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Beyond The Shining Path: Surviving Revolution in Peru

by

Kathryn Leger

A thesis submitted to
the faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Journalism
Department of Journalism

Carleton University

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Abstract

Sixteen years of armed warfare by the insurgency group Shining Path has had a far-ranging impact on the political, social and economic life of ordinary people in Peru. The insurgency was the product of decades of ineffective development efforts and the inability of a succession of Peruvian leaders from the left to the right of the political spectrum to harness relentless pressures and expectations for change that began accelerating in the 1950s. The result today is a traumatized, polarized society characterized by militarization, deep-rooted suspicion and a consuming sense of indifference and fear. The untold brutality, suffering and political and economic crisis of the war years have not brought Peruvians, long divided by extremes of geography and race, together. Instead, the war has driven them even farther apart. New, violent forms of crime are increasing and democratic community organizations and institutions are severely weakened or stunted as Peruvians rebuild and pacify their country.

Acknowledgements

The memory of all those Peruvians who let me into their lives during my travels in Peru provided the driving power for me to take on and complete this writing project. There are too many to give individual recognition to here, but I would like to thank the people living in and around Aucayacu and former and present residents of Umaro for sharing their fears, pain and determination during trying times. My thesis supervisor Clyde Sanger also deserves a special mention for his guidance and encouragement throughout what turned into a lengthy project and his belief in the importance of telling the human side of Peru's war. My parents, and friends Catherine LeGrand, Marie Pennachetti, Ruben Rizzo and Conche Uribe, also provided invaluable support that helped me to stay on track while treading new and old waters.

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Introduction

In a lush tropical zone on the edge of the Peruvian jungle, Jorge, an agricultural engineer, found himself deep in the swirling brown depths of the Huallaga River fishing out body parts. There were pieces of arms and legs and several burlap sacks filled with heads. Corpses had been showing up in the river the people of the town used to wash and swim in for the past three months. No one could stop the murders and there were no investigations. The killings were part of a campaign by the Peruvian military to rid the area of Shining Path guerrillas. Anyone who spoke up or protested could also be killed. Jorge thought his daily trips to the river were the least he could do to help family members of the victims. But he says that being a witness to so much death and violence has left him numb, without much of a sense of feeling.

Anita, a 29-year-old policewoman, narrowly survived an assassination attempt by the Shining Path in a shantytown neighborhood in Lima, the Peruvian capital. A guerrilla hit squad gunned her down at a bus stop at around 7:30 in the morning while her husband and two children watched her leave for work from across the street. One bullet ripped through her left breast, narrowly missing the heart. Another pierced her right eye. A third penetrated her forehead and burst out of the left temple. Her would-be assassins, including one who carried a grenade, coolly walked away without further incident. Anita's children are still traumatized and she lives with constant fear the guerrillas will try to kill her again.

Dario Palomino, a short, solid man of 70, breaks down and cries every time he talks about how his native village of Umaro, in a remote corner of the southern central Andes mountains, came under the control of Shining Path guerrillas in the 1980s. "I cry because I was not in agreement with what happened," he says. Members of the guerrilla army used the community as a hideout. All villagers had to collaborate and play deadly hide and seek games between the guerrillas and the military. The guerrillas warned that those who tried to escape would be hunted down and killed. Umaro turned into a ghost town after army troops showed up one day and killed anyone they found. Now Palomino is among those spearheading a campaign to confront the past and resettle the village. There is hope and determination Umaro can be brought back to life again.

Throughout Peru, people are struggling to overcome the psychological and physical horrors of a war that has exposed the worst and weakest elements of Peruvian society. Many people still measure recent history as the time before and after Sept. 12, 1992, the day police captured Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, founder and maximum leader of the outlawed Communist Party of Peru in the Shining Path of José Carlos Manátegui, the rebel movement better known as the Shining Path. For more than a decade, Shining Path terrorized much of Peru. Thousands of Guzmán's followers seized upon his revolutionary appeal to destroy existing social and economic structures in order to build up a society that would bring about equal treatment for millions of Indian or mixed-blood Peruvians largely excluded from a society that accords power and privilege to a mostly white minority descended from

the Spaniards who conquered Peru in the sixteenth century. The capture of Guzmán and many of his central committee leaders did not mean that the war that officially began in a remote corner of the Andean highlands in 1980 and spread throughout Peru was over. But observers said it did strip away the Shining Path's aura of invincibility and its ability to paralyse the entire nation by fear. "Never in modern Peruvian history has the change of status -- through death, election, or in this case, arrest -- of one individual so deeply and suddenly changed the nation's mood," anthropologist Carlos Iván Degregori, a noted authority on the Shining Path, reflected a year after the capture. "Literally from one day to the next, a vast feeling of relief swept Peru, touching every corner of its social and geographical diversity, its depth a direct inverse proportion of the fear and demoralization that had gripped the country until September 12."

It is only since the capture of Guzmán that Peruvians have emerged enough from their shell-shocked state to stand back and begin to consider the political, social and economic impact of the war. The war's litany of statistics gives some extent of the devastation. More than 30,000 (the vast majority non-combatants) Peruvians killed, many of them shot, dynamited or hanged in front of their families, at least 5,000 men and women forcibly abducted never to be seen again, thousands of orphans and hundreds of people left mutilated or handicapped, at least 100,000 families -- more than 600,000 people, most of them peasant farmers from the Andes -- left homeless and destitute. At least 4,000 'subversives' have been reported captured, according to government officials, while another 4,461 turned themselves

in under a limited amnesty program for guerrillas from May 1992 to October 1994. While there are no reliable numbers on the number of guerrillas in jail, in 1996 the Shining Path itself claimed that there are about 14,000 'political prisoners' nationwide. Damage to infrastructure caused by guerrilla sabotage from 1980 to 1992 was more than US\$20 billion --- an amount almost equal to Peru's monstrous foreign debt. There was also a cost in human capital, as more than a million Peruvians migrated out of Peru because of the violence and economic crisis. While about 40 percent of the national budget is spent annual on security and defence, an estimated 90 percent of Peru's 23 million people officially live below the poverty line. But these numbers only tell part of the story.

