AGAINST THE JAPANESE"  
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[REDACTED]

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12. [REDACTED] CERPA RECOUNTED THE MRTA'S 1985 OFFER OF A ONE-YEAR "POLITICAL ARMISTICE" TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT ALAN GARCIA. THOUGH THE GOP HAD REJECTED THE SUBVERSIVE

[REDACTED]

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GROUP'S OFFER, THE MRTA IMPLEMENTED THE ARMISTICE UNILATERALLY. CERPA STATED THAT THE MRTA WAS AGAIN PREPARED TO OFFER THE GOP A ONE-YEAR POLITICAL ARMISTICE. CERPA'S NEXT POINT WAS THAT THE MRTA'S DECISION TO TAKE OVER THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE WAS NOT MADE ON THE BASIS OF RACISM. AFTER THIS INCIDENT WAS CONCLUDED, THE MRTA WOULD NOT/TARGET THE JAPANESE OR THEIR ENTERPRISES.

13. [REDACTED] THE GOP INTERLOCUTOR THEN INVITED CERPA TO DISCUSS HIS VIEWS REGARDING CUBA AS A DESTINATION FOR THE HOSTAGE TAKERS. ALTHOUGH CERPA NOTED THAT CUBA HAD MANY PROBLEMS, "INCLUDING THE U.S. EMBARGO," IT SEEMED THAT THE MRTA HOSTAGE TAKERS HAD SETTLED ON CUBA AS THEIR LIKELIEST FOREIGN REFUGE.

ICRC LOOKING TO LOGISTICS OF HOSTAGE TAKERS' DEPARTURE  
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14. [REDACTED]


[REDACTED] THE  
TERRORIST ORGANIZATION'S LEADERS DO NOT EXPECT THAT ALL OF THEIR IMPRISONED COMRADES OR THE TOP LEADERS WILL BE RELEASED. BUT THE MRTA MUST HAVE SOMETHING CONCRETE TO SHOW FOR ITS EFFORTS: "SOME NUMBERS" OF PRISONERS MIGHT BE SUFFICIENT. IN THE ICRC GUARANTOR'S OPINION, IMPRISONED  
[REDACTED]

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MRTA PRISONERS' CASES COULD BE REVIEWED UNDER CERTAIN CRITERIA, E.G., THEIR AGE, HOW LONG THEY HAVE BEEN INCARCERATED, THEIR STATE OF HEALTH, TO YIELD A NUMBER OF MRTA-AFFILIATED PRISONERS ELIGIBLE FOR RELEASE. THE MRTA IS AT PRESENT TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE LIMITS OF THE GOP'S FLEXIIBILITY IN THIS DELICATE PROCESS.

15. [REDACTED] LOOKING AHEAD TO A TIME WHEN THE GOP WOULD BE READY TO ALLOW CERTAIN PRISONERS TO BE "LIBERATED," MINNIG IS PLANNING THE LOGISTICS FOR TWO POSSIBLE DEPARTURE SCENARIOS. HAVING STUDIED THE M-19 CASE IN COLOMRIA, HE IS LOOKING AT THE TIMING OF THE DISARMAMENT OF THE TERRORISTS. UNDER THE FIRST, CERPA WOULD RELEASE THE HOSTAGES AND DEPART AFTER WHICH THE GOP WOULD RELEASE SOME NUMBER OF PRISONERS "TACITLY." (MINNIG REPORTEDLY OBSERVED THAT CERPA WOULD REJECT THIS SOLUTION AS HE HAS "NO CONFIDENCE" IN THE GOP'S COMMITMENT.) THE SECOND OPTION WOULD REQUIRE THE RELEASED  
[REDACTED]


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PRISONERS AND THE MRTA HOSTAGE TAKERS TO DEPART  
SIMULTANEOUSLY AS DEMANDED BY CERPA IN THE SIXTH ROUND OF  
TALKS.  
JETT

  
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