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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LIMA 05059

PANAMA FOR ADS

DIA FOR IR BRANCH

E O 12065 GDS 5/13/88 (THOMPSON, LARRY C) DR-0
TAGS: PINS, PORS, PE
SUBJ: RUI TERRORISM IN AYACUCHO: TRIP REPORT

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT).

2. SUMMARY. EMBASSY NARCOTICS CONTROL OFFICER VISITED
AYACUCHO DEPARTMENT TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
POLICE COMBATTING THE TERRORISM PROBLEM. POLICE STATE
THAT SENDERO LUMINOSO IS WELL-ORGANIZED AND ENJOYS
CONSIDERABLE LOCAL SYMPATHY. POLICE EFFECTIVENESS IS
LIMITED BY LACK OF EQUIPMENT FOR OPERATIONS IN RURAL
AREAS, AND POLICE CONTROL APPEARS CONFINED TO LARGER TOWNS.
IF SENDERO LUMINOSO IS AS UNITED AND COMMITTED AS
AUTHORITIES THINK, THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE POLICE
CAN RESOLVE THE PROBLEM UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS APPEARS
REMOTE. END SUMMARY.

2. NARCOTICS CONTROL OFFICER VISITED AYACUCHO DEPARTMENT
APRIL 26-28 TO MEET WITH POLICE OFFICIALS AND ASSESS
POLICE CAPABILITY TO DEAL WITH TERRORISM. FIVE OF
AYACUCHO'S SEVEN PROVINCES, PLUS ONE PROVINCE FROM EACH
OF TWO ADJOINING DEPARTMENTS, FORM AN "EMERGENCY ZONE",
WITH CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES SUSPENDED AND
STEPPED-UP POLICE PRESENCE.

3. GENERAL SITUATION. THE SITUATION IN THE CITY OF
AYACUCHO AND THE EMERGENCY ZONE WAS QUIET DURING THE
VISIT. A 9:00 PM CURFEW IS STRICTLY ENFORCED IN ALL
URBAN AREAS. AYACUCHO CITY IS IN A DRY, ROCKY ZONE
WITH LIMITED AGRICULTURE AND HERDING. ITS ECONOMY IS
BASED ON TOURISM AND HANDICRAFTS, BOTH MUCH REDUCED AS
A RESULT OF TERRORISM. BUSINESSMEN COMPLAIN ABOUT THE
LOSSES SUFFERED BECAUSE OF THE CURFEW. THE POPULATION
OF AYACUCHO CITY INCLUDES A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS, EITHER
WAITING FOR THE UNIVERSITY TO REOPEN OR ATTENDING
SECONDARY SCHOOLS. ACCORDING TO THE POLICE, THE SCHOOLS
ARE OVERWHELMINGLY LEFTIST. THE MORE OUTSPOKEN POLICE
OFFICIALS DESCRIBE THEM AS "SCHOOLS FOR GUERRILLAS".

4. THE TERRORISTS. POLICE OFFICIALS SAY THAT SENDERO
LUMINOSO IS WELL-ORGANIZED AND INTEGRATED INTO THE
POPULATION, WITH A GREAT DEAL OF LOCAL SYMPATHY. IT
DATES BACK TO THE EARLY 1960'S, WITH THE ARRIVAL OF
ABIMEL GUZMAN, ITS IDEOLOGICAL LEADER. UNDER THE

VELASCO GOVERNMENT (1968-75), LEFTIST PROFESSORS AND
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS UNARMED IN; MANY OF THESE ARE STILL
IN PLACE. EXPERIENCED GUARDIA CIVIL (GC) OFFICERS
DESCRIBED THE PROBLEM AS MORE DANGEROUS THAN EITHER THE
MID-1960'S GUERRILLA OUTBREAK AT LA CONVENCIÓN OR A
TERRORIST UPSURGE IN JAEN IN 1972. THEN, OUTSIDERS
ATTEMPTED TO GRAFT A POLITICAL MOVEMENT ON THE LOCAL
POPULATION. NOW, 90 PERCENT OF THE TERRORIST ARE
FROM AYACUCHO ITSELF, AND MOST OF THE REST HAVE LONG
TIES IN THE DEPARTMENT. THE AYACUCHO TERRORIST ARE
TOUGHER THAN THEIR PREDECESSORS AND MORE IDEOLOGICALLY
COMMITTED. ESTIMATES BY THE POLICE OF THE NUMBER OF
TERRORISTS OR "GUERRILLAS", AS THEY CALL THEM IS
ABOUT 600, WITH SEVERAL THOUSAND ACTIVE OR PASSIVE
SUPPORTERS.