Peru's traditional political system is in shambles and has been turned upside down. Hundreds of community organizations and local governments have been left headless or destroyed. Many municipal and grassroots leaders were gunned down by the Shining Path or scared into leaving their jobs or communities by death threats. Others are too busy trying to survive in Peru's war- and debt-ravaged economy. Large areas of the interior are still effectively under the control of the military. The army, not civilians, has been assigned the task of pacification and still wields significant control over the population through its direct supervision of more than 4,500 armed civilian defence patrols, whose members number several hundred thousands throughout the country, as they remain on the lookout for any vestiges of the Shining Path. While there are exceptions and the democratic nature of some

peasant communities is beginning to reassert itself the overriding culture in many rural parts of Peru is fear-infected militarization

National political power is concentrated in the hands of civilian President Alberto Fujimori, who rules the affairs of the nation with a populist, authoritarian hand backed up by a sometimes murky alliance with the armed forces and a shadowy coterie of advisors specializing in psycho-social control. The most powerful government institution is not the elected congress, or even the army, but the National Intelligence Service, the spy agency whose Spanish acronym is SIN.

Pacification is complicated by an us-against-them attitude that dominates daily life and is a direct consequence of the war. Fujimori's pledge to eradicate subversion by 1995 by encouraging people to denounce anyone they consider suspicious and the use of his considerable executive power to eliminate existing or potential opposition fuel an atmosphere of confrontation. This approach has also exacerbated a deep-rooted racism. Traditional political parties can offer few solutions since they are largely dominated by personalities rather than coherent policy platforms and remain publicly discredited for their inability to resolve crisis and represent the interests of the millions of Peruvians that remain marginalized or excluded from the formal, decision-making system.

Up to now the stunning blows to the Shining Path organization, the dramatic reduction of five-digit inflation, and the seeming lack of political alternatives, have bolstered support for the Fujimori administration among the voting public. But there is little sense of reconciliation or jubilation. Society as a whole is polarized and

there is widespread suspicion, frustration and a general sense of impotence among large sectors of the population. Years of crisis have made Peruvians, who are known for their innovation and ability to overcome obstacles, more resilient. It has also left many depressed, indifferent, or more determined than ever to find new ways to survive. The war is still not completely over, even though the Shining Path is no longer considered a threat to the nation. One reason is that there have been almost no official efforts to address the pain and injustice of the war, or even to shed light on what happened and why, an exercise that has happened in most countries in Latin America where there has been such internal turbulence. More importantly, notwithstanding a slow-moving shake up in Peruvian society and relative macroeconomic stability, little has been done to resolve the root causes of the Shining Path insurgency. Desperation and a crisis of values had led to a dramatic upsurge in violent crime in Lima. No fewer than 280,000 civilians now possess their own firearms, and at least 70 new pistols are sold to people each day, according to one investigative report published in June 1996 in the daily *La República*.

It is hard, if not impossible, to present a comprehensive portrait of life in Peru beyond the Shining Path. For one thing, beyond the obvious extremes of rich and poor, white and Indian, rural and urban there are many Perus. While there is not a single person who has not been affected in some negative way by the war and the crisis situation of the early 1980s and 1990s, the war affected Peru's people and places very differently. Because of this, the distribution of suffering -- much like the country's skewed wealth distribution -- was and remains dramatically unequal.

This thesis explores how the Shining Path war has affected Peru. It looks at how and why the war started and examine the impact on people living in major war zones in Peru's *sierra* (mountains), *selva* (jungle) and *costa* (coast). My investigation and analysis are based on numerous visits to some of the most remote and abandoned areas of Peru during different stages of the war from 1985 to mid-1994 and an extensive review of books, academic articles and media reports written both inside and outside Peru. Many people I interviewed had difficulty speaking about the war because they still suffer from the conspiracy of silence that was such an integral part of the insurgency, or fear some kind of retaliation, either from the Shining Path or government security forces, for revealing their experience or expressing an opinion. For this reason, throughout the thesis I have identified people whose security might be threatened by the public use of the information they gave me by their first name only. The first chapter sets the stage by walking through Peru's recent political and economic history to give the context for the war and its escalation. Chapter two examines how people displaced by war in the Peruvian *sierra*, where Shining Path began its activities, are trying to rebuild their lives. it examines how both insurgency and counterinsurgency have affected development and pacification efforts. The third chapter will show how people in part of Peru's *selva*, or jungle region, have been caught in the middle of a vicious war between drug traffickers, the Shining Path and the military and looks at attempts to end the insurgency through a limited amnesty program for guerrillas and collaborators. The fourth chapter considers the effects of the war in Lima, particularly in the desperately

poor shantytowns in the capital, where an often forgotten majority of Peruvians lives. It recognizes the work of ordinary people to defeat the Shining Path and examines the indelible marks the war has left on human relations, community organizations and the political system. An epilogue looks briefly at the situation in Peru as President Fujimori settled into his second term in office.

Historical Overview

The problem of our time is not knowing what Peru has been . . . but what Peru is.

José Carlos Mariátegui (1895-1930)

On May 17, 1980 five students broke into the electoral offices of the small Andean town of Chuschi and burned the voting lists for the next day's national elections and ballot boxes in the public square. This event marked the Shining Path's official launch of a prolonged campaign of armed insurgency. At the time, few people took the incident or the group seriously. Peru was returning to democracy following 12 years of military rule and the country was filled with a heady sense of optimism and change.

The range of political options for a new generation of Peruvian voters had never seemed so promising. Peru's traditional political parties, a fresh crop of electoral contenders from the once rebellious left and newly energized union and grass roots organizations had all played a role in the transition back to multi-party, elected rule. Illiterates, many of them poor peasant farmers who lived in Peru's remote highlands and plateaus, were eligible to vote for the first time in accordance with the new 1979 Constitution. Expectations were high that the problems of chronic underdevelopment and a rising tide of new social forces could be reconciled within the framework of democracy.

Fernando Belaúnde Terry, ousted from the presidency during the 1968 coup d'état that began the military's rule, coasted back into power in 1980 promising Peruvians he would bring about a "revolution without bullets." Radical reforms implemented during the military *docenio*, as the army's 12 years in power were called, had already dramatically altered Peru's social and economic landscape. One analyst would later call them "the most sweeping changes of any Latin American government in the period between Fidel Castro's 1959 triumph in Cuba and that of the Nicaraguan Sandinistas 20 years later." But the military's so-called "revolution from above" could not fulfil its promises to achieve independent economic development, social justice and mass popular participation in the political process. The reforms had mixed results and there were ideological divisions about them within the military. "From the point of governance," according to Peruvian political scientist Javier Alcalde, "the reforms of the military opened a Pandora's box in Peru, unleashing overwhelming problems and popular demands impossible to cope with in the short term."

The need for reform

The history of the years from 1960 to 1980 seems in retrospect to have been the ideal preparation for Shining Path's insurrection. Peru entered the 1960s far behind many other Latin American countries in terms of economic and political development but with a population hungry for change. Industrialization and modernization in the 1940s and 1950s had brought about an unprecedented level of social mobilization, especially in terms of education and urbanization. Between

1958 and 1968, there was a doubling of primary education enrollment, a tripling of the figures for secondary education, and the number of universities jumped from seven to 33. The rate of illiteracy shrank from 57 percent in 1940 to 28 percent by the end of the 1960s.

