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ACTION ARA-00

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 AID-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9366
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
DIA WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 4720

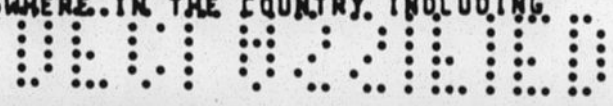
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PTER, SHUM, PINS, PE
SUBJECT: VIOLENCE MARS HOLY WEEK IN PERU

REF LIMA 4595 ✓

1. (C) SUMMARY: COORDINATED DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS SET OFF BY
TERRORISTS, AND RANDOM SHOOTING INCIDENTS INVOLVING DRUNK
POLICEMEN, MARRED HOLY WEEK CLLEBRATIONS IN SEVERAL PERUVIAN
CITIES. ALTHOUGH CITY OF AYACHCHO ITSELF CELEBRATED A
SURPRISINGLY "QUIET" HOLY WEEK, TERRORIST RELATED
DEATHS CONTINUED IN SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE. LIMA ESPERIEENCED
DYNAMTE EXPLOSIONS ON THREE SEPARTE DAYS, BUT ONLY ONE PERSON
WAS HURT. VIOLENCE ELESWHERE. IN THE COUNTRY. INCLUDING

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INCIDENTS POSSIBLY RELATING TO DRUG TRAFFIC, LEFT A

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DOZEN PEOPLE KILLED OR INJURED. DESPITE HIGH VISIBILITY OF LIMA EXPLOSION, WE VIEW THEM AS SYMPTOMATIC OF TERRORISTS' CONTINUING ORGANIZATIONAL WEAKNESS IN CAPITAL, WHERE POLICE' ANTI-TERRORIST UNIT CONTINUES TO FOLLOW-UP LEADS AND MAKE ARRESTS. END SUMMARY

2. (U) HOLY WEEK IN AYACUCHO ALMOST NORMAL. CHURCH, MILITARY, AND GOP AUTHORITIES COOPERATED TO PROMOTE HOLY WEEK CELEBRATIONS IN CITY OF AYACUCHO THIS YEAR. "POLITICAL MILITARY COMMAND" MADE SPECIAL EFFORTS TO ASSURE SECURITY FOR RELIGIOUS CELEBRANTS, WHILE CHURCH AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES ENCOURAGED TOURISTS TO VISIT WITH PROMISES OF TRADITIONAL SPECTACLES AND REDUCED RESTAURANT AND HOTEL ACCOMMODATION RATES. AYACUCHO'S FAMED ARTISANS WERE INCLUDED IN PLANS, WITH THEIR HOLY WEEK FARI RESTORED (AFTER HAVING BEEN SUSPENDED LAST TWO YEARS). CITY'S BISHOP, MSGR. FEDERICO RICHTER, ASSURED ALL THAT SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) TERRORISTS WOULD POSE NO PROBLEM, SINCE TERRORISTS STAND "AGAINST SOCIAL ORDER, BUT NOT AGAINST RELIGION."

3. (U) BY AND LARGE, BISHOP'S ASSURANCES WERE WELL PLACED. SENDERO INAUGURATED HOLY WEEK WITH MID-MORNING SERIES OF DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS (SUNDAY, APRIL 18), THAT SERVED TO DISTRIBUTE AND CALL ATTENTION TO PROPAGANDA HANDBILLS. OTHER DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS, ACCOMPANIED BY ELECTRICAL BLACKOUT, SET STAGE FOR FRIDAY NIGHTS MAJOR PROCESSION. MORE SL HANDBILLS WERE LAUNCHED (VIA DYNAMITE EXPLOSION) ON SATURDAY. NEIGHBORING CITY OF HUANTA TO NORTH EXPERIENCED SERIES OF FOUR EXPLOSIONS ON THURSDAY, APRIL 19, TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH END OF YEARLY EVENING RELIGIOUS SERVICES. ALTHOUGH EXPLOSIONS PROFANED HOLIDAY PERIOD'S MOOD, THEY CLAIMED NO REPEAT NO VICTIMS

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4. (U) VIOLENCE AS USUAL ELSEWHERE IN ZONE. TERRORIST-COUNTERTERRORIST WAR CONTINUED TO CLAIM LIVES IN OTHER PARTS OF EMERGENCY ZONE. THREE PEASANTS DIED APRIL 21 IN OCCOLLO, EXECUTED BY SL AS ALLEGED PRISONERS, ON SABBATH DAY, MAJOR OF CHIARA (PROVINCE OF HUANANCA) WAS FOUND SHOT; HE HAD BEEN SOUTH BY POLICE FOR ALLEGED PARTICIPATION IN SERIES OF ASSAULTS AND ROBBERIES AGAINST RESIDENTS OF AREA. CORPSES OF TWO MEN IN LATE TWENTIES WERE FOUND EARLY MORNING APRIL 21 SHORT DISTANCE OUTSIDE

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AYACUCHO. SL ATTACK MORNING APRIL 22 ON HUAMANGILLA (PROVINCE OF HUANTA) LEFT TOWN'S MAJOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR DEAD. BODY OF PRESUMED TERRORIST, FOUND APRIL 20, WAS BLOWN TO PIECES WHEN DYNAMITE EXPLODED PREMATURELY IN HIS HAND.

5. (U) SL INCURSION IN ICA. SL ACTIVISTS IN DEPARTMENT OF ICA STRUCK GOVERNMENT BUILDING AND POLICE TARGETS ON APRIL 20. THREE EXPLOSIONS SHOOK CITY OF ICA, WHILE TWO OTHERS OCCURRED IN NEARBY PISCO. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS IN BOTH CITIES WERE DAMAGED, BUT THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES.

