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DRAFTED BY: ARA/AND:P MCLEAN

APPROVED BY: ARA:RSGELBARD

S/S:KMQUINN

S/S-O:LTRACY

ARA:EABRAMS (SUBS)

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E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TAGS: PINT, PHUM, PE, AG, CO, VZ, UR, BR, BO, EC

SUBJECT: GARCIA AND THE MILITARY: PLEA FOR
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ALAN GARCIA IS INVOLVED IN A DANGEROUS CONFRONTATION
WITH THE PERUVIAN ARMED FORCES. CIVIL-MILITARY STRAINS
DEVELOPED OVER THE LAST WEEK FOLLOWING CONFIRMATION THAT
AT LEAST 100 PRISONERS WERE SUMMARILY EXECUTED WHEN
POLICE AND ARMED FORCES RE-ASSERTED GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY
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AT THREE PRISONS. GARCIA WENT TO LURIGANCHO PRISON
YESTERDAY (JUNE 27) WITH PRIME MINISTER ALVA CASTRO,

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SAM A. MOSKOWITZ
DATE/CASE ID: 9 AUG 1999 199902275

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FONMIN WAGNER, MINISTER OF INTERIOR SALINAS AND A NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS TO DRAMATIZE THE INCIDENT. AS HE DID EARLIER IN THE WEEK, GARCIA OPTED TO TAKE A HIGH-PROFILE, HEAVILY RHETORICAL, AND CONFRONTATIONAL APPROACH WITH THE MILITARY. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HE MUST HAVE AUTHORIZED THE ORIGINAL COUNTERATTACKS IN THE PRISON, AND HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN UNDER GREAT ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE MANNER IN WHICH THE MILITARY OR POLICE WOULD HANDLE THIS. NEVERTHELESS, THE LARGE NUMBERS OF THOSE ACTUALLY

EXECUTED MAY INDEED HAVE BEEN A SHOCK, BUT IT PARTICULARLY BECAME A PROBLEM FOR HIM WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT IT HAD BEGUN TO HAVE ADVERSE IMPLICATIONS FOR HIM PERSONALLY, HIS PRESIDENCY, OR FOR HIS INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ASPIRATIONS. CRITICISMS FROM THE SI AND OTHERS CONTRIBUTED TO THIS. BY THE MIDDLE OF LAST WEEK, WE BEGAN TO RECEIVE REPORTS THAT GARCIA WAS TRYING TO DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM THE MILITARY/POLICE AND THEIR ATTACK. HE ALSO BEGAN SPECIFICALLY TO ACCUSE THE GUARDIA REPUBLICANA (THE RELATIVELY SMALL AND WEAKEST FORCE CHARGED WITH GUARDING PRISONS AND BORDERS) OF HAVING COMMITTED THE PRISON MURDERS. IN DOING SO, HE HAS CAREFULLY NOT ACCUSED THE ARMY OR OTHER MAJOR SERVICES THEREBY HOPING TO AVOID A CONFRONTATION WITH THEM, DISTANCING HIMSELF, HIS GOVERNMENT, AND PARTY FROM THE ATROCITIES AND FOCUSING ATTENTION ON A WEAK SCAPEGOAT.

3. RUMORS HAVE ABOUNDED THAT THE ARMED FORCES HIGH COMMAND IS RESISTING GARCIA'S ORDER TO DISCIPLINE THOSE INVOLVED IN THE GR AND ANY OTHERS. GARCIA AND FM WAGNER HAVE SPREAD THIS VIEW IN HIGHLY DRAMATIC TERMS AND HAVE
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TALKED APOCALYPTICALLY OF AN IMMINENT MILITARY COUP WHEN THEY TOOK THE INITIATIVE FRIDAY TO TRY TO DEVELOP EXTERNAL SUPPORT AMONG SEVERAL DEMOCRATIC LATIN GOVERNMENTS; WE HAVE SO FAR HEARD OF TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE ARGENTINES (ALFONSIN CAPUTO), COLOMBIANS (BETANCUR), AND VENEZULANS (LUSINCHI). AFTER EXTENSIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH A WIDE RANGE OF SOURCES IN PERU--INCLUDING DISCUSSIONS GENERAL GALVIN HAS HAD WITH SENIOR PERUVIAN MILITARY OFFICIALS, THE USG VIEW HAS SHIFTED. WHILE IT IS, OF COURSE, POSSIBLE THAT OUR INFORMATION IS INACCURATE OR THAT WE HAVE BEEN MISLED, WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT BELIEVE THAT MILITARY COUP PLOTTING IS

