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BODY

SUBJ: NAVATAC SUPPLEMENT - PERU: ARREST OF KEY SENDERO LUMINOSO LEADER (U)

- (u) 1. (C) THE RECENT ARREST OF THE SECOND-IN-COMMAND OF SENDERO LUMINOSO (SHINING PATH -SL) WILL HAVE LITTLE LONG TERM EFFECT ON TERRORISM IN PERU. ALTHOUGH SL MIGHT TEMPORARILY APPEAR TO BE FACED WITH A MAJOR SETBACK, IT WILL CONTINUE TERRORIST ACTIVITIES PRIMARILY DIRECTED AGAINST THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT. INCREASED SL ACTIONS TARGETING PERUVIAN COUNTERTERRORIST FORCES SUCH AS THE ARMED FORCES AND PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL POLICE ARE MOST LIKELY, DEMONSTRATING SL'S RETALIATION AND PREPONDERANCE AGAINST ITS PRIMARY

Auth: SSSB LD Encl: 17
Date: 16 MAR 89 Unit: 25C

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FOES. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS THAT SL HAS IMPLICATED U.S. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN PERUVIAN COUNTERTERRORIST POLICIES SUCH AS REPORTS CONCERNING COLOMBIAN TERRORISTS' BELIEF OF U.S. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN COLOMBIAN NATIONAL DECISIONS. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS OF PERUVIAN TERRORISTS TARGETING U.S. ASSETS IN PERU BASED ON THIS ARREST. PERUVIAN TERRORISTS WILL CONTINUE TO TARGET U.S. DIPLOMATIC AND COMMERCIAL ASSETS IN THE FUTURE AS ONE PART OF THEIR OPERATIONS REGARDLESS OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.

2. (U) ~~██~~ ALONG WITH TWO UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE COMPANIONS, WAS CAPTURED AT AN SL SAFE HOUSE NEAR THE PERUVIAN PALACE OF JUSTICE IN DOWNTOWN LIMA DURING A DRAGNET BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES. ~~████████████████████~~ A FORMER UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR, WAS WANTED ON VARIOUS CHARGES, INCLUDING SEDITION, ROBBERY, KIDNAPPING, AND MURDER. HE HAS ALSO BEEN ACCUSED OF DIRECTING GUERRILLA ACTIONS IN PERU'S NORTHERN MOUNTAINS FOR SEVERAL YEARS. REPORTEDLY, ~~████████████████████~~ WAS IN LIMA FOR ONLY SIX DAYS PRIOR TO HIS ARREST, ALLEGEDLY TO STAGE ATTACKS COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE KILLING OF MORE THAN 260 CONVICTS BY SECURITY FORCES DURING SENDERO-LED PRISON UPRISINGS ON 19 JUN 86.

(u) 3. (CONF) THE ARREST PRESENTS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT SETBACK FOR SL

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SINCE THE 1986 PRISON UPRISINGS. ~~████████████████████~~ IS THE HIGHEST RANKING SL MEMBER EVER TO HAVE BEEN CAPTURED SINCE THE GROUP BEGAN ITS INSURGENT/TERRORIST ACTIVITIES EIGHT YEARS AGO. ~~████████████████████~~ IS BELIEVED TO HAVE SERVED AS DEPUTY TO SENDERO LEADER ~~████████████████████~~ WHO HAS NOT BEEN SEEN IN PUBLIC FOR TEN YEARS (SOME PERUVIAN AUTHORITIES DOUBT THAT ~~████████████████████~~ IS ALIVE). MOROTE IS ALSO SL'S MOST IMPORTANT MILITARY STRATEGIST. HE IS AN EXTREME HARDLINER, REPORTEDLY BEHIND MUCH SL VIOLENCE DIRECTED AGAINST RURAL INDIAN PEASANTS. THE LOCAL POLICE HAVE 15 DAYS TO INTERROGATE ~~████████████████████~~ BEFORE FILING FORMAL CHARGES WITH THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM. IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT ~~████████████████████~~ ARREST WILL NECESSARILY RESULT IN MAJOR INTELLIGENCE ACQUISITIONS AS SL'S ORGANIZATION IS HERMETICALLY CENTERED ON CELLS INDEPENDENT OF OTHER CELLS' PERSONNEL AND ACTIVITIES. PAST ARRESTS OF SL LEADERS HAVE NOT HINDERED THE GROUP'S ABILITY TO CARRY OUT TERRORIST ACTIONS AND THE ARREST OF MOROTE WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY IMPAIR THE GROUP'S CAPABILITIES. NEVERTHELESS, THE APPREHENSION OF MOROTE MIGHT PROVIDE A TEMPORARY BLOW TO SL OPERATIONS AND PLANNING, ESPECIALLY IN LIMA. APPARENTLY ~~████████████████████~~ PRESENCE IN LIMA WAS TO COORDINATE AND