Despite this progress, Peru still had one of the most unequal landholding and income distribution structures in the world. A large mass of Peruvians, either Indian or mestizo, were largely excluded from the economic and political decision-making process, despite their higher levels of education. A small élite, made up almost exclusively of the white descendants of European conquerors, and said to have consisted of some 44 families, reaped the lion's share of profits from the country's tremendous natural resource base along with foreign companies that had controlling interests in almost every key sector of the economy. The coastal élite ran huge empires of sugar and cotton for export, while in the mountains landlords operated giant haciendas in almost semi-feudal conditions with hundreds of workers who were usually simply given a place to live and food in return for agricultural labour.

Living standards in the highlands, already dramatically far below the national average, declined further with the centralization of new economic activity on the coast. The lack of regional development fuelled waves of heavy migration from the highlands, particularly to Lima, the capital, and fed a sense of abandonment and resentment in the interior. By the end of the 1960s, about 45 percent of Lima's population was estimated to be made up of Indian migrants. Many of them ended up in the squatter settlements that grew like mushrooms around the capital. Group land

invasions of unoccupied desert land on the city limits was the only alternative to a life of expensive slum housing in the overcrowded centre. Lima, a relatively genteel city of about half a million inhabitants in 1940, was rapidly growing into a sprawling metropolis of haves and have-nots that would contain five million people by 1980. Peasants in the countryside also resorted to land invasions in an effort to force a change in their living conditions and recover ancestral lands lost following the Spanish conquest.

Expectations left unfulfilled

Both Belaúnde, elected for the first time in 1963, and the military government led by General Juan Velasco Alvarado tried to address the social ferment connected to the lack of land and economic opportunities. But their promises for change raised expectations that could not be fulfilled; efforts to bring about change were ill-conceived, became bogged down because of opposition from the well-entrenched élites, or were severely limited by economic crisis. In his campaign for the 1963 elections, Belaúnde promised land reform and the "conquest of Peru by Peruvians" by making foreign companies pay more revenues to be used to fund national development programs. But once in power he failed to deliver on either promise. After the oligarchy and political parties in the Peruvian congress blocked his proposals for land reform, some factions of Peru's leftist parties organized a guerrilla uprising in parts of the Peruvian highlands in 1965. The military quickly quelled the insurgency, but it was another alarm that change was urgently needed. Meanwhile, the U.S. government, antagonized by Belaúnde's populist and nationalist policies,

cut off all development funds and loans from multilateral institutions. Private sources were more than willing to lend substantial amounts at a premium, leading the country down what would become a precarious path of debt financing for grandiose projects that would have little benefit for the majority.

The catalyst for the Oct. 3, 1968 coup was a decision by Belaúnde to extend favourable terms granted to the U.S.-owned International Petroleum Company, whose lucrative exploitation of Peru's resources had been a source of controversy since the early 1920s. The agreement allowed continued repatriation of massive profits and exemption from taxes. Within days, Belaúnde had been ousted by a group of army officers led by army general Velasco, himself a mestizo of humble beginnings, and Peru found itself under the rule of the new "Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces."

Velasco's program of reforms aimed at bringing about a "transformation of the economic, social and cultural structures of Peru." It included agrarian land reform, the nationalization of most foreign-owned companies to promote national economic development, and an ambitious plan to integrate the large mass of marginalized Peruvians into the economic and political decision-making process. But while well-intentioned and far-reaching, Velasco's reforms did not produce the desired results. The controversial agrarian reform law, promulgated in 1969, broke up the landholding basis of the oligarchy's power and its grip over the peasantry. But only between one-quarter and one-third of the rural poor actually benefitted over the nine years the reform was phased in. Those left out in the cold included an estimated four

million people living in some 5,600 *comunidades campesinas*, communal peasant organizations in the *sierra* whose members made up about 40 percent of the workforce. Instead of parcelling out land, the military converted the prosperous coastal plantations and large agricultural landholdings in the interior into 600 cooperatives to be run by former workers. Any profits were to be shared with the peasant communities. But since the cooperatives were not given technical support or credit assistance, many of them fell into ruin. This defeated the military's objective of neutralizing peasant rebelliousness, and improving income distribution and food self-sufficiency in a country becoming increasingly dependent on expensive food imports. The military's model for economic development further concentrated industry on the coast. While the coast and the highlands had roughly the same population between 1968 and 1980, the coast received 70 percent of public investment and the highlands only 14 percent. This encouraged a further flood of migrants to the cities from the countryside, adding to more social pressures in Lima. It also heightened the sense of discontent and alienation among the rural population.

Politicization of the masses

At the same time, marginalized Peruvians were becoming more aware of national political issues through education and the military's own program to encourage more political activism in order to mobilize popular support for its regime. A national social mobilization agency the military set up and ran worked to promote grass roots organizing and self-help projects, particularly in the shantytowns around Lima. The military thought that by controlling the development process it could

prevent the urban migrant population from becoming a radical political force, but this backfired as economic crisis set in. Community organizations became increasingly militant in pressing demands the government was unable to meet. The unresolved questions of land, jobs and basic services for the legions of poor that lived in the shantytowns led to continuous eruptions of civilian disobedience and agitation.

Further crisis erupted after the military government attempted to restrict free education by putting limits on those who could repeat courses failed or missed by students at no cost. Protests were particularly strong and turned violent in the Ayacucho area. Peasant farmers placed a high value on education and were willing to sacrifice much to make sure their children got schooling because they believed it would give them a degree of social mobility that they themselves had never had. The military government ended up cancelling the education reform but the repression it carried out against protesters in Ayacucho politicized students of all ages. This would later help recruiting by the Shining Path.

By 1975, Peru had moved into a prolonged period of economic crisis. There was a disastrous decline in Peru's traditionally lucrative fishing catch, the price of copper was down, and huge investments in the oil and copper industries failed to produce a boost in state revenues. While Velasco removed foreign control by nationalizing industries, he had helped create another dependency by borrowing heavily from international lenders. Under his government, the public foreign debt had quadrupled to US\$3 billion, with annual service payments totalling around US\$500 million. Real wages dropped to half of what they were in the earlier part of the

decade and less than half the population was classified as fully employed. Many people were forced to peddle a living in the streets or enter contraband trade, creating the roots for a large underground economy.

