

~~SECRET~~

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**ENVELOPE**

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**HEADER**

R 250144Z MAY 88 ZYS  
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**CONTROLS**

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DO NOT TRANSMIT VIA OPINTEL BROADCAST

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**CLASS**

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**BODY**

SERIAL: DIADIN 145-2E

SUBJ: **PERU**: ARMY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. (U)

DOI: 24 MAY 88 (AS OF 2133 EDT)

TEXT: 1. (~~SECRET~~) [ ] NEWLY INSTALLED PRIME MINISTER

VILLANUEVA'S RESPONSE TO A RECENT MASSACRE OF PEASANTS MAY SIGNAL A NEW POLICY TOWARD THE ARMED FORCES THAT COULD DISCOURAGE MILITARY COUP PLOTTING AND MEET DEMANDS FOR STRONGER COUNTERINSURGENCY EFFORTS.

2. (~~SECRET~~) [ ] ON 18 MAY VILLANUEVA MET WITH DEFENSE MINISTER LOPEZ ALBUJAR AND OTHER HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS TO DISCUSS ALLEGATIONS THAT THE ARMY WAS INVOLVED IN KILLING A LARGE NUMBER OF PEASANTS IN AYACUCHO DEPARTMENT, ABOUT 380 KM SOUTHEAST OF LIMA. FOLLOWING THE MEETING, VILLANUEVA DRAFTED A COMMUNIQUE THAT STATED A MASSACRE DID NOT TAKE PLACE, BUT THAT THE ARMY HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN A CLASH WHILE PURSUING FLEEING REBELS WHO HAD AMBUSHED AN ARMY CONVOY.

3. (~~SECRET~~) [ ] THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD THE OFFICERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SUPPORT ENERGETIC ANTIINSURGENT ACTIONS. HE REPORTEDLY REMARKED THAT HE DID NOT CARE IF THE ARMY EXECUTED EVERY **SENDERO LUMINOSO** (SL) GUERRILLA IT CAPTURED AS LONG AS SUCH EXECUTIONS WERE ACCOMPLISHED DISCREETLY. VILLANUEVA ALSO STATED THAT ANY EFFORT BY THE OPPOSITION TO LAUNCH AN INVESTIGATION INTO

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THE MASSACRE WOULD BE IMMEDIATELY DEFEATED.

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4. ~~(S//NF//NF)~~ [redacted] COMMENT: [redacted]  
CONFIRMED THAT A MASSACRE OF 93 SL SUSPECTS AND CIVILIANS TOOK PLACE ON THE 14TH NEAR CAYARA, AYACUCHO DEPARTMENT. THE ARMY HAS BEGUN AN INVESTIGATION, AND TWO OFFICERS ARE BEING HELD FOR QUESTIONING. ALTHOUGH ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES HAVE SURFACED REGULARLY IN THE PAST, GOVERNMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN OVERLY CONCERNED WITH THIS ASPECT. PRESIDENT GARCIA, HOWEVER, MAY USE THIS MASSACRE EPISODE TO ASK FOR THE RESIGNATION OF ALBUJAR, WHO IS VIEWED AS UNSUPPORTIVE OF GARCIA'S RULING AMERICAN POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY ALLIANCE (APRA) PARTY. THE PRESIDENT MAY REPLACE HIM WITH AN OFFICER MORE CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH APRA'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

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5. ~~(S//NF//NF)~~ [redacted] VILLANUEVA'S DECISION TO COVER UP THE ARMY KILLINGS IS PROBABLY DESIGNED TO APPEAL TO THE MILITARY. MANY OFFICERS BELIEVE THE DECISION WILL DEPICT THE GOVERNMENT AS MORE SUPPORTIVE OF THE MILITARY'S DESIRE TO PURSUE AN AGGRESSIVE ANTI-INSURGENT CAMPAIGN. THE MILITARY HAS LONG BEEN FRUSTRATED OVER ITS LACK OF A FREE REIGN IN DEALING WITH THE SL AND PERU'S OTHER INSURGENT ORGANIZATION, THE TUPAC AMARU REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT. VILLANUEVA'S MOVE MAY ALSO CHANGE MANY OFFICERS' VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT AS ANTAGONISTIC TO THE MILITARY, AND IT COULD UNDERMINE THE CONTINUING COUP PLOTTING WITHIN THE OFFICER CORPS. VILLANUEVA'S SUCCESS IN DEFLECTING INQUIRIES AND THWARTING OPPOSITION EFFORTS TO PURSUE AN INVESTIGATION REGARDING THE MASSACRE IS LIKELY TO HAVE CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON FUTURE GOVERNMENT-MILITARY RELATIONS.

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**ADMIN**

PREP: [redacted]

DECL: [redacted]

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