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ACTION SCT-02

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-05	EUR-00	SS-00	CIAE-00
	EB-05	NSCE-00	ARA-00	NSAE-00	COME-00	SSO-00	L-02
	AMAD-01	TRSE-00	PM-05	PA-02	CCO-00	INRE-00	CA-02
	FAA-00	USSS-00	USIE-00	JUSE-00	FBIE-00	OC-02	FAIM-01
	DS-01	DSE-00	ZOVD-00	/028 W			

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O 261959Z NOV 86
 FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5749
 INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
 AMEMBASSY QUITO
 AMEMBASSY PANAMA
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 USAFSO HOWARD AFB PM
 USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PM
 DEAHQS WASHDC
 DIA WASHDC

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TERREP

DIA FOR AT-5/OS-1D/DB-6D2/JSI-4B/DB-3C1
 DEA FOR OF, PS, OC, OI
 PANAMA FOR ADS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PHUM, PTER, PE
 SUBJECT: ALLEGED MASSACRE AT POMATAMBO AND PARCCO

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE ARMED FORCES' CLAIM TO HAVE
 KILLED IN OCTOBER IN AYACUCHO 13 TERRORISTS, INCLUDING
 AN SL LEADER, HAS COME UNDER INCREASING SCRUTINY.
 THE LEFTIST PRESS SURFACED CLAIMS OF A MASSACRE,
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SUPPOSEDLY BASED ON EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNTS. FOUR
 RESPECTED JOURNALISTS VISITED THE AREA LAST WEEK, AND

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SAM A. MOSKOWITZ
 DATE/CASE ID: 6 APR 2001 200003845

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BECAME CONVINCED THAT THE ARMY HAD SUMMARILY EXECUTED 12 (NOT 13) CIVILIANS; THE ARMY FORCED THE REPORTERS TO LEAVE THE AREA THAT DAY. THE SENATE HAS PROMISED AN INVESTIGATION, BUT HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ARE SKEPTICAL THAT A SERIOUS INQUIRY WILL OCCUR. THERE IS STILL MUCH THAT IS UNCLEAR ABOUT THE KILLINGS. MILITARY SUMMARY EXECUTIONS APPEARED TO HAVE DECLINED SINCE 1985, BUT WE CANNOT RULE ONE OUT IN THIS CASE. THUS FAR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND THE MILITARY HAVE NOT RESPONDED TO ALLEGATIONS OF WRONGDOING. WE EXPECT THE SENATE INVESTIGATION TO BE COMPARED CLOSELY TO THE AMBITIOUS 1985 SENATE ACCOMARCA INQUIRY. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) IN OCTOBER THE ARMED FORCES REPORTED THAT 13 TERRORISTS, INCLUDING SL LEADER CLAUDIO "CAMARADA CASZELLY" BELLIDO HAD DIED IN CONFRONTATIONS ON OCTOBER 22-23 IN POMATAMBO AND PARCCO ALTO IN AYACUCHO. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF ASSERTIONS IN THE LEFTIST PRESS THAT IN FACT THE ARMY HAD KILLED INNOCENT CIVILIANS. MORE RECENTLY, INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGES REPORTEDLY CHARGED--VIA THE MEDIA--THAT A MASSACRE HAD OCCURRED. THERE WAS NO GOVERNMENT RESPONSE.

3. (U) ON NOVEMBER 20, FOUR REPORTERS FROM THE WEEKLY CARETAS (GORRITI AND MEDRANO), THE DAILY EXPRESO (NED) AND LONDON TIMES (STRINGER NICHOLAS ASHESHOV) VISITED THE TWO TOWNS, LOCATED WITHIN A FAIRLY DANGEROUS PART OF THE AYACUCHO EMERGENCY ZONE. ACCORDING TO CARETAS STORY AND DCM'S CONVERSATION WITH ASHESHOV, THE REPORTERS

