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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION NCT-04

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 AID-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00  
NSCE-00 ARA-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 SY-06 L-03 TRSE-00  
PM-10 PA-01 INRE-00 CA-02 A-02 USSS-00 SYE-00  
USIE-00 FBIE-00 FAIH-01 SLPD-01 /041 W  
-----067661 172203Z /62-R

P 172134Z OCT 88  
FM ANEMBASSY LIMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7322  
INFO ANEMBASSY BOGOTA  
ANEMBASSY LA PAZ  
ANEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
ANEMBASSY QUITO  
USAFSO HOWARD AFB PN  
DIA WASHDC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE		IS/FPC/CDR	Date: 9/12/94
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELEASE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DECLASSIFY	MR Cases Only:	
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCISE	<input type="checkbox"/> DECLASSIFY	EO Citations	
<input type="checkbox"/> DENY	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PART	TS authority to:	
<input type="checkbox"/> DEFER Non-Responsive Info		<input type="checkbox"/> CLASSIFY as	<input type="checkbox"/> S or <input type="checkbox"/> C OADR
FOIA Exemptions		<input type="checkbox"/> DOWNGRADE TS to	<input type="checkbox"/> S or <input type="checkbox"/> C OADR
PA Exemptions			

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, PTER, SHUM, PE  
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON LURIGANCHO KILLINGS

REFS: (A) LIMA 11485, (B) LIMA 11467 N

1. (U) THE OCTOBER 4 DEATHS OF 30 SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) INMATES IN LIMA'S LURIGANCHO PRISON (REF A) HAVE RECEIVED INTENSE SCRUTINY FROM THE MEDIA AND CONGRESS. JUSTICE MINISTER LUIS GONZALES POSADA LED THE GOP'S DEFENSE OF ITS HANDLING OF THE INCIDENT, APPEARING IN CONGRESS ON OCTOBER 10, AND GRANTING SEVERAL INTERVIEWS TO THE PRESS.

2. (U) BASIC ELEMENTS OF GOP POSITION ON LURIGANCHO KILLINGS ARE:

(A) SL INMATES HAD BEEN ARMING THEMSELVES SURREPTITIOUSLY  
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AND WERE PLANNING AN ESCAPE. LOCAL MEDIA HAS GIVEN

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BROAD COVERAGE TO CAPTURED SL WEAPONS AND DOCUMENTS THAT LEND CREDENCE TO GOP CLAIM.

(B) VAST MAJORITY OF DEATHS (26 OF 30) WERE CAUSED BY FIRE, WHICH WAS STARTED BY SL INMATES. TESTIMONY OF OFFICIALS PRESENT AT THE SL CELL BLOCK, AND TELEVISION FOOTAGE, THUS FAR SUPPORT THIS CLAIM. FURTHERMORE, AUTOPSIES OF FIVE VICTIMS REPORTEDLY REVEALED NO EVIDENCE OF BULLET WOUNDS. (HOWEVER, THE BODIES OF TEN UNIDENTIFIED PRISONERS BURIED OCTOBER 10 HAVE BEEN ORDERED EXHUMED AND MAY UNDERGO ADDITIONAL EXAMINATION.) IN ADDITION, ONE TELEVISION STATION BROADCAST AN INTERVIEW ON OCTOBER 15 WITH A SUPPOSED SL INMATE WHO CONFIRMED THAT SL HAD STARTED THE FIRE (HOWEVER, HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT WHEN THE POLICE ENTERED THE CELL BLOCK, THEY "SHOT TO KILL").

(C) CLAIMS TO THE CONTRARY NOTWITHSTANDING, APPROPRIATE GOP OFFICIALS WITNESSED THE ATTACK ON THE CELL BLOCK, INCLUDING THE PRISON DIRECTOR, A JUDGE, AND A PROSECUTOR (FISCAL).

3. (C) COMMENT: COMING CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF THE GARAGAY SQUATTER EVICTION (REF B) AND TWO RECENT PROVEN CASES OF MILITARY ATROCITIES, THE LURIGANCHO DEATHS LED MANY PERUVIANS TO SUSPECT THE WORST INITIALLY. SEVERAL UNITED LEFT (IU) POLITICIANS AND THE MARXIST DAILY "EL DIARIO" SOUGHT TO PLAY ON THIS REACTION AND TO SEEK MAXIMUM POLITICAL ADVANTAGE ON THE KILLINGS. NEVERTHELESS, AT THIS TIME IT APPEARS THAT GOP HAS BEEN ABLE TO DEFEND ITS ACTIONS CONVINCINGLY. HOWEVER, GOP STILL LACKS FULL CONTROL OVER PRISONS,  
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AND POTENTIAL REMAINS FOR RESURGENCE OF VIOLENCE FROM SL AND OTHER INMATES. JORDAN

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