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TAKING PLACE OR THAT THE PROSPECT OF A COUP IS SIGNIFICANT OR IMMINENT. HOWEVER, WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROVOCATIVE WAY IN WHICH GARCIA IS HANDLING THIS SITUATION THROUGH HIS INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC AND CONFRONTATIONAL TACTICS (E.G., "EITHER ALL THOSE RESPONSIBLE GO OR I GO").

4. PERU IS LIVING THROUGH A DANGEROUS PERIOD. THE SL HAD SHIFTED ITS TACTICS TO BECOME EVEN MORE VIOLENT AND TO AN URBAN EMPHASIS EVEN BEFORE THE PRISON ATTACKS; THE TRAIN BOMBING IN CUZCO REPRESENTS A POSSIBLE NEW EMPHASIS ON INDISCRIMINATE KILLINGS. THE MRTA, TOO, HAS BECOME MORE ACTIVE. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS URGENT FOR THE GOP AND THE MILITARY TO BE COOPERATING RATHER THAN CONFRONTING EACH OTHER; FAILURE TO DO SO COULD REPRESENT A FAILURE FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS OFFERING GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR TERRORISM. GARCIA SHOULD BE CAREFULLY BALANCING THE NEED FOR A FULL INVESTIGATION INTO THE CHARGES WITH THE NEED NOT TO STRAIN CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS. WE ARE STRESSING TO THE GOP AND THE MILITARY AND POLICE THE NEED FOR BOTH TO TRY TO RECONCILE ANY DIFFERENCES QUIETLY AND PROPERLY. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION MUST BE DEALT WITH, BUT WE STRONGLY HOPE THAT THIS WILL BE DONE IN WAYS THAT AVOID CONFRONTATION AND
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SCAPEGOATING SO THAT THE GOP AND MILITARY WILL BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER TO COUNTER THEIR EXTREMELY SERIOUS TERRORIST THREAT.

5. WE HAVE THE SENSE THAT GARCIA HAS NOW BACKED OFF THE APOCALYPTIC LINE HE TOOK FRIDAY. WE HOPE THIS IS THE CASE; NEVERTHELESS, WE THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ADDRESSEE POSTS TO CONTACT APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS AND DRAW ON THE FOREGOING AS APPROPRIATE AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- THE U.S. IS SHOCKED AT THE NEWS OF ABUSES FOLLOWING THE RE-CAPTURE OF THE THREE PRISONS NEAR LIMA FROM REBELLING SENDERO LUMINOSO PRISONERS.

" U.S. IS ALSO CONCERNED, HOWEVER, ABOUT REPORTS COMING OUT OF LIMA WHICH INDICATE A CONFRONTATION DEVELOPING BETWEEN GARCIA AND THE MILITARY. EVERYTHING MUST BE DONE TO ASSURE THAT DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT SURVIVES THE PRESENT

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TENSIONS.

-- GARCIA SEEMS BENT ON CONFRONTATIONAL TACTICS WHICH WE VIEW AS DANGEROUS GIVEN THE DELICACY OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN PERU. MOREOVER, GARCIA WILL NEED MILITARY SUPPORT TO OVERCOME THE SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO DEMOCRACY FROM THE VIOLENT LEFT.

- WE, THEREFORE, ASK YOUR INTERVENTION WITH GARCIA, HIS MINISTERS, AND OTHER INFLUENTIAL PERUVIANS IN COUNSELING A COURSE THAT SINGLES OUT THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HORRIBLE ABUSES AT THE PRISONS BUT AVOIDS ATTACKING THE ARMED FORCES MORE BROADLY.

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-- WE DO NOT HAVE INDICATIONS OF COUP-PLOTTING AT THIS TIME. TO THE CONTRARY, THE MILITARY SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF GARCIA'S POPULARITY. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS FOR GARCIA TO DEVELOP CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES WITH THE MILITARY AND POLICE, WHOM HE WILL NEED IN THE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FIGHT AGAINST THE SL AND MRTA.

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