E28

Current Class: [redacted]
Current Handling: NODIS
Document Number: 1993STATE137326

Channel: n/a

PAGE 01 STATE 137326 060024Z
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO LOG-00 CCO-00 ADS-00 /000R

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DRAFTED BY: S/S-O: JOBRIGGS
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TAGS: PHUM, PREL, ASEC, US, PE
SUBJECT: GENERAL ASKS FOR ASYLUM AT U.S. EMBASSY, SAYS THREAT TIED TO HIS EFFORTS TO INVESTIGATE KILLINGS

REF: BRAYSHAW/PATTERSON TELCONS, 5/5/93

1. [redacted] NOFORN - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: GEN. RODOLFO ROBLES AND SIX FAMILY MEMBERS ENTERED EMBASSY EARLY MAY 5 FOR A PURPORTED FAREWELL CALL BEFORE ROBLES TOOK UP HIS ASSIGNMENT TO THE INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE BOARD. ONCE AT DAO, ROBLES REQUESTED ASYLUM FOR HIMSELF AND FAMILY MEMBERS, CLAIMING THREAT -- AND HIS ABRUPT TRANSFER TO WASHINGTON -- WAS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J. OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 1 AUG 2001 200003853

RESULT OF HIS PASSING INFORMATION ABOUT THE "LA CANTUTA" KILLINGS TO THE MILITARY JUDGE REVIEWING THE CASE. ROBLES CLAIMED HE WAS READY TO GO PUBLIC WITH DENUNCIATIONS THAT MONTESINOS AND ARMY COMMANDER HERMOZA WERE PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ARMY/INTEL DEATH SQUADS, AS WELL AS BEING LINKED TO NARCOS. ROBLES SAID HE HAD RECEIVED DEATH THREATS AT HOME, AND THAT TWO OF HIS SONS WHO ARE ARMY OFFICERS WOULD BE ARRESTED OR KILLED SHOULD HE SPEAK OUT. ROBLES CLAIMED HE COULD NOT LEAVE THE EMBASSY BUILDING WITHOUT BEING IN IMMINENT DANGER OF HIS LIFE. CHARGE TOLD ROBLES THAT THE U.S. DID NOT ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED BY MANY LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES ON ASYLUM AT EMBASSIES. USG [redacted]

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CONSIDERS ASYLUM REQUESTS ONLY FROM PERSONS WHO ARE IN THE U.S. WHEN THEY MAKE THE REQUEST OR SEEK PAROLE INTO THE U.S. FROM THIRD COUNTRIES. USG DOES OFFER SHORT TERM PROTECTION IN CASES OF IMMINENT DANGER. ON THIS BASIS, HE SAID ROBLES AND FAMILY COULD STAY IN EMBASSY WHILE HE SOUGHT INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON. WE BELIEVE THAT BY NOW THE ARMY AND SIN PROBABLY KNOW THAT ROBLES HAS SOUGHT ASYLUM. THE ROBLES CASE IS A BOMBSHELL, WITH SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS FOR HERMOZA, MONTESINOS, AND THE PRESIDENT, AS WELL AS FOR ARMY UNITY. ONE OPTION WOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE ROBLES TO SEEK ASYLUM AT A LATIN COUNTRY THAT IS A SIGNATORY TO THE HAVANA AGREEMENT ON ASYLUM (SEE SEPTEL). END SUMMARY.

3. GEN. (THREE STAR) RODOLFO ROBLES ESPINOSA, RECENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE BOARD, ENTERED THE EMBASSY EARLY MAY 5 FOR A FAREWELL CALL ON THE ARMY AND ASSISTANT ARMY ATTACHES. ROBLES, WHO HAD COME WITH HIS WIFE, THREE SONS, A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, AND A GRANDDAUGHTER, PROMPTLY REQUESTED POLITICAL ASYLUM.

