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ACTION MCT-02

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-10 CIAE-00 H-01
NSC-01 ARA-16 NSAE-00 SY-06 HA-08 -03 PM-08
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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
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DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 8462

EO 12356: DECL: 8/12/89
TAGS: PTER SHUM PE
SUBJECT: (U) PERUVIAN TERRORISM: AUGUST 1-12
ROUNDUP

PANAMA FOR ADS, DIA FOR IR BRANCH

REFS: (A) LIMA 5561; N/A (B) LIMA 7787 ✓

1. (C) SUMMARY. A POTPOURRI OF EVENTS IN FIRST HALF OF AUGUST REFLECT BOTH PROGRESS AND DIFFICULTIES IN PERU'S ANTITERRORIST FIGHT. POLICE IN AREQUIPA AND LIMA CONTINUE TO FOLLOW-UP LEADS AND MAKE ARRESTS. POLICE INVESTIGATIONS ARE ALSO FREEING CLEARED SUSPECTS, WHILE COURT SYSTEM IS PROCESSING THOSE INDICTED FOR TERRORIST ACTS COMMITTED IN 1980 AND 1981. BUT MOST TERRORIST NEWS REMAINS SPOTTY AND OF QUESTIONABLE ACCURACY, WITH

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DEFERRED INTERPRETATIONS AVAILABLE AT BOTH PRESS AND

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OFFICIAL LEVELS. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) FOLLOW-UP ARRESTS CONTINUE. BOTH IN LIMA AND AREQUIPA, PERU'S NATIONAL POLICE SERVICES CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE CAPACITY TO PERFORM ROUTINE POLICE WORK OF TRACKING DOWN SUSPECTS AND FOLLOWING-UP LEADS. THE MAY ARREST IN AREQUIPA OF WEST GERMAN NATIONAL RENATE HEHR (REF A) CRACKED A SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) ORGANIZATION ASSOCIATED WITH TERRORIST INCIDENTS BOTH THERE AND IN CUSCO. FOLLOWING PRESS LEAKS, INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (PIP) IN AREQUIPA ACKNOWLEDGED AUGUST 5 DETENTION OF TEN ALLEGED SL LEADERS LINKED TO HEHR. WITH LESS RETICENCE, PIP AUTHORITIES IN LIMA STAGED PRESENTATION AUGUST 10 AND 11 OF EIGHT SUSPECTS ACCUSED OF PARTICIPATING IN NUMEROUS INCIDENTS OCCURRING IN METROPOLITAN AREA IN RECENT MONTHS. MOST REVEALING DETAIL TO EMERGE WAS CLARIFICATION THAT, IN ONE OF SEVERAL ATTACKS STAGED IN LIMA NIGHT OF JULY 25, SL UNIT THAT HIT DOWNTOWN BUILDING HOUSING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY OF SAN MARCOS (REF B) HAD INTENDED TO HIT NEARBY MILITARY COMMAND HEADQUARTERS.

3. (U) IN GENERAL, BOTH PRESS AND OFFICIAL REPORTING ON TERRORIST INCIDENTS REMAINS SPOTTY, INEXACT, AND OFTEN CONTRADICTORY. LIMA'S LARGEST CIRCULATION DAILY, SOCIALIST-SENSATIONALIST "REPUBLICA," LAMENED IN AUGUST 8 EDITORIAL THAT "ALL INFORMATION THAT ARRIVES AT NEWSPAPER OFFICES IS FRAGMENTARY, INCONSISTENT, OBLIQUE, AND THE ONLY THING THAT CAN EMERGE IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IS MYSTERY, STIRRED UP BY THE PROLIFERATION OF DEATHS."

4. (U) COMMON CRIMES OR POLITICAL TERRORISM?

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LIMA'S PRESS CARRIED ACCOUNTS IN FIRST DAYS OF AUGUST CONCERNING SERIES OF BANK ROBBERIES, EFFECTED BY "PRESUMED TERRORISTS" WHO KIDNAPPED KEY BANK ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL TO FORCE RANSOM PAYMENTS. NO LESS A FIGURE THAN PIP HEAD, GENERAL RODOLFO BALLESTEROS, STATED POLICE WERE CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY THAT SL LAY BEHIND KIDNAPPINGS. BUT ON AUGUST 10 PIP ANNOUNCED IDENTIFICATION OF TWO MEMBERS OF FOUR-MAN BRND, THUS PLACING EVENTS ENTIRELY IN "COMMON CRIMES" CATEGORY.

5. (U) ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRYSIDE, SIMILAR EXAMPLES
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FILLED NEWS ACCOUNTS, WITH "TERRORIST" OR "CRIMINAL" LABEL APPLIED IN NONE TOO SELECTIVE A MANNER. "SENDERISTAS" ROBBED CATTLE, FARMING EQUIPMENT, SEEDS AND FERTILIZER AUGUST 4 IN HUANTA PROVINCE (AREA INSIDE SOUTH CENTRAL HIGHLANDS "EMERGENCY ZONE"), WHILE "RUSTLERS" STRUCK AUGUST 10 IN ANTABAMBA (OUTSIDE THE ZONE), MAKING OFF WITH 200 ALPACAS. ON AUGUST 11, "TERRORISTS" DYNAMITED TELEPHONE LINES AT AN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE NEAR CHICLAYO, WHERE WORKERS ARE ON STRIKE. "TERRORISTS BELONGING TO SENDERO LUMINOSO" STOLE GOODS AND KILLED A MERCHANT AUGUST 10 NEAR HUANUCO--AN AREA IN WHICH SL IS NOT KNOWN TO BE ACTIVE.

6. (U) SIX SL DEAD--KILLED OR MURDERED? PRESS ACCOUNTS OF JULY 24 AGREED IN THAT SIX SENDERISTAS DIED IN CURGOS, A RURAL COMMUNITY IN DEPARTMENT OF LA LIBERTAD. THE SIX, ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL POLICE VERSION, WERE GUNNED DOWN IN COMBAT. BUT WITNESSES CLAIMED OTHERWISE AND, ON AUGUST 10, POLICE CONFIRMED DEATHS WERE ORDERED BY A GUARDIA CIVIL (GC) CAPTAIN, SINCE REMOVED FROM SERVICE.

7. (C) COMMENT: DECLARATIONS BY TOP GOP OFFICIALS NOTWITHSTANDING, VIGNETTES SUCH AS THOSE ABOVE CONTINUE TO DOCUMENT VARIOUS SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR SENDERO. IN FINAL ANALYSIS, AS "REPUBLICA" LAMENTS, WHILE INCIDENCE OF VIOLENCE AND DEATH ARE FACTS: THE
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DETAILS AND MOTIVATIONS REMAIN CLOUDY.
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