Meanwhile, sharp ideological differences were emerging in the military over Velasco's introduction of a social property initiative that would have enabled workers to share in company profits. This, along with the country's precarious economic position and Velasco's weakening health, led to a bloodless coup that brought Francisco Bermúdez Cerruti, a more conservative army officer, to power in 1975. Bermúdez's introduction of austerity measures to appease foreign lenders such as the International Monetary Fund resulted in intense labour and social unrest soon after. By 1978, the junta had outlined a timetable for a return to civilian rule in 1980.

Shining Path starts war

Shining Path considered the end of military rule as an ideal time to officially start armed warfare. The military could not immediately retake the helm of the state. Shining Path founder and leader Abimael Guzmán Reynoso would later point out in a rare interview in 1988, because it was politically exhausted and discredited in the eyes of the population.

The Shining Path saw the 1980 elections as yet another power grab by the still-powerful mostly white élite, a facade for a social and economic structure that still allowed few opportunities for progress and social standing for the majority of non-white or mixed-blood and Indian Peruvians. The Shining Path had already spent most of the 1970s designing its own strategy to change Peru and building up

contacts with the peasantry throughout the central southern highlands around their base in the city of Ayacucho, located in one of the poorest regions of Peru.

Its members were mostly middle-class youths, many with a university education, who lived in the cities but had their roots in provincial cities or the Andean countryside. The average age was 20 years old and a significant number were women. Guzmán, born in the southern city of Arequipa, became active in regional communist politics in Ayacucho after he became a philosophy professor at Ayacucho's National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga in 1962. He formed his own pro-Chinese faction, then the Shining Path, following deep rifts inside the Peruvian Communist Party in the early 1960s. The 1960s were spent making inroads into social organizations in the Ayacucho area. In the 1970s, Guzmán concentrated on recruiting and training the cadres who would later form the nucleus of the Shining Path leadership.

Under Guzmán, known to his followers as Presidente Gonzalo, or Dr *Puka Inti*, or Red Sun in the Quechua language, the Shining Path grew "to proportions approached by no other rebellion since Peru became independent in the 1820s," Peruvian author Gustavo Gorriti wrote in 1990. "The rag-tag guerrillas of the early days, who had no military training and poor weaponry, have been replaced in several parts of the country by battle-hardened, company-size groups armed with machine guns and rifle-propelled grenades. This growth cannot be explained through the stereotype of Pol Pot -- fanatics who are killing the very people they should be winning over. Although Shining Path's murderous policies are all too real, there is

clearly more than bloody fanaticism to them. The organization has a well-developed strategy, disciplined cadres, and of course Guzmán, the insurgency's key protagonist."

Shining Path philosophy was Maoism mixed with Mariátegui, the Marxist, yet nationalist revolutionary theorist (1895 -1930) who profoundly influenced Peruvian political development from the 1920s on through his writings exhorting a total change in the structure of Peruvian society. Author John M. Baines's 1972 book about Mariátegui provides several passages that could easily fit how Guzmán saw his role in designing the Shining Path. "Mariátegui sought to develop an ideology that would unify the powerless elements of Peruvian society: the Indian, the mestizo and the disenchanting intellectuals, a new political force that would be legitimate and would bridge the racial and cultural gap. . . . Revolution for him was a mystical experience that allowed him to perceive and to participate in the march of history." Just like Mariátegui, the Shining Path believed that all elements of the social structure and all political regimes that had grown up since the Spanish conquest of Peru were illegitimate because they did not take into account Peru's indigenous heritage or incorporate Indians or mestizos fully into economic or political life. Shining Path tracts do not specifically mention race but the message is clear: for things to change, Peru's political and social structure had to be completely destroyed while the Shining Path simultaneously built up a new system to replace it.

The guerrillas' strategy was to provoke the militarization and polarization of Peru through a protracted "people's war" that would gradually choke off the cities

from the countryside in much the same way Mao Zedong carried out his revolution in China. The Shining Path would be the vanguard that would create, develop and organize the conditions for revolution, not wait for its spontaneous development. It would do this by establishing bases of support among the peasantry and workers, training and building up a guerrilla army and ultimately building an alliance of peasant and urban workers. Trying to bring about a wide scale state of war in which even non-Shining Path supporters would ostensibly join the guerrillas out of self-interest for their own survival against the forces of repression was a key element of Shining Path's medium- to long-term scenario. It began its armed campaign by blowing up police stations, electric power stations, and bridges using dynamite stolen from Peru's many mining stations. Their first victims were members of the rural police establishment that had a reputation for being abusive and corrupt

Building the bases

On a political level, the Shining Path worked to undermine or destroy both the official state presence and community organizations through sabotage, threats or assassination, or by coopting them. Once it had several firm contacts inside a community, the Shining Path set up its own organizations and established rules of cooperation and behaviour. Anyone who opposed the Shining Path, or who represented competition, had to leave or be killed. Guerrillas instituted their own form of popular justice in many communities in the interior. People accused of corruption or of exploiting a community were warned to stop, often they were summarily killed following a public hearing. In the early years of the guerrilla war, this

helped foster a certain level of support for the Shining Path, who were seen as avengers of the people. Later, Shining Path's brutality -- such as killing people by slitting their throats in front of family members -- would turn ordinary people against them.

Peru's rugged extremes of geography -- from the towering mountain ranges of the Andes to the jungles around the Amazon -- helped the guerrillas to establish a presence in many communities without detection. The central southern *sierra* around Ayacucho was the guerrillas' first strategic front, followed by the *selva alta* area where coca production for drug trafficking was concentrated, the region around Huancayo, a vital agricultural resource and transit nexus for supplying the capital. Bases were also being built up around Cajamarca in the northern *sierra* near Ecuador, around Puno in the south, approaching the border with Bolivia, and in the shantytowns surrounding Lima. Enrique Bernaldes, former chairman of a senate committee monitoring political violence, estimated that by the end of the 1980s, the Shining Path had some 1200 party militants, about 3000 battle-ready troops, and a support network of somewhere between 40,000 to 60,000 supporters, either active or passive.

But even as the Shining Path increased its presence throughout Peru, few people could claim to understand it. "The legions of Shining Path members are faceless, their whereabouts unknown," Canadian journalist Wilson Ruiz wrote in an accurate reading of the group's public face following a visit to Ayacucho in 1985, when the guerrillas still had a strong presence in the region. "They emerge to

destroy bridges, blow up electrical pylons, attack police posts or ambush military patrols, then disappear into the adobe-brick hamlets in the hills or into the slums of Ayacucho. No one knows who they are or where they are and that is the mystery of the Shining Path. They're invisible."

