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ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 SY-06
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P R 082121Z APR 83
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8097
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
USCINSSOUTH QUARRY HTS PN
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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
DIA WASHDC

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PANAMA FOR ADS

DIA FOR IR BRANCH

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PTER, PINS, PE

SUBJ: (LOU) PERUVIAN TERRORISM TURNS BLOODIER, BUT NOT
NECESSARILY ACCORDING TO PLAN

REFS: A) LIMA 1913; B) LIMA 2197 (NOTAL); C) LIMA 2356

1. (U) PERU'S BLOODIEST TERRORIST MASSACRES YET LEFT
AN ESTIMATED 50-100 DEAD IN WEEKEND VIOLENCE. INFORMATION
FILTERING OUT OF THE ISOLATED CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IDENTIFIES
AT LEAST THREE SEPARATE INCIDENTS IN OR NEAR THE EMERGENCY
ZONE IN WHICH ARMED SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) BANDS ENTERED
UNDEFENDED VILLAGES AND, AFTER SUMMARY "PEOPLE'S JUSTICE"

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TRIALS, PUBLICLY EXECUTED A BROAD RANGE OF VICTIMS. THREE

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DIED ON APRIL 2 ATTACK ON A SMALL VILLAGE OF CALCA (HUANCAYO PROVINCE, DEPARTMENT OF JUNIN). DEPENDING ON WHOSE ACCOUNT YOU BELIEVE, SOME 45, 80, OR UPWARDS OF 100 VILLAGERS WERE KILLED ON APRIL 3 INCIDENTS IN SANTIAGO DE LUCANAMARCA AND HUANCASANCOS, BOTH IN VICTOR FAJARDO PROVINCE (DEPARTMENT OF AYACUCHO).

2. (U) REASONS FOR THIS RENEWED SPATE OF SL KILLINGS, WHICH WERE MARKED BY UNACCUSTOMED BRUTALITY, DIFFER. MARXIST LIMA DAILY "EL DIARIO", NOTED FOR ITS PRO-SL SLANT, ACKNOWLEDGES POSSIBILITY THAT SOME "INNOCENT" PERSONS DIED BUT ATTRIBUTES MASSACRES TO SL VENGEANCE ON VILLAGERS WHO HAD COOPERATED WITH GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES AND TURNED IN TERRORISTS. OTHER ACCOUNTS SPEAK OF BALKED SL RECRUITMENT EFFORTS: WHEN VILLAGERS REFUSED TO JOIN THE "ARMED STRUGGLE," INFURIATED TERRORISTS KILLED ALL.

3. (U) COMMENT: AS ALWAYS, NEWS ON EMERGENCY ZONE DEVELOPMENTS IS NOT EASY TO COME BY AND HARD TO DECIPHER. BUT AMONG THE RUMORS, EXAGGERATIONS, AND DENIALS, SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS EMERGE THAT, UNTIL HARDER DATA DISPLACES THEM, SEEM PROBABLE:

A. THE SL HAS COME A LONG WAY FROM THE ROMANTIC DAYS OF 1980. THE IMAGE OF SHERWOOD FOREST TENDED TO LINGER, EVEN AFTER DEVELOPMENTS TOOK A BLOODY TURN IN LATE 1981. BUT EVEN THE REPLACEMENT IMAGE OF METHODOICAL RUTHLESSNESS SERVED SENDERO'S PURPOSES. WITH GOVERNMENT FORCES ON THE RUN, SENDERO'S EFFICIENT ASSASSINATIONS AND WIDENING SPHERE OF OPERATION PRODUCED A PUBLIC IMPRESSION OF INEXORABLE MANACE THAT, AMONG OTHER EFFECTS, INTRIGUED SOME ELEMENTS OF THE (LEGAL)

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RADICAL LEFT. WHEN GOVERNMENT FORCES COUNTERATTACKED IN FEBRUARY AND AMRCH (REFS A AND B), , THEY DESTROYED THAT IMPRESSION. NOW, IT WOULD SEEM, SENDERO IS RAISING THE PRICE OF OPPOSITION.

B. WE ASSUME THAT ADDITIONAL FACTORS ARE AT PLAY ALSO. THE REPORTED INDISCRIMINATE VICTIMIZATION POINTS TO CRIMES BASED ON AROUSED PASSION AS MUCH AS IDEOLOGICAL DEDICATION. THE UCHURUCCAY INVESTIGATING COMMISSION'S REPORT AND PREVIOUS EMBASSY CABLES (REFS A AND C) REFER TO TRADITIONAL RIVALRIES IN THE HIGHLANDS, TO "FRONTIER

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JUSTICE", AND TO THE AGGRAVATION OF PRE-EXISTING TENSIONS CAUSED BY THE EBB AND FLOW OF FORCES "OF ORDER". IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-TERRORIST OFFENSIVE MUST BE AFFECTING SL COMMUNICATIONS COMMAND AND CONTROL--A PROBLEM UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES FOR A CLANDESTINE ORGANIZATION SPREAD OUT IN TORTUOUS TERRAIN. THUS WE SURMISE LOWER ECHELON LIEUTENANTS AND SUB-LIEUTENANTS--SOME LITTLE MORE THAN TEENAGERS, SWAYED ONLY IN PART BY IDEOLOGY AND MUCH BY EMOTION, OPPORTUNISM, AND FEAR--CAN MOBILIZE SUPPORT GROUPS AND ENGAGE IN ACTIONS WITHOUT DIRECT CONTROL BY SENDERO'S TOP LEADERSHIP.

C. THE GOP STANDS TO BENEFIT INTERMS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS. LEFTIST CRITICS HAVE KEPT THE GOVERNMENT OFF BALANCE WITH CHARGES THAT SECURITY FORCES HAVE NOT RESPECTED HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE. IN THE WAKE OF THESE MASSACRES, SO CLEARLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO SL, FOREIGN AND THE DOMESTIC LEFT WILL FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT NOT TO RECOGNIZE SL'S ATROCITIES. THEN TOO, THOSE IN THE HIGHLANDS MAY NOT REGARD SOLDIERS AND POLICE IN THEIR MIDST AS FRIENDS, BUT GARRISONED TOWNS OFFER GUARANTEES OF SECURITY FRIGHTENINGLY ABSENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.
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