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PRESS RELEASE

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The House Interior Subcommittee on Mines and Mining will visit three South American countries which supply the United States with strategic imported minerals.

On January 7 and 8, Interior Committee members, led by Subcommittee Chairman James D. Santini, (D-Nev.), will confer with Venezuelan Government officials as a follow up to five agreements signed in 1980 between the U.S. and Venezuela.

The energy and geological agreements call for cooperation between the two countries in scientific and technological research as well as providing for an interchange of personnel and information. The Subcommittee hopes this cooperation will provide a mutually beneficial approach to the question of the availability of vital minerals.

Venezuela contains the world's single largest supply of heavy oil. The Subcommittee will visit the heavy oil fields at Lake Maracaibo where enhanced recovery methods of production, utilizing steam injection, are employed.

On January 9 and 10, the Subcommittee will travel to Peru, one of the world's largest producers of copper. After meeting with Peruvian energy and mining officials, members of the committee will travel to

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Southern Peru for a visit to a copper smelter and open pit mine.

Between January 11 and 18, the Subcommittee will visit Brazil upon whose vast resources the United States is greatly dependent. Separate trips are planned to mining operations for manganese, niobium, and oil shale. In addition, the Members will visit a vast hydroelectric project and meet with leaders of the Brazilian government.

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