Shining Path's highly organized secretive structure was one of its most effective weapons. Orders were transmitted from a largely unknown leadership organized into national, regional and local divisions, and supported by multiple layers of support sections cells and committees, some clandestine, some legal and legitimate. No one Shining Path member was in contact with more than eight other members for special assignments such as bombings and assassinations; guerrilla commanders for some local regions did not know who their superiors were. The organization, along with the fanaticism and discipline of the followers, enabled the Shining Path to operate relatively freely, especially in the cities. In rural areas, people didn't know who the leaders were. Family ties in many communities kept people quiet about revealing the identity of members. Guerrilla leaders also possessed a cunning ability to adapt Shining Path strategy to local conditions in Peru's different regions and to take advantage of the many weak spots in the official system. Artful use of the psychology of fear also contributed to the Shining Path's effectiveness and allure, and image of power and invincibility.

The Shining Path presented itself to recruits as the vanguard of world revolution. Members would not only work to bring about revolutionary change in Peru but would be at the forefront of a messianic movement that would change the world.

Guzmán was elevated to the stature of Marx, Lenin, and Mao, as "the fourth sword of Marxism." Shining Path ideology became known to followers as Gonzalo Thought and a tremendous personality cult grew up around the leader. Following Guzmán and the Shining Path was held up as the only road to a more just society. It offered many a sense of hope, identity and self-advancement.

"Those who join the Shining Path are those who don't have a place in the system," Carlos Iván Degregori, a Peruvian anthropologist, said in an interview in 1989. "The Shining Path offers them a new identity and an organization that works. When they say there will be a blackout, there is one. And that is something in a country in which almost nothing besides the women's volleyball team (1988 Olympic medal winners) and the church works." Many recruits were the sons and daughters of peasants or provincial élites, or children of migrants who had moved from the city to the countryside. "They feel they are between two worlds, that of their parents, who come from a traditional Andean world that they don't understand, and that of the urban, *limeño* (from Lima) Western world that looks down on them because they are *cholos* (Indians who adopt dress, lifestyle and attitudes of those in Lima) and from the provinces. The Shining Path offers them power. For the first times in their lives they can command respect. They are the ones who instill fear."

Failed promises

Despite its emphasis on ideology, failed promises of change and popular resentment and frustration helped Shining Path's growth most. "For three decades, gifted orators and demagogues, such as Belaúnde and Alan García, and committed

but incompetent reformers such as General Velasco revolutionized the expectations of the middle sectors and the underdogs, playing to the theme of radical development and making too many promises that they were unable to fulfil," Javier Alcalde wrote in his book on the decay of the development process in Peru.

During his campaign for the elections in 1980, Belaúnde promised to create a million jobs during his five years in office, to expand the agricultural frontier into the jungle region and to build roads, housing and other public works. While the first two years were buoyed by relatively good economy performance, by 1982 the country was again facing serious economic problems. Recession and foreign debt crushed the economy and a series of floods and droughts struck entire regions. Politically, the poor performance of the economy worked to eat away at the government's stability and credibility: civilian rule was failing to bring about any material benefits. The economic crisis hampered Belaúnde's plans to continue road building; and the jungle area he hoped to turn into an engine of growth and bread basket for Peru had instead become a flourishing zone for the production of the coca plant used to manufacture cocaine. Increased drug-trafficking also became a growing source of corruption among government, military and police officials, and violence and common crime as children and teenagers in some of the poor sectors became quickly addicted to cruder versions of the refined powder used by members of high-society circles.

With inflation at 160 percent, unemployment at least 50 percent in some urban areas, and industrial production down by nearly 20 percent by 1984, Belaúnde

agreed to implement a tough IMF stabilization program including sharp cuts in government spending and subsidies and strict limits on wages. This resulted in growing disenchantment with the government and labour protests by teachers and other public sector workers. Purchasing power was about 40 percent of what it was in 1977 and the lack of investment in the economy meant no new jobs. Still, one of Belaúnde's proudest achievements was transferring power to a democratically chosen successor following elections in 1985. It was the first time such an event had happened in 40 years. Growing political violence, however, still threatened the fledgling democracy, with at least 6,000 people dead and more than US\$1 billion in property damage by 1985 as a result of terrorist acts.

A fresh alternative

There were renewed hopes for change when Alan García Pérez, the leader of the social-democratic American Popular Revolutionary Alliance Party, won presidential elections in 1985 with the largest majority in Peru's history following an outspoken campaign against hunger, corruption and political violence. García, a charismatic 36-year-old who became the youngest chief of state in Latin America, presented a fresh alternative to the aging Belaúnde. His promises to govern for all Peruvians attracted a wide range of voters, especially those in the shantytowns and lower sectors who wanted to believe García and the APRA, after years as a sometimes outlawed opposition party that was often blocked from governing by an interventionist military, could deliver change.

García's first radical move was to limit payments on Peru's foreign debt, which was almost US\$14 billion when he assumed power, to 10 percent of export earnings. García argued that the money saved by deferring payments was needed to boost the Peruvian economy and to fight subversion with more food, jobs and health care for Peru's growing numbers of poor. García abandoned Belaúnde's jungle development scheme, instead making assistance to the so-called Trapecio Andino, a geographic triangle made up of Peru's poorest highland provinces, a main focus of his administration's development efforts. Despite a credit cut-off by foreign banks and a showdown with the IMF over the debt payment limit, following García's first year in power the Peruvian economy had a growth rate of 8.5 percent -- the highest in Latin America.

The policy worked well in the short term: higher wages translated into higher consumption levels and as a consequence were a boost for Peruvian industry. Yet critics constantly assailed the government for lacking a coherent development plan. García was counting on private investment to be the second motor of growth following higher consumption. But large Peruvian industrialists, despite having made a lot of money from García's pro-business policies, continued to transfer their profits out of the country instead of reinvesting. This angered García. On an impulse, and in an effort to rob part of the platform of the strong rival United Left party elected to run metropolitan Lima and other municipalities, García moved to nationalize Peruvian banks and financial institutions.

Meanwhile, members of the APRA increasingly became assassination targets of the Shining Path. Fifty-four APRA officials were killed in García's first 25 months in power, including 23 in early 1987 alone. One of the most famous victims was Rodrigo Franco Montes, the 31-year-old president of the government's food import and distribution agency who was an important member of the ruling APRA party. Analysts suggested that the Shining Path was stepping up its attacks to weaken the government further as the country was embroiled in widespread controversy over the bank nationalization plan.

