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SERIAL: MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIGEST (MID) 308-9A

BODY

SUBJ: PERU: FUJIMORI'S INTERNAL SECURITY GAMBLE. (U)

DOI: 4 NOV 93 (AS OF 1815 EST)

TEXT: 1. ~~(S)~~ PRESIDENT FUJIMORI'S EFFORTS TO BOLSTER SUPPORT FOR THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM BY MANIPULATING SHINING PATH LEADER ABIMAE GUZMAN'S REQUEST FOR PEACE TALKS DID NOT GENERATE THE EXPECTED RESOUNDING ENDORSEMENT. INSTEAD, THE FAILURE OF HIS "PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATION" TO SWAY POPULAR OPINION IN FACE OF AN INCREASINGLY REINVIGORATED INSURGENT THREAT RESULTED IN A SLIM MARGIN OF APPROVAL.

2. (U) IN A DEFT POLITICAL MOVE ON 1 OCTOBER, FUJIMORI ANNOUNCED AN ALLEGED REQUEST FROM SHINING PATH (SENDERO LUMINOSO--SL) LEADER GUZMAN FOR PEACE TALKS. IT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A MILITARY AND POLICE CRACKDOWN IN LIMA SEEKING TO END A WAVE OF URBAN TERRORISM THAT WAS RAISING UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S PLEDGE TO DESTROY THE SL BY 1995. IT WAS ALSO INTENDED TO REVERSE A DECLINE IN FUJIMORI'S POPULARITY AND TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR THE "YES" VOTE ON THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION. FUJIMORI BELIEVED THAT THE APPEARANCE OF A BROKEN GUZMAN WOULD LEAD TO AN OVERWHELMING PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT.

3. ~~(S/NF)~~ GUZMAN'S ALLEGED REQUEST FOR PEACE TALKS COMES A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AFTER HIS ARREST. HIS MAIN CONTACT AND SOURCE OF INFORMATION HAS BEEN VLADIMIRO MONTESINOS, FUJIMORI'S SHADOWNY INTELLIGENCE ADVISER. AFTER CONVINCING GUZMAN THAT THE SL HAS SUFFERED AN IRREVERSIBLE DECLINE, MONTESINOS SKILLFULLY CONVINCED

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GUZMAN THAT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WOULD BE TO THE ORGANIZATION'S ADVANTAGE. THESE TALKS RESULTED IN TWO FOLLOW-ON LETTERS. ONE, ALLEGEDLY WRITTEN BY GUZMAN, REITERATES HIS REQUEST FOR PEACE TALKS AND IS HIGHLY SUPPORTIVE OF FUJIMORI AND HIS POLICIES. THE OTHER, PURPORTEDLY WRITTEN BY OTHER SL LEADERS, ENDORSES GUZMAN'S REQUEST.

4. ~~(S/NF)~~ COMMENT: THE SEPTEMBER 1992 CAPTURE OF GUZMAN AND OTHER TOP LEADERS CLEARLY SHOCKED THE SL AND SHATTERED THE MYTH OF ITS INVINCIBILITY. DURING THE FIRST 8 MONTHS, THE SL'S URBAN LOSSES APPEARED TO BE DEVASTATING, BUT VIOLENCE LEVELS REMAINED ABOUT THE SAME AS BEFORE GUZMAN WAS CAPTURED. SINCE APRIL, THE SL APPEARS TO HAVE PROGRESSIVELY RECOVERED IN LIMA. ITS ABILITY TO UNDERTAKE URBAN OPERATIONS--EVEN IN THE FACE OF EXTENSIVE ARMY AND POLICE DEPLOYMENTS--REMAINS UNTHWARTED DESPITE ITS DIMINISHED CAPABILITIES. IN ADDITION, BY OCTOBER 1993, SL HAD RESOLVED AN INTERNAL LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE, ESTABLISHING OSCAR ALBERTO RAMIREZ DURAND AS THE SL'S NEW NATIONAL COMMANDER.

5. ~~(S)~~ INDICATIONS ARE INCREASING THAT THE SL HAS TIGHTENED ITS INTERNAL OPERATIONAL SECURITY AND IS REEMERGING AS A SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO PERUVIAN NATIONAL SECURITY. NONETHELESS, FUJIMORI REMAINS CONVINCED THAT IT IS A PERSONALITY CULT THAT WILL FOLLOW GUZMAN AT ALL COSTS. HE IS HOPING THAT THE GUZMAN TAPES WILL AGGRAVATE REPORTED INTERNAL DIVISIONS IN SL LEADERSHIP, UNDERMINE GROWING GROUP COHESION, AND ENCOURAGE DEFECTIONS BY LOW-RANKING CADRE. FUJIMORI AND MONTESINOS LIKELY MANIPULATED A SERIES OF SESSIONS WITH GUZMAN TO OBTAIN SUFFICIENT VIDEO FOOTAGE TO RELEASE WHAT APPEARS TO BE A TOTAL CAPITULATION OF THE SL'S LEADERSHIP.

6. (C) FUJIMORI'S POLITICAL MANIPULATION OF AN INITIALLY SUCCESSFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATION SEEMS TO HAVE BACKFIRED. THE OBSEQUIOUS LANGUAGE IN THE SECOND LETTER UNDERMINED THE GOVERNMENT'S CREDIBILITY AMONG THE POPULACE AND IN THOSE SL CADRES THAT FUJIMORI HAD HOPED TO PERSUADE. THUS, WHEN THE THIRD LETTER WAS RELEASED ON 29 OCTOBER, THE SL COUNTERED IT WITH A BLACKOUT OF MOST OF COASTAL PERU AND A SPATE OF BOMBINGS IN LIMA. BY OVERPLAYING HIS HAND AND UNDERESTIMATING THE PERUVIAN PUBLIC, FUJIMORI MUST NOW CONFRONT A RECONSTITUTED INSURGENCY AND AN INCREASINGLY INCREDULOUS POPULATION.

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