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FOUND THE VILLAGERS IN MOURNING. THEY GAVE REPORTERS THE FOLLOWING VERSION OF THE KILLINGS: ON THE NIGHT OF OCTOBER 22, AN ARMY PATROL ENTERED THE VILLAGE, AND DETAINED FIVE VILLAGE AUTHORITIES AND TWO OTHER PERSONS. AFTER A SHORT PERIOD, THE PATROL DEPARTED, TAKING THE SEVEN PERSONS. AFTER TWO DAYS, THE INHABITANTS DISCOVERED BLOODY CLOTHING AND OTHER REMAINS BELONGING TO THE DETAINEES NEAR THE VILLAGE OF PARCCO. IN PARCCO, THEY WERE TOLD THAT THE SEVEN PERSONS FROM POMATAMBO, PLUS FIVE FROM PARCCO, WERE EXECUTED. SEVERAL DAYS LATER, THE CHARRED REMAINS

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OF EIGHT OF THE TWELVE MISSING PERSONS WERE FOUND AT MUNGASPUNCO MOUNTAIN. "CAMARADA CASZELLY" WAS NOT AMONG THE DEAD. THE REPORTERS--ALL SEASONED VETERANS OF COVERING AYACUCHO AND SL--FOUND THE VILLAGERS' ACCOUNTS TO BE PERSUASIVE AND MUTUALLY CONSISTENT.

4. (U) AN UNEXPECTED TWIST MARKED THE END OF THE REPORTERS' TRIP. UPON THEIR RETURN TO THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL OF VILCASHUAMAN, THEY WERE SUMMONED TO THE MILITARY COMMAND, AND ORDERED TO REMAIN THERE UNTIL THAT AFTERNOON, WHEN THREE OF THEM WERE ORDERED TO RETURN TO AYACUCHO BY MILITARY HELICOPTER, AND ONE TO DRIVE BACK IN HIS CAR. THE JUSTIFICATION WAS CONCERN ABOUT THE REPORTERS'

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SAFETY (ALTHOUGH DRIVING AT NIGHT THERE IS VERY DANGEROUS), AND THE MILITARY'S POWER IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE TO SUSPEND FREEDOM OF TRANSIT. -- CARETAS AND OTHER MEDIA SUBSEQUENTLY DENOUNCED THE MANEUVER AS AN ATTEMPT

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TO RESTRICT PRESS FREEDOM IN THE EMERGENCY ZONE.

5. (U) MEANWHILE, THE SENATE AGREED LAST WEEK TO EMPOWER A COMMISSION (PROBABLY HUMAN RIGHTS) TO INVESTIGATE THE KILLINGS. NEITHER THE MILITARY NOR THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS ISSUED A RESPONSE TO THE EVENTS.

6. (C) COMMENT: IT IS STILL VERY UNCLEAR WHAT OCCURRED IN POMATAMBO AND PARCCO. BOTH ARE IN AN AREA WHERE SL HAS LONG HAD FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, AND THE SUPPORT OR ACQUIESCENCE OF SOME OF THE POPULACE. WE CANNOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME OR ALL OF THE DEAD WERE SL MEMBERS OR SYMPATHIZERS. THE MANNER OF DEATH IS ALSO UNCLEAR: THE REPORTERS DID NOT SEE THE BODIES, OR AREAS WHERE THEY WERE KILLED, AND OF COURSE COULD NOT IDENTIFY THE VICTIMS. IF THE ARMY HAS ANY EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT ITS VERSION THAT THE DEATHS OCCURRED IN COMBAT, IT HAS YET TO PRESENT IT. THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS ALLEGATIONS, AND A NUMBER OF PROVEN CASES, OF SUMMARY EXECUTIONS OF PEASANTS BY THE SECURITY FORCES. ALTHOUGH THIS PRACTICE APPEARED TO HAVE DECLINED (BUT NOT ENDED) SINCE GARCIA SHOOK UP THE MILITARY IN SEPTEMBER 1985 (ACCOMARCA MASSACRE), WE CANNOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT EXCESSES HAVE OCCURRED AGAIN. AN IMPORTANT POINT TO WATCH WILL BE THE CONDUCT OF THE SENATE INVESTIGATION, PLUS ANY EXECUTIVE BRANCH OR ATTORNEY GENERAL (FISCAL) INVESTIGATION. WE EXPECT THE SENATE'S ACTION TO BE COMPARED CLOSELY TO THE AMBITIOUS 1985 SENATE ACCOMARCA

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INVESTIGATION. POINTING TO THE ABSENCE OF THE
PROMISED CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF THE JUNE

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PRISON KILLINGS, LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ARE
SKEPTICAL THAT A SERIOUS INQUIRY WILL ENSUE.
WATSON

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