4. IN A SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH CHARGE, THE TWO ATTACHES, AND POLCOUNS, ROBLES EXPLAINED HIS REASONS. FLOURISHING AN EIGHT-PAGE HANDWRITTEN PERSONAL STATEMENT, HE CLAIMED THAT HE COULD TESTIFY -- PUBLICLY IF POSSIBLE -- THAT ARMY COMMANDER GEN. NICOLAS HERMOZA AND NATIONAL

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INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (SIN) ADVISER VLADIMIRO MONTESINOS WERE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ARMY/SIN "DEATH SQUADS" THAT HAD CARRIED OUT THE BARRIOS ALTOS KILLINGS AND THE LA CANTUTA DISAPPEARANCES, AS WELL AS THE KILLING OF SL LAWYER FEBRES. ROBLES SAID THAT MONTESINOS PERSONALLY MANAGES, WITH HERMOZA'S KNOWLEDGE, A CORE GROUP OF OFFICERS WHO ARE CALLED TOGETHER WHEN OPERATIONS LIKE LA CANTUTA AND BARRIOS ALTOS ARE TO BE CARRIED OUT. THEY BRING IN SOLDIERS TO DETAIN THE SL SUSPECTS, MURDER THEM, AND DISPOSE OF THE BODIES. THE TROOPS ARE PAID LARGE STIPENDS AND THEN DISPERSED TO THEIR REGULAR UNITS UNTIL NEEDED AGAIN. CHARGE ASKED ROBLES IF HE HAD KNOWLEDGE OF MORE RECENT ACTIONS BY THIS GROUP (LA CANTUTA OCCURRED IN JULY 1992). ROBLES SAID THAT HE DID NOT BUT WAS CERTAIN THAT THE BASIC DOCTRINE OF THE GROUP REMAINED PART OF ARMY POLICY. ROBLES SAID HE HAS RECEIVED THIS INFORMATION FROM OFFICERS IN THE "COMACA" GROUP WHO ARE DISGUSTED WITH THE

ARMY'S INVOLVEMENT IN CORRUPT PRACTICES. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE "COMACA" GROUP WAS LINKED TO REBEL GENERAL JAIME SALINAS SEDO, BUT WAS NOT UNDER HIS COMMAND. ROBLES ALSO ASSERTED THAT THE MONTESINOS/HERMOZA GROUP CONTROLLED AND PROFITTED FROM THE NARCOTICS TRADE IN PERU.

5. ROBLES SAID HE HAD PRESSED MILITARY JUDGE GEN. PICON, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE MILITARY

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JUDICIAL SYSTEMS CASE ON LA CANTUTA, TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER. PICON REPORTEDLY TOLD HIM THAT GEN. HERMOZA HAD ORDERED HIM TO "FREEZE" THE INVESTIGATION, BUT HE ASKED ROBLES FOR NAMES OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE AND FOR DOCUMENTS. ROBLES SAID HE DELIVERED A LIST OF NAMES OF THE ARMY/SIN SQUAD TO GEN. PICON LATE APRIL 26. ON APRIL 28, ROBLES WAS SUMMONED TO GEN. HERMOZA'S OFFICE AT 10:00 P.M. THERE HERMOZA ANNOUNCED THAT ROBLES, WHO WAS HEAD OF THE INSTRUCTION AND DOCTRINE COMMAND, HAD JUST BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE BOARD IN WASHINGTON. HE

WAS TOLD IT WAS URGENT THAT HE ASSUME HIS NEW POST IMMEDIATELY. TWO DAYS LATER, WITH UNPRECENDENTED SPEED, HE WAS OFFERED DOLS 26,000 CASH IN ADVANCE FOR HIS EXPENSES; ROBLES SAID HE STALLED BY ASKING FOR A CHECK.

6. IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS MEETING WITH HERMOZA, ROBLES RETURNED HOME, WHERE HE REPORTEDLY RECEIVED NUMEROUS DEATH-THREATS BY PHONE AGAINST HIM AND HIS FAMILY. ONE OF THE THREATS REPORTEDLY CLAIMED THIS WAS A RESPONSE TO HIS HAVING ATTACKED THE REPUTATION OF THE SIN.