6. (U) INCIDENTS IN LIMA. SL PULLED OFF COORDINATED SERIES OF DYNAMITE BOMBINGS IN CAPITAL ON THREE SEPARATE DAYS. EXPLOSIONS OCCURRED AT FIVE LOCATIONS NIGHT OF APRIL 16; FOUR OTHERS TOOK PLACE MORNING OF FOLLOWING DAY. SL RETURNED NIGHT OF 21ST, ATTACKING THREE SITES IN LIMA AND TWO IN PORT OF CALLASO. BANKS WERE MAIN TARGET, BUT TERRORISTS ALSO HIT INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (PIP) STATION IN RINAC AND PARK LOCATED 80 METERS FROM AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, ONLY INJURY WAS THAT SUSTAINED BY PASSERBY IN AREA OF APRIL 17 BLAST SOME 100 METERS FROM DOWNTOWN PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. SL KEPT CITY NERVOUS THROUGHOUT WEEK WITH FALSE ALARM TELEPHONE CALLS, INCLUDING ONE ASSERTING THAT BOMB HAD BEEN PLACED IN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES.

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7. (U) MORE SERIOUS INCIDENT OCCURRED NIGHT OF APRIL 19, WHEN CAR CARRYING FIVE PERSONS OPENED FIRE WHEN CHALLENGED BY POLICEMEN NEAR PIP STATION IN SAN JUAN DE MIRAFLORES SECTION OF CIT. POLICE RETURNED FIRE KILLING ONE AND INJURING OTHERS ALTHOUGH INITIAL REPORTS IDENTIFIED ATTACKERS AS "PRESUMED TERRORISTS." SUBSEQUENT REPORTS DISCLOSED THEY WERE COMMON CRIMINALS. MOST NOTEWORTHY DETAIL TO INCIDENT IS THAT CRIMINAL BANK INCLUDED A CIVIL GUARD (CG), A FACT THAT RAISED INITIAL ALARM THAT TERRORISTS HAD SUCCEEDED IN "INFILTRATING" MEMBERS INTO SECURITY FORCES.

8. (U) OTHER PROBLEMS WITH POLICE. WHILE SENDERO CELEBRATED HOLY WEEK WITH VIRTUALLY CASUALTY FREE DYNAMITINGS, CELEBRATIONS BY INDIVIDUAL POLICEMEN ENDED

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LESS INNOCENTLY. SPECTACULAR EARLY MORNING SHOOTOUT APRIL 21 IN DOWNTOWN HUANCAMELICA (INSIDE EMERGENCY ZONE) LEFT ONE POLICEMAN DEAD AND FOUR OTHERS (INCLUDING ONE CIVILIAN) SERIOUSLY INJURED. SHOOTOUTS' PROTAGONISTS WERE RIVAL CIVIL GUARDS (GC) AND REPUBLICAN GUARDS (GR), SEVERELY INJURED REPORTER FOR "EXPRESSO" (PRO-GOVERNMENT LINA DAILY) APRIL 18 IN HUANTA (ALSO IN EMERGENCY ZONE). TWO DAYS LATER, SIMILARLY DRUNK GC SHOT AND KILLED RADIO BROADCASTER IN CERRO DE PASCO, WHILE YET ANOTHER DRUNK GC SHOT LOCAL MERCHANT TO DEATH IN TOWN OF LABAYEQUE (BOTH OF LATTER SITES BEING OUTSIDE EMERGENCY ZONE).

9. (U) MORE "MARCOTERRORISM." COMPLETING THE PICTURE OF "HOLY WEEK 1984" VIOLENCE CONTINUED TO CLAIM LIVES AND PROPERTY IN DRUG INFESTED AREA OF UPPER HUALLAGA VALLEY (REFTEL). AS IN PREVIOUS INSTANCES, ELEMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLENCE REMAIN DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY
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WITH PRECISION.

10. (C) COMMENT: HOLY WEEK DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS IN AYACUCHO REPRESENTED A CALIBRATED SL EFFORT TO ACCORD CITY A "TRUCE" (MUCH WORSE VIOLENCE IS THE NORM). THEY REMINDED ALL OF SL'S PRESENCE WITHOUT, AT SAME TIME, AFFRONTING CATHOLIC FAITH OR HIERARCHY OF CHURCH. SL'S LINA EFFORTS, BY CONTRAST, RAISED SPECTER OF RENEWED TERRORIST SURGE IN CAPITAL. BUT WE NOTE THAT IT TAKES LITTLE SOPHISTICATION OR PLANNING TO THROW LIGHTED STICKS OF DYNAMITE FROM MOVING CAR WINDOWS (SL'S TYPICAL MODUS OPERANDI HERE), AND THIS PRACTICE HAS COST SENDERO'S METROPOLITAN INFRASTRUCTURE DEALY IN THE PAST. POLICE IN LIMA, AS IN OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY, SUFFER FROM POOR PAY, TRAINING, AND DISCIPLINE. BUT THEY CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE AN ABILITY TO FOLLOW-UP CLUES AND TRACK DOWN CRIMINALS, AND THE PIP'S ANTI-TERRORIST UNIT (DIRCOTE) HAS HOWN PARTICULAR SUCCESS. WE EXPECT MORE ARRESTS WILL FOLLOW.

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