5. THE POLICE SAY THAT ALL TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN
AYACUCHO ARE IN THE HIGHLANDS, WITH NO INCIDENTS IN
ITS JUNGLE REGIONS, AN IMPORTANT COCA GROWING AND
NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AREA. THE TERRORIST HAVE NO
FIXED BASES, ALTHOUGH THE POLICE THINK THEY MIGHT BE
TRYING TO ESTABLISH ONE ON THE PAMPAS RIVER, ABOUT 50
KILOMETERS SW OF AYACUCHO CITY. SEVERAL HACIENDAS IN
THAT AREA HAVE BEEN ATTACKED AND CONFISCATED, WITH THEIR
LAND REDISTRIBUTED AND SOME ELEMENTS OF "LOCAL GOVERNMENT"
ALLEGEDLY SET UP.

6. THE ONLY EVIDENCE THE POLICE CLAIM TO HAVE OF FOREIGN
INVOLVEMENT IS OF TWO PERSONS AMONG THE TERRORIST WHO
DO NOT SPEAK SPANISH AS A NATIVE LANGUAGE. ONE IS
DESCRIBED AS "WHITE" AND THE OTHER, ALLEGEDLY A DOCTOR,
AS "CHINESE". THE POLICE HAVE FOUND A FEW EXPLOSIVES AND
AMMUNITION NOT COMMONLY IMPORTED INTO PERU. LIKEWISE,
THE POLICE HAVE LITTLE INDICATION OF LINKS BETWEEN
NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS AND TERRORISTS. THE TERRORISTS,
HOWEVER, COMMONLY SOLICIT "CONTRIBUTIONS" FROM BUSINESSMEN,
AND SOME NARCOTICS MONEY MAY FIND ITS WAY INTO THE
TERRORIST ORGANIZATION VIA THIS ROUTE.

7. ANTI-TERRORIST PERSONNEL. GC GENERAL HECTOR
RIVERA MURTADO HEADS A JOINT COMMAND OF THE CIVIL GUARD,
PERUVIAN INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (PIP), AND REPUBLICAN GUARD
(GR). RIVERA TOOK CHARGE APRIL 8; THUS FAR, HE HAS HAD
LITTLE SUCCESS, ALTHOUGH HE IS A COMPETENT AND EXPERIENCED
OFFICER WITH PREVIOUS ANTI-TERRORIST EXPERIENCE.

8. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICE ASSIGNED TO THE EMERGENCY ZONE
IS APPROXIMATELY 1000. OF THESE, 200 ARE GC--THE REGULAR
COMPLEMENT OF 400, AND 400 RECENTLY-ASSIGNED "ANTI-

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ACTION MCT-02

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PANAMA FOR ADS

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TERRORIST PERSONNEL. AMONG THE LATTER ARE ABOUT 100 "SINCHIS" FROM AN ELITE UNIT SPECIALLY TRAINED FOR COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS, AND A CONTINGENT OF LIMA RIOT POLICE. THE PIP HAS APPROXIMATELY 100 PERSONNEL IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE, 75 REGULAR AND 25 "ANTI-TERRORISTS", AND THE GR ABOUT 60.

9. THE GC IS WIDELY SCATTERED IN 23 POSTS AROUND THE DEPARTMENT. EVEN SO, SEVERAL SMALLER POSTS HAVE BEEN CLOSED TO CONSOLIDATE FORCES INTO LARGER, MORE SECURE UNITS. THE PIP HAS THREE POSTS AND THE GR TWO. THERE ARE THUS SUBSTANTIAL AREAS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE REMOTE FROM ANY POLICE PRESENCE.

10. THERE ARE ALSO SEVERAL HELICOPTER PILOTS FROM THE AIR FORCE (FAP) IN AYACUCHO TO OPERATE THE THREE HELICOPTERS ON LOAN FOR ANTI-TERRORIST OPERATIONS.