7. ROBLES' QUANDARY IS THAT TWO OF HIS SONS (WHO ACCOMPANIED HIM IN MEETINGS WITH DAO AND CHARGE) ARE ARMY OFFICERS. BOTH ASKED TO RESIGN FROM THE ARMY LAST WEEK; HERMOZA REPORTEDLY DENIED THE REQUESTS, CITING REGULATIONS THAT OFFICERS IN AN EMERGENCY ZONE (LIMA IS UNDER A [redacted]

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STATE OF EMERGENCY) CANNOT RESIGN. ROBLES CLAIMED THAT SUBSEQUENTLY, HE HAD HEARD THAT IF HE SPOKE OUT AGAINST ARMY LEADERSHIP, ONE SON WOULD BE ARRESTED FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING, AND THE OTHER WOULD BE SENT TO THE UPPER HUALLAGA OR AYACUCHO EMERGENCY ZONE WHERE HE WOULD BE KILLED.

8. CHARGE ASKED ROBLES IF HE BELIEVED HE WAS IN IMMINENT DANGER SHOULD HE LEAVE THE EMBASSY. ROBLES SAID THAT HE WAS AS WERE HIS IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS; HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD TOLD HIS ADJUTANT HIS INTENTIONS, AND THAT THIS OFFICER HAD ALREADY LEFT THE EMBASSY AREA. ROBLES SAID THAT HE BELIEVED HE COULD RETURN HOME AND STAY THERE SAFELY ONLY IF THE U.S. OFFICIALLY ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS PROTECTION. ROBLES ASKED EXACTLY WHAT "SHORT TERM PROTECTION IN THE FACE OF IMMINENT DANGER" MEANT IN PRACTICAL TERMS FOR HIM. CHARGE TOLD HIM THAT HE WOULD SEEK INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON ON THIS POINT AND ON HOW THE U.S. COULD HANDLE HIS ASYLUM REQUEST GIVEN OUR NON-ADHESION TO INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS COVERING THE PRACTICE.

9. ROBLES' PERSONAL STATEMENT CONTAINS ONE NEW

PIECE OF INFORMATION: THAT A SPECIAL FORCES DIVISION LIEUTENANT, AQUILINO PORTELLA NUNEZ, AKA "LT. MEDINA," WAS THE PERSON WHO IDENTIFIED THE VICTIMS IN THE LA CANTUTA DISAPPEARANCES.

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OTHERWISE, OUR QUICK READING OF THE DOCUMENT IS THAT IT COINCIDES WITH PREVIOUS ALLEGATIONS OF ARMY INVOLVEMENT IN LA CANTUTA. WHAT STANDS OUT, OF COURSE, IS THAT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT A GENERAL OFFICER HAS EXPRESSED, IN WRITING, ALLEGATIONS THAT HERMOZA, MONTESINOS, AND POSSIBLY EVEN THE PRESIDENT WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEATH SQUAD ACTIVITY. CHARGE ASKED ROBLES IF HE BELIEVED THAT THE INFORMATION HE HAD RECEIVED ON THESE ACTIONS TRACKED CLOSELY WITH THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO CCD DEPUTY HENRY

PEASE IN AN ANONYMOUS DOCUMENT FROM "LEON DORMIDO." ROBLES SAID IT WAS THE SAME INFORMATION, BUT HE HAD SOME ADDITIONAL DETAILS.

10. ROBLES' DOCUMENT ALSO DWELLS CONSIDERABLY ON THE FACT THAT ACCORDING TO ARMY PRACTICE, HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED AS THE ARMY NUMBER THREE (INSPECTOR) IN 1993, BECOMING ARMY COMMANDER IN 1996. IN HIS ORAL PRESENTATION, ROBLES ALSO DEMONSTRATES DEEP IRRITATION THAT THE NORMAL LINE OF SUCCESSION TO TOP COMMAND IN THE ARMY HAD BEEN BROKEN BY THE MONTESINOS/ HERMOZA GROUP AND THAT SEVERAL OFFICERS WHO WERE ENTITLED TO THE TOP JOB COULD NOT HAVE IT. ROBLES LINKED THIS WITH THE FUJIMORI'S LONG TERM POLITICAL PLANS. FUJIMORI, HE ASSERTED INTENDS TO REMAIN IN OFFICE FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD, USING THE ARMY AS HIS SUPPORT BASE. THUS, HE WILL NOT ALLOW OFFICERS WHO DO NOT FULLY SUPPORT