By that time, the Shining Path claimed to have control of more than 500 villages in remote parts of the countryside and was becoming increasingly powerful in Upper Huallaga Valley where coca production was concentrated. Government enforcement squads broke up more than a dozen Shining Path hit squads operating in Lima. But the Shining Path moved quickly to replace them and was making headway in building up its support organizations, such as a front of lawyers to defend those accused of terrorism by the government and another to provide assistance to family members of guerrillas jailed or killed by government forces.

The Shining Path had grown in influence throughout the country and was increasingly dominating the national political agenda along with economic crisis. Two-thirds of Peruvian territory was under emergency military control. Thousands of people had been killed because of political violence, most of them innocent civilians. Hundreds of local politicians like mayors, union leaders and grass-roots officials -- at least 400 between 1988 and 1992 -- had been killed or forced to resign

on threat of death, leaving power vacuums in areas that already had little government presence. In a number of districts, especially rural ones, the Shining Path became the de facto government. Constant sabotage campaigns to destroy key infrastructure, such as bridges, power stations, and development projects, kept the government on the defensive and weakened its resources. The guerrillas used stolen dynamite plentiful in the country's mining districts to blow up their targets, weapons stolen from police and soldiers they killed, and the element of surprise. As well, guerrillas could count on supporters inside the system for intelligence. Besides promoting chaos and isolation, by 1989 the destruction had caused an estimated US\$20 billion worth of damage, an amount that was almost equivalent to Peru's foreign debt. Foreign investment dwindled because of the violence and instability, and once several foreign aid workers and a few missionaries were killed, many international development programs, particularly those in Peru's interior, were either cancelled or became paralysed.

Fighting the insurgency

As the Shining Path grew, the government was often incapable of fighting the insurgency through legal and political means. During the first 10 years of the insurgency, the Peruvian state committed all the errors it could conceivably make in response to Shining Path activities, Peruvian military analyst Enrique Obando Arbulú argues. "We had a government trying to deal with subversion without a plan, without intelligence, and in an environment of mutual distrust between the civilian government and the armed forces."

Relations were already strained between Belaúnde and the military when he became president in 1980. Given the fact he had been removed from power during the 1968 coup and Peru's chronic history of military intervention in the nation's politics, Belaúnde was wary of giving the military too much power. Soon after he took office, Belaúnde cut the military's budget in what appeared to be an attempt to undermine its intelligence powers and make sure it could not keep spying on politicians. Belaúnde also refused to admit that the Shining Path was a home-grown, organized force that posed a serious internal security threat. "It's a few hundred people. This is not a movement, it is a bunch of killers, common offenders and narcotics traffickers," Belaúnde said during an interview in the presidential palace in April 1985.

The military itself is reported to have known about Shining Path's insurgency plans by at least 1979 -- one full year before the armed struggle began -- but took no action because it was transferring rule back to civilians and did not want to be accused of ruining the process by stepping up military activity. Guzmán -- who for years would be the most elusive, wanted man inside Peru -- had even been briefly detained, but then released, by the military government in 1979. Other reports suggest that the military removed key intelligence files before officially turning over the reins of government to civilians. There was also a lack of coordination among police and military intelligence agencies -- numbering more than 10 in the mid-1980s -- who often saw each other as rivals.

One military officer who worked in army intelligence in Ayacucho, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that the military was totally unprepared for Shining Path's kind of war once the civilian government ordered it to take over the fight against the guerrillas from the police and their special insurgency squad in 1984. Peruvian soldiers were well-versed in conventional forms of war. Peru's borders with Ecuador and Chile have long been a source of friction. But he said that officers and soldiers had almost no briefing materials or training to be able to root out an underground subversive force that was radically different from other guerrilla movements in Central and South America in the 1960s and 1970s. As a consequence, they knew almost nothing about the Shining Path, what bound cadres together, or its sophisticated cell structure. It was only around 1985 that attempts were made by the military to write down Shining Path's political and military objectives for instruction to soldiers, the officer said. By that time, the Shining Path had spread out and established an underground presence in much of the Peruvian highlands and in different parts of Lima. In the absence of a strategic concept to fight the war, military chiefs in different regions "acted on their own without coordinating their actions with that of military chiefs in other parts of the country," Enrique Obando said.

. . . the dirty way

The overall result was a dirty war, a slash-and-burn approach. The military's disregard for basic human rights sparked criticism from rights groups mobilizing inside Peru and abroad and initially helped encourage support for the Shining Path

In some cases, family members of victims of atrocities became more receptive to the Shining Path as the country became one of the Western Hemisphere's worst human-rights offenders for its high number of forced disappearances and reports of rape and torture. From 1987 to 1990, Peru occupied the first place in the world for detained and disappeared people, according to the United Nations. "What was incredible was that the civilian government, being ignorant of defence and anti-subversive affairs, thought that there was no alternative to this policy and did two things," concluded Obando. "It backed the military's policy of abducting people, and it denied publicly that this was going on."

Early on in his presidency, García took a strong position against human rights abuses by the armed forces. He also offered peace talks with the guerrillas and appointed a blue-ribbon peace commission to make proposals to the government. The Shining Path, which believes that "violence is the essence of revolution," completely ignored the call for negotiations. The peace commission's recommendations were never implemented because of the continual lack of national consensus among Peru's many political parties. When news of several massacres emerged as the army continued its dirty war tactics, García quickly reassigned three army generals responsible for the Ayacucho region. The president's public statements about human rights mainly served to create resentment and increase the frustration simmering within military ranks. For the military, national and international human rights organizations seemed to focus only on military abuses, and not on the guerrillas' brutal attacks on soldiers or policemen. The 1986 massacre of 300

suspected members of the Shining Path who were being held in three Lima jails was a clear demonstration of military frustration. At least one hundred of the victims were shot after they surrendered. The slaughter also tarnished the international image of Garcia, who had hopes of becoming the leader of the non-aligned movement of nations, because he gave the order for the military to stop a strike by rebel prisoners trying to capture international attention while the London-based Socialist International held its annual meeting of representatives of the world's social democratic parties that year in Lima.

Any thought that the killings of the Shining Path prisoners, who included a large number of known commanders and high-level militants, would wipe out the Shining Path was a serious miscalculation. The massacres created martyrs for the movement and boosted its recruiting efforts, especially among the victims' families and friends. On an organizational level, the Shining Path proved to be especially resilient in its ability to generate and regenerate leadership continuously.

Military and police intelligence still weren't sure until the late 1980s who all the members of the Shining Path's governing central committee were. The Garcia government made a concerted attempt to beef up intelligence gathering activities, particularly those of the police forces which reported to the civilian government under the Interior Ministry. This further antagonized relations with military officials, who mistrusted APRA's intentions. The Garcia government also, without much success, launched public campaigns to encourage people to report on suspicious activities in their neighbourhoods and offered huge rewards for information leading

to the capture of Guzmán and a couple of other suspected leaders. Some reports suggested that the reward campaign may have contributed to the capture in 1988 of Osmán Morote Barrionuevo, believed to be the Shining Path's second-in-command and the person in charge of military operations.

