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ACTION ARA-01

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	DS-00	FBIE-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	ADS-00	MMP-00
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R 061721Z JUN 97
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7890
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

C [REDACTED] L LIMA 004928

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL:6/5/07

TAGS: PTER, PMIL, PE

SUBJECT: SENDERO LUMINOSO LEADER "FELICIANO" CORNERED -- YET AGAIN

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY JAMES F. MACK, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION,
AMERICAN EMBASSY, LIMA. REASON 1.5 (B,D).

2. (C) SUMMARY: A PERUVIAN MILITARY OFFICER IN THE AYACUCHO
REGION RECENTLY TOLD US THAT HIS UNIT BELIEVES OSCAR RAMIREZ DURAN
C [REDACTED] L

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(A.K.A. "FELICIANO"), THE MOST IMPORTANT SENDERO LUMINOSO (SHINING
PATH - SL) LEADER OUTSIDE OF JAIL, IS STILL CORNERED WITH THIRTY TO
FIFTY CADRES IN A BROKEN, WOODED REGION NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF
THE MONTARO AND APURIMAC RIVERS. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT
PERUVIAN OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR BELIEF THAT THE SL LEADER
WAS TRAPPED -- SOMEHOW IN THE PAST HE HAS ALWAYS MANAGED TO
ESCAPE. END SUMMARY.

3. (C) [REDACTED] TOLD US JUNE 4 THAT THE PERUVIAN MILITARY

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: DONALD A. JOHNSTON
DATE/CASE ID: 21 DEC 2001 200103376

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HAD SUCCEEDED IN CORNERING SENDERO LUMINOSO (SL) LEADER "FELICIANO" WITH THIRTY TO FIFTY SHINING PATH CADRES IN THE TRIANGULAR REGION SOUTHWEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE APURIMAC AND MONTARO RIVERS. THE ROUGHLY 900 SQUARE KILOMETER AREA IS HEAVILY WOODED, LIGHTLY POPULATED AND CHARACTERIZED BY EXTREMELY BROKEN TERRAIN. THERE IS NO COCA CULTIVATION IN THE REGION; AS A RESULT, THE ARMY BELIEVES "FELICIANO'S" GROUP IS UNABLE TO LIVE OFF WAR TAXES. [REDACTED] STATED THAT THE PERUVIAN MILITARY HAD LAUNCHED A NUMBER OF OPERATIONS INTO THE AREA IN RECENT MONTHS BUT HAD NOT SUCCEEDED IN CAPTURING THE SL LEADER. MILITARY FORCES RAIDED "FELICIANO'S" CAMP SHORTLY AFTER IT WAS VACATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AND ONCE EVEN CAPTURED THE SL LEADER'S BED. THE MILITARY ALSO DESTROYED OVER TEN SEPARATE FARMING SITES, WHERE SHINING PATH HAD SOWN YUCA AND OTHER CROPS AS FOODSTUFFS.

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4. (C) [REDACTED] ASSERTED THAT AFTER YEARS OF SL ATROCITIES, VILLAGERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION ARE FIRMLY ON THE GOVERNMENT'S SIDE AGAINST THE TERRORIST GROUP. HE OBSERVED THAT THERE ARE NOW OVER 120,000 RONDEROS (VILLAGE CIVIL DEFENSE MEMBERS) WITH OVER 6,000 WEAPONS IN THE AYACUCHO MILITARY DISTRICT. IF "FELICIANO" AND THE SENDERO CADRES ATTEMPT TO FLEE THEIR CURRENT HIDEOUT, THEY

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 WILL BE QUICKLY SPOTTED IN THE TREELESS TERRAIN WHICH SURROUNDS THE AREA, [REDACTED] HE ALSO SAID "FELICIANO" CANNOT HIDE OUT IN ANY OF THE VILLAGES IN THE REGION BECAUSE THE RONDEROS WOULD QUICKLY REPORT HIS PRESENCE. THE MILITARY IS REPOPULATING VILLAGES WHICH HAD BEEN ABANDONED EARLIER DURING THE HEIGHT OF TERRORIST VIOLENCE IN ORDER TO FURTHER REDUCE "FELICIANO'S" FREEDOM OF ACTION. IN MID-JUNE, THERE ARE PLANS TO REPOPULATE TIRCOS, A VILLAGE DUE WEST OF SAN FRANCISCO IN HUANTA PROVINCE, [REDACTED]

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5. (C) "FELICIANO" AND HIS GROUP FACE A DISMAL FUTURE, WITH FOOD RUNNING OUT AND NOWHERE TO OBTAIN SUPPLIES, ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] HE EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT THE GROUP WILL EITHER (1) MAKE A BREAK FOR IT AND EXPOSE ITSELF TO MILITARY ACTION, (2) BREAK UP AND DISPERSE, OR (3) SUFFER A VIOLENT INTERNAL CONFRONTATION IN WHICH SOME SL MEMBERS ARE KILLED. "I CAN'T SAY THAT WE WILL CAPTURE 'FELICIANO' TOMORROW, IN THE NEXT WEEK OR EVEN IN THE NEXT YEAR," HE SAID, "BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR SENDERO LUMINOSO HERE."

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6. (C) COMMENT: PERUVIAN MILITARY OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR BELIEF THAT SL LEADER "FELICIANO" HAS BEEN CORNERED MANY TIMES IN RECENT YEARS. WE CANNOT CONFIRM, HOWEVER, THAT "FELICIANO" IS IN FACT IN THE TRIANGULAR REGION DESCRIBED BY REGIFO; LOCAL MEDIA REPORTS HAVE PLACED HIM IN CUSCO, LIMA, THE UPPER HUALLAGA VALLEY

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AND OTHER LOCATIONS IN RECENT MONTHS. DESPITE FREQUENT REPORTS OF
HIS IMMINENT ARREST, "FELICIANO" HAS SO FAR ESCAPED THE ARMY'S NET.

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