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THIS PLAN INTO COMMAND POSITIONS. IN THIS CONNECTION, ROBLES ASSERTED THAT SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS IN THE MONTESINOS/HERMOZA GROUP HAD GIVEN SERIOUS THOUGHT TO CLOSING CONGRESS IN THE RECENT HERMOZA/CCD CONFRONTATION. ROBLES DEFENDED HIS SUPPORT FOR THE APRIL 5, 1992, COUP, BUT SAID HE REFUSED TO SIGN ANY DOCUMENTS JUSTIFYING HERMOZA'S CONFRONTATION WITH THE CCD

IN MID-APRIL. THIS IS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SITUATION, HE SAID.

11. CHARGE CONVENED [redacted] TO REVIEW SITUATION. NO ONE DISAGREED WITH EVALUATION THAT THE GOP WAS PROBABLY AWARE THAT ROBLES AND FAMILY WERE SEEKING ASYLUM IN THE EMBASSY, AND THAT ROBLES WOULD BE TAKING A STRONG RISK BY LEAVING AT THAT TIME. CHARGE SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY THAT ROBLES' APPEARANCE COULD BE A PROVOCATION/ENTRAPMENT, BUT ALL PRESENT AGREED THAT THIS SEEMED HIGHLY UNLIKELY, GIVEN THE SERIOUSNESS OF HIS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST GOP AND ARMY TOP LEADERSHIP. CHARGE SAID THAT ROBLES AND HIS FAMILY COULD STAY FOR THE TIME BEING IN THE EMBASSY WHILE AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT. B1, 1.5(D)

12. COMMENT: ROBLES' ACTION IS A BOMBSHELL. HIS REPUTATION IN THE ARMY IS THAT OF A STRAIGHT-SHOOTER. IT IS NOT SO MUCH WHAT HE SAYS AS WHO SAYS IT. ONCE IT BECOMES PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, IT WILL NOT ONLY BACK THE ARMY INTO A CORNER ON THE [redacted]

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LA CANTUTA INVESTIGATION, IT WILL FURTHER INCREASE DISSENSION WITHIN THE ARMY. IT IS A DIRECT CHALLEGE TO HERMOZA, MONTESINOS, AND THE PRESIDENT. ROBLES' ACTIONS HAVE, IN OUR OPINION, PLACED HIS AND HIS FAMILY'S LIVES IN DANGER, ALTHOUGH THE GOP WOULD NOT NECESSARILY RESPOND TO HIS CHALLENGE WITH VIOLENCE. A MORE LIKELY RESPONSE, DEPENDING ON WHAT HE SAYS IN PUBLIC, WOULD BE TO HARASS HIM AND POSSIBLY TO PROSECUTE HIM AND HIS SONS FOR REAL OR IMAGINED OFFENSES.

13. ONE OPTION IS TO ENCOURAGE ROBLES TO SEEK ASYLUM AT A LATIN EMBASSY, IDEALLY ARGENTINA, THAT HAS PREVIOUSLY GRANTED ASYLUM TO PERUVIANS. (THIS ASSUMES ROBLES COULD MAKE IT TO THE ARGENTINE EMBASSY SOME SIX BLOCKS AWAY.) ROBLES TOLD US HE WOULD CONSIDER DOING THIS IF THE U.S. OPTION DID NOT WORK OUT. THE GOP, HOWEVER, MIGHT RESPOND BY REFUSING A SAFE-CONDUCT PASS FOR THE ROBLES FAMILY, CITING THE ABSENCE OF ANY PENDING JUDICIAL ACTIONS AGAINST THEM.
BRAYSHAW UNQUOTE WHARTON