Protecting rights

Ironically, the 1979 Constitution and concerns about protecting the rights of individuals consistently hampered the García government's attempts to fight the Shining Path. Shining Path members who were captured and processed by the Peruvian legal system often were acquitted or served minor jail terms because of the justice system's stiff criteria for proof. "The issue of creating legislation to prosecute perpetrators of insurgent activity raised ethical questions in the desire to uphold fully the rights and freedoms protected under the nation's new Constitution," Gabriela Tarazona-Sevillano, a former government prosecutor, wrote in her 1990 book on the Shining Path. Morote's processing under anti-terrorist legislation in force at the time was a case in point. Morote was proven "technically innocent" of participation in Shining Path activities because it could not be proven beyond doubt. Internal Shining Path documents found in his own handwriting were insufficient to justify a pronouncement of guilt. At the same time, Tarazona-Sevillano wrote, "because of the critical nature of the Shining Path threat, however, the police and army exercised liberal arresting procedures that clogged the courts with state cases against people whose only crime may have been their presence in an area where Shining Path actions took place The overwhelming burden these accusations placed on the

courts caused many cases against true Shining Path members to be lost in the shuffle and countless others to be dismissed for lack of evidence."

Peruvian laws and traditions also permitted the Shining Path to operate with virtual freedom and immunity in the country's universities and jails. By 1988, both had become open breeding and training grounds for the movement. García for several years tolerated the daily publishing of the newspaper *El Diario*, even though it was clearly a propaganda instrument for the Shining Path, on the grounds that free expression was essential to a democracy. After the Shining Path gained control of the newspaper in 1987, it began using *El Diario* to herald guerrilla army fights with the military and to advance its positions on a variety of political and cultural issues. In 1988, in a blatant, taunting propaganda exercise, it devoted a whole issue to the "interview of the century" with Guzmán. It, and other articles that often mocked the government, appeared to be aimed at bringing a broader number of Peruvians on side to its cause and provoking more government repression as the guerrillas stepped up their public and underground presence in Lima.

The Shining Path was not able to mobilize a network of support in Lima as it had done so successfully in the *sierra* and *selva* regions. But the racial and class divides in Lima facilitated its attempts to spread support systems and exert controls over shantytown communities as it quietly infiltrated organizations to gather intelligence and mobilize resources. While people in the middle and upper classes were distressed by the Shining Path's growth, many viewed it as a problem of the lower classes that the government should handle. Because many never travelled

into the shantytowns or the interior, or could not because of military controls, the war seemed to be a phenomenon that they viewed on television rather than in their daily life. "The drama of Peru is that the different social groups don't care about understanding the Shining Path phenomenon," Julio Cotler, a well-known Peruvian political historian, said in an interview in 1988. "They are completely disdainful of what is happening and are not considering the real dimension of the insurgency and the barbarity that it represents. People are not aware of the problem that is right in their own back yard. The time to react is now, otherwise the violence is only going to increase."

Violence becomes generalized

Violence was already becoming more generalized and for the first time in Peruvian history, several paramilitary groups emerged. The most active was named the Rodrigo Franco Command, after a murdered APRA official, and its formation led to suggestions the APRA was taking the law into its own hands. One of the group's first acts was to kill the lawyer who represented captured Shining Path leader Morote. An unknown number of APRA militants received secret military training in North Korea and, although never proven, there were persistent reports the APRA was building up an arms stockpile to defend itself against any potential military coup.

In addition to the Shining Path, a second guerrilla group called the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru* (MRTA), was gaining strength in the central jungle areas, in Lima and in parts of the lower jungle area. The MRTA, described as Castroite by security analysts, carried out Robin Hood-style actions in the

shantytowns, took over radio stations to promote its message, kidnapped business leaders and carried out bombings of franchises of American restaurant chains and embassies. Rumoured to have collaborated fleetingly with the Shining Path in Lima around 1986, the MRTA became a bitter rival of the Shining Path. It waged battles against members of the Shining Path army in some parts of the interior but its strength and tactics were pale by comparison to its Maoist rival. The MRTA lacked the Shining Path's organizational skills and security apparatus, and suffered from major internal crises. While the movement remained active, its leaders were easily captured several times.

Violence related to drug-trafficking was another problem. The Garcia government waged active warfare against the increasing power of drug dealers through several operations in coordination with U.S. law enforcement. But its efforts did nothing to decrease the ever-expanding cultivation of coca, or the steady supply of cocaine paste to the primarily Colombian drug rings that operated planes in and out of the Upper Huallaga Valley. The Peruvian government's task was made all the more difficult by the reality that the Peruvian economy had become virtually addicted to coca dollars. The coca/cocaine trade was worth, directly and indirectly, about US\$1 billion a year to the Peruvian economy. According to some estimates, coca dollars accounted for more than 70 percent of all the dollars that moved through Peru's thriving national currency exchange market. Coca dollars also helped the government to meet its foreign-debt payments. In late 1990, Peru's central reserve bank made daily purchases of US\$2 million in coca dollars "in order to accumulate

reserves for debt payment," according to one former president of the central bank. Meanwhile, the Peruvian crop was providing the raw material for an estimated 60 percent of the world's cocaine.

Running out of money

As the 1990 elections approached, Peru sunk deeper into economic crisis. Inflation was spiralling out of control at more than 2,000 percent per year and daily life became plagued by constant strikes by thousands of public workers to protest wages far behind the cost of living.

After the attempted nationalization of banks, confidence in the García government and its credibility had dropped. The country soon began running out of money, forcing the government to dig deep into the country's reserves to make up for a freeze in lending from institutional and commercial lenders. They did not want García's debt stance to set an example, even though figures showed that the government was actually paying closer to 30 percent of its debt load rather than the 10 percent peg set in 1985. Inflation began to accelerate as the government's economic model failed miserably. Political violence also inhibited investment. Cocaine manufacture, the private security industry, and contraband smuggling of clothes, foodstuffs and sundries, were the only real booming sectors of the economy.

The bank nationalization also forged a new political force led by Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa. In what turned out to be a fatal strategy, Vargas Llosa allied himself with Peru's traditional centre-right and right-wing parties for the 1990 elections. He campaigned hard for an economic shock program to put Peru's

finances back in order to promote stability and to help reestablish the country's international lending and promised to set up a special social fund to help the poorest adjust to the resulting economic hardship.