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BOOST SL'S URBAN TERRORIST ACTIONS. BEFORE [REDACTED] ARREST, SL ACTIVITIES WERE NOTABLY ON THE UPSWING WITH THE GROUP RESPONSIBLE

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FOR SEVERAL LIMA BOMBINGS AS WELL AS THE 11 JUN SABOTAGE OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL POWER GRID THAT BLACKED OUT MOST OF THE COUNTRY. SL TERRORIST ACTIVITIES HAVE INCREASED SINCE THE SPRING AND WERE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE AT HEIGHTENED LEVELS THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER, ESPECIALLY DURING THE ANNIVERSARY DATE OF THE 1986 PRISON UPRISINGS. SL HAS ALSO RAISED ITS PUBLIC PROFILE, STAGING TWO PUBLIC MARCHES IN MAY 88. SL'S TURN TO PUBLIC RECOGNITION IS CONSIDERED IMPORTANT IN LIGHT OF THE GROUP'S PENCHANT FOR SECRECY AND IS PROBABLY PART OF ITS STRATEGY TO INCREASE PRESSURE UPON GOVERNMENT FORCES.

(u) 4. [REDACTED] THE [REDACTED] ARREST IS ALSO SIGNIFICANT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF PERU, PROVIDING IT A MORAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORY IN ITS WAR AGAINST PERUVIAN TERRORISTS. THE GOVERNMENT UNDER PRESIDENT ALAN GARCIA HAS COME INCREASINGLY UNDER HEAVY CRITICISM AND PRESSURE FOR ITS COUNTERTERRORIST POLICIES DURING THE PAST YEAR. AMID THE CONTROVERSY IS PERUVIAN ARMY MISCONDUCT IN ITS COUNTERINSURGENCY/ COUNTERTERRORIST OPERATIONS, PRIMARILY ALLEGATIONS OF ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE 14 MAY EXECUTIONS OF VILLAGE PEASANTS IN CAYARA, A TOWN LOCATED IN SL CONTROLLED TERRITORY. THE PERUVIAN LEFT, INCLUDING EXTREMIST ELEMENTS SUCH AS THE SL AND THE TUPAC AMARU

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REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT (MRTA), HAS EXPLOITED THE CAYARA MASSACRE THROUGH PUBLIC MARCHES/PROTESTS AND COMMUNIQUES AS BEING INDICATIVE OF GOVERNMENT "TERRORISM." RECENT SL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THOSE DESCRIBED ABOVE APPEAR DESIGNED TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT. AFTER A RECENT CHANGE IN KEY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL, GARCIA ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A SPECIAL CABINET COMMISSION TO FORMULATE COUNTERINSURGENT/COUNTERTERRORIST POLICY. THE ARREST OF A KEY TERRORIST LEADER SUCH AS [REDACTED] WILL PROVIDE A NEEDED AND IMMEDIATE LIFT TO PERUVIAN COUNTERTERRORIST FORCES.

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