11. MORALE AND EQUIPMENT. THE QUALITY AND MORALE OF THE GC IS GOOD. MOST OF ITS SENIOR OFFICERS ARE COUNTER-INSURGENCY TRAINED AND HAVE EXPERIENCE IN CIVIL DISTURBANCES. THE QUALITY OF THE PIP, BASED ON FIRST IMPRESSIONS, IS CONSIDERABLY LOWER.

12. THE POLICE ARE POORLY EQUIPPED FOR COMBATTING A RURAL INSURGENCY. MOST VEHICLES ARE PATROL CARS AND BUSES, AND RIOT CONTROL EQUIPMENT IMPORTED FROM LIMA IS SUITED ONLY FOR URBAN USE. NEW RADIOS WERE BEING INSTALLED IN GCY POSTS IN AYACUCHO AND HUANTA DURING THE VISIT. PRIOR TO THIS THE 35 GC IN HUANTA HAD NO RADIO COMMUNICATIONS WHATSOEVER. THE GC IN HUANTA WERE ARMED ONLY WITH PISTOLS ALTHOUGH SEVERAL REINFORCEMENTS IN THE CITY HAD SUB-MACHINE GUNS. THERE IS A LACK OF FIELD EQUIPMENT AND ARMS, FOUR WHEEL-DRIVE VEHICLES, AND FUNCTIONING HAND RADIOS.

13. THE THREE FAP HELICOPTERS ARE 8-PASSENGER MODELS, REQUIRING FREQUENT TRIPS TO LIMA FOR MAINTENANCE. (THE MILITARY'S BIG TROOP-CARRYING HELICOPTERS ARE UNSUITABLE FOR THE ALTITUDE.) AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT, ONE OF THE HELICOPTERS WAS IN LIMA FOR MAINTENANCE, AND ANOTHER HAD ONLY THREE HOURS FLYING TIME REMAINING BEFORE MAINTENANCE. GUARDING THE HELICOPTERS AND THE AIRPORT TIES DOWN ABOUT 30 GC'S.

14. THE POLICE BELIEVE THAT WITH THEIR PRESENT NUMBERS THE TERRORISM PROBLEM CAN BE CONTROLLED (OR AT LEAST ANY MAJOR TERRORIST OPERATIONS WILL BE DISCOURAGED), BUT ANTICIPATE RENewed TERRORIST ACTIVITY IF THE REINFORCEMENTS ARE PULLED OUT. ALTHOUGH THE POLICE FAVOR CONTINUING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY THERE APPEARS TO BE NO FIRM GOP POLICY TO KEEP A REINFORCED POLICE PRESENCE IN AYACUCHO. THE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL ARE ASSIGNED ON A TDY BASIS. THE PIP, IN PARTICULAR, APPEARS TO HAVE DIFFICULTY FINDING PERSONNEL WILLING TO BE ASSIGNED TO AYACUCHO. GENERAL LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE POLICE ARE MAKESHIFT AND TEMPORARY. SOME SYMPATHY WAS EXPRESSED FOR THE IDEA OF BRINGING THE PERUVIAN MILITARY (AND ITS EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES) INTO THE STRUGGLE.

15. COMMENT: AYACUCHO HAS BEEN NEAR THE END OF THE POLICE SUPPLY LINE FOR MANY YEARS AND THE ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE TERRORIST PROBLEM IN THE DEPARTMENT HAS NOT REMIDIED THE MATERIEL DEFICIENCIES. THUS, ALTHOUGH GENERAL RIVERA IS RESPECTED, THERE IS PESSIMISM THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH. THE POLICE HAVE LARGELY ABANDONED THE RURAL AREAS TO FOCUS ON THE LARGER TOWNS.

16. IF SENDERO LUMINOSO IS INDEED A WELL-ORGANIZED, UNITED, AND COMMITTED FORCE, THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE POLICE, GIVEN THEIR PRESENT MANPOWER AND EQUIPMENT, CAN RESOLVE THE PROBLEM APPEARS REMOTE. THE POLICE NEED MORE PERMANENT POSTS, MORE VEHICLES, BETTER COMMUNICATIONS, MORE HELICOPTER SUPPORT, BETTER ARMS, FIELD EQUIPMENT, AND INTELLIGENCE.
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