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RELEASED IN FULL

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ACTION EUR-01

INFO	LOG-00	AID-01	BIB-01	CIAE-00	C-01	OASY-00	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	EB-01	HA-09	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-04
	L-03	ADS-00	MOFM-04	MOF-03	M-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-02	PRS-01	P-01	SCT-03	SDEL-00
	SIL-00	SNP-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00
	USIE-00	SA-01	RPE-01	CORE-00	SNIS-00	NISC-02	/043W

-----DDE674 021423Z /38

O 021220Z AUG 93
 FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2957
 INFO AMEMBASSY SOFIA
 USMISSION USNATO
 AMEMBASSY ROME
 USEC BRUSSELS
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
 AMEMBASSY ATHENS
 AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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STATE ALSO FOR EUR/EE AND EUR/EEA
 LONDON FOR TREASURY - EMILY WALKER
 VIENNA ALSO FOR DAO - LTC GREATHOUSE

PAGE 02 TIRANA 01981 01 OF 02 021418Z
 E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PGOV, PREL, AL, IT
 SUBJECT: FORMER PRIME MINISTER NANO
 ARRESTED; SOCIALISTS RALLY IN TIRANA

REF: TIRANA 1941 S

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) FATOS NANO WAS ARRESTED ON FRIDAY, JULY 30, HOURS BEFORE A PLANNED SOCIALIST RALLY WAS TO TAKE PLACE IN TIRANA. NANO, WHOSE PARLIAMENTARY IMMUNITY HAD BEEN LIFTED ON JULY 27 (REFTEL), WAS CHARGED WITH MISAPPROPRIATION OF STATE PROPERTY AND MISUSE OF

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HIS AUTHORITY DURING HIS TENURE AS PRIME MINISTER FROM MARCH 25 THROUGH JUNE 4, 1991. INDICTMENT PAPERS FILED BY ALBANIAN GENERAL PROSECUTOR ALUSH DRAGOSHI ACCUSE NANO, IN COLLABORTATION WITH FORMER ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO TIRANA TORQUATO CARDILLI, OF DIVERTING TO PERSONAL BANK ACCOUNTS USD 8 MILLION IN ITALIAN AID WHICH ARRIVED DURING THAT PERIOD.

3. DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF NANO, THE RALLY WENT OFF AS PLANNED. THOUGH PS NEWSPAPER "ZERI I POPULLIT" CLAIMED THE NEXT DAY THAT MORE THAN 70,000 PEOPLE HAD PARTICIPATED, OBSERVERS ESTIMATED THE CROWD TO BE APPROXIMATELY 10,000. AFTER LISTENING TO SPEECHES IN FRONT OF A SOCCER STADIUM IN WHICH ORATORS DENOUNCED PRESIDENT BERISHA, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PD) AND AMBASSADOR RYERSON AND FORMER DCM

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HILL (FOR ALLEGEDLY CARRYING OUT A CIA DIRECTIVE ORDERING NANO'S ARREST), THE SOCIALIST SYMPATHIZERS MARCHED TO TIRANA'S CENTRAL SKANDERBEG SQUARE. THERE THEY CHANTED MORE DENUNCIATIONS AND FINALLY DISPERSED.

4. AUTHORIZATION FOR THE MARCH ON THE SQUARE HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN REQUESTED, SO POLICE ATTEMPTED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE MARCHERS, LED BY FORMER COMMUNIST MINISTER OF INTERIOR GRAMOZ RUCI. (POLICE WERE PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE GENERALLY PEACEFUL RALLY.) THE MARCH, WHICH FINALLY DID TAKE PLACE, SNAKED THROUGH DOWNTOWN TIRANA JUST AS BOULEVARDS WERE FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF CITIZENS TAKING A COMMON EVENING STROLL. MANY PEDESTRIANS STOPPED AT THE SQUARE TO WATCH AND LISTEN, BUT WERE NOT PARTICIPANTS. THOSE TAKING PART WERE FOR THE MOST PART OLDER PS MEMBERS, FORMER SIGURIMI EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES. POLICE WERE REQUIRED TO SUBDUE A FEW RALLIERS AND DID MAKE SOME ARRESTS OF DEMONSTRATORS FOR DISTURBING THE PEACE AND TRYING TO PROVOKE SKIRMISHES WITH POLICE OFFICERS.

5. TELEVISION NEWS TREATED THE RALLY MATTER-OF-FACTLY, NOTING THAT NANO HAD BEEN ARRESTED BUT THAT THE RALLY HAD BEEN HELD WITHOUT HIM. THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE NO PUBLIC COMMENT ABOUT THE ARREST, THOUGH HE WAS SAID TO BE CONCERNED BEFORE THE RALLY THAT THE SOCIALISTS MIGHT INITIATE SOME VIOLENCE. PD NEWSPAPER "RILINDJA DEMOKRATIKE" AND PD LEADERS, INCLUDING CHAIRMAN EDUART SELAMI, HAVE STRONGLY

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SUPPORTED THE ARREST DECISION, CALLING IT A BLOW TO
COMMUNISM AND CORRUPTION IN ALBANIA. SOCIAL-
DEMOCRATIC PARTY NEWSPAPER "ALTERNATIVA" CALLED THE
ARREST A "GREAT CHANCE" FOR THE SOCIALISTS TO SHED
THEIR CORRUPT PAST AND PRESENT THEMSELVES ANEW TO
THE ALBANIAN PUBLIC. (SEPTTEL ON NEWSPAPER COVERAGE
OF THE NANO ARREST TO FOLLOW.)

6. COMMENT: WITH PARLIAMENT IN RECESS UNTIL EARLY
SEPTEMBER, THE PS WILL NOT HAVE A NATIONAL FORUM TO
USE IN THEIR RENEWED CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GOA. A
SAMPLING OF RANDOM ALBANIANS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
FIGURES, WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN IN THE PAST FEW
DAYS, INDICATES STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE DECISION TO
ARREST NANO. ON AUGUST 16 FORMER PM VILSON AHMETI
(LAST SOCIALIST/ COMMUNIST PM PRIOR TO THE MARCH
22, 1992 ELECTIONS) WILL BE ARRAIGNED IN COURT ON
CHARGES OF MISAPPROPRIATION OF STATE FUNDS AND
MISUSE OF AUTHORITY. PD CHAIRMAN SELAMI HAS DENIED
(CREDIBLY, IN OUR VIEW) THAT THE TIMING OF NANO'S
ARREST OR THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM AND OTHER FORMER
COMMUNIST LEADERS, ARE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED.

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SPEAKING TO A RALLY IN THE FAR NORTHERN TOWN OF VERMOSH ON AUGUST 1, SELAMI SAID HE CONSIDERED THE ARREST OF NANO "OVERDUE", AND SUGGESTED LOOSELY THAT THE ARREST OF OTHERS MIGHT NOT BE A BAD IDEA. NOTABLY, HE DECLINED TO PICK UP ON A SUGGESTION MADE BY ANOTHER SPEAKER THAT THE SOCIALIST PARTY OUGHT TO BE OUTLAWED. THOUGH SOME ALBANIANS ARE WORRIED THAT THE PS WILL RESORT TO SABOTAGE OR VIOLENCE IN RETALIATION FOR NANO'S ARREST, MOST OFFICIALS FEEL THEY FINALLY HAVE THE "DEVIL ON THE RUN."

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