Until a few weeks before the election, most people assumed Vargas Llosa would win the national elections. Instead, the novelist's Freedom and Democracy (FREDEMO) party suffered a dramatic upset at the hands of Cambio 90, an electoral slate of political neophytes led by Alberto Fujimori Fujimori, a virtual unknown with no political experience. Fujimori, the son of Japanese immigrants who trained as an agronomist and worked as a mathematics professor before becoming rector of the agrarian university, promised "work, honesty and technology" as he drove around with a megaphone and a tractor truck in the sandy hills of Lima's shantytowns. He spoke out vigorously against Vargas Llosa's proposed shock program. Unknown to most voters, Fujimori, who until late in the campaign operated on a shoestring budget helped by the volunteer efforts of well-organized evangelists and small entrepreneurs working in the underground economy, had some support from Garcia's APRA party, which saw blocking the right-leaning agenda of Mario Vargas Llosa as the only compensation for its own failing fortunes.

Rejecting the establishment

Fujimori's election represented a clear rejection of establishment politics and brought the rampant racism that exists in Peru visibly to the surface. For some in the upper middle and upper classes, support for Fujimori among *campesinos* and members of the poorer sectors of society seemed to justify long-held fears that

Peruvians of Indian ancestry or mixed-blood would rise up against them. Some spat at their televisions when Fujimori talked. The navy, traditionally the most elitist of the Peruvian armed forces, looked for a way to prove he was not born in Peru and therefore could not become president.

All of that changed a few weeks after Fujimori assumed office and introduced one of the most austere economic reform programs in Latin America. The so-called *fujishock* stunned Peru because it was even more orthodox than the program proposed by Vargas Llosa and that international financial institutions would accept. It had a devastating social impact. In the month following the announcement of the adjustment program, the cost of living rose by almost 400 percent as prices increased from 200 to 3000 percent with the removal of subsidies and other controls. In 1989, the number of people living below the poverty line was seven million. Following *fujishock* the number increased to more than 12 million -- about half the population of Peru. Infant mortality, and diseases such as tuberculosis and cholera, which result from improper housing, nutrition and health services, began to rise dramatically. In 1991, a breakdown of sanitary conditions led to a serious outbreak of cholera, one of the few occurring in the Western Hemisphere in this century. Only 18 percent of the economically active population in greater Lima were estimated to have regular paying jobs. Purchasing power plummeted by at least 27 percent during the first 12 months of Fujimori's rule. At least 7,000 small- and medium-sized businesses shut down in the month following the introduction of the shock program.

The initial reaction was protest and disruption of public order. Angry crowds took to the streets rioting and looting. News reports said the police had arrested more than 6,000 people. Despite the economic plan's heavy social costs, the effectiveness of the austerity measures in bringing down inflation helped Fujimori maintain a fair level of acceptance and approval. Opposition parties remained divided and disorganized in the wake of the stunning defeat of traditional parties. Many in the opposition parties elected to the Senate and Congress agreed with the economic reforms. Fujimori's decision to choose people from the centre-right and right to be part of his first cabinet and his liberalization of the economy helped him win important political support not only from the international community but at home from the business class and politicians who had previously supported Vargas Llosa and had expressed open disdain for Fujimori.

While Fujimori was having some success in controlling inflation, the government and the military were still not making any major headway against the Shining Path. Those who were trying to fight the Shining Path at the grass-roots level were left unprotected as guerrillas moved to kill community leaders who opposed them in the shantytowns. The military and police were cited for systematically detaining and intimidating popular leaders at the very time that many of these leaders were trying to fight against the influence of the Shining Path, which had kindled new support because of increased desperation over the drastic social impact of the economic measures. Sporadic roundups and searches also did not

help much but the military tried to improve its image with civic action campaigns in some communities.

Forcing a new direction

The Shining Path concentrated most of its terrorist actions in the capital throughout 1991. The goal was to capitalize on popular discontent over the economic measures and to try and further destabilize a system whose politics and economy were in turmoil. In opinion polls, up to 38 percent of people said they believed a Shining Path victory could eventually be possible.

In late 1991, Fujimori moved into action. He presented Congress with a package of 126 decrees for the reorganization of the state, the economy and the fight against insurgency. The decrees, dubbed *decretos-bomba* (bomb decrees) for their explosively controversial nature, called for a lifting of remaining controls on foreign investment, already eased progressively under Belaúnde and García, almost unlimited power for the military and intelligence services in the counterinsurgency fight, and greatly enhanced executive power for the president.

The security decrees reflected an increasing tendency of the Fujimori government not only to legitimize the often heavy-handed counter-insurgency tactics of the military but to use anti-democratic controls. One proposed decree said that any person living in Peru could be drafted into the security forces with the possibility of their real estate and economic assets being temporarily expropriated. Those resisting such measures could be charged with treason. Congress was able to overturn some of the decrees, including one calling for a merger of the state's four

development banks, and refused to pass many others, including the patriotic expropriation law.

With only 17 percent of the seats in the Peruvian congress and 14 percent in the senate, Fujimori had to rely on alliances in order to get legislation passed. Many of those elected agreed with his economic reforms, but tension with the executive branch increased over the diversion of powers. Despite a steady fall in the rate of inflation, the severity of the continued economic crisis had sectors of the business class worried about the extent of the economic recession with its marked drops in productivity and impact on Peruvians' buying power. They were also concerned that the dire economic straits of many Peruvians would increase social discontent further, contributing to political violence, thereby further affecting investment.

Amid growing opposition in congress to his measures, on April 5, 1992, Fujimori announced that, with the support of the armed forces, he was dissolving parliament and establishing a "Government of Emergency and National Reconstruction." The move was in effect an *autogolpe* -- or a self-proclaimed coup against the elected government. Fujimori argued the exceptional measures were necessary to uphold democracy, but internationally and among traditional political parties, Fujimori's *autogolpe* was seen as a major setback in the country's consolidation of democracy. Fujimori received an astonishingly high level of support for his actions among Peruvians, who felt authoritarianism was the only way to establish order to cope with what had become a cliff-hanging sense of chaos and

impotence related to political violence, economic crisis, the perceived ineffectiveness of parliamentarians, and widespread corruption in the judiciary.

One month after his coup, Fujimori enacted the hard-hitting anti-terrorism decree 25475. Under the new system, people accused of terrorism could be tried for treason by military tribunals; those accused of other offenses would appear before civilian courts presided over by faceless judges who signed their verdicts with code names. Fujimori said this would protect the identity of some judges afraid of retaliation by the Shining Path. But rights groups were critical of the procedure because the verdicts, with jail terms of up to 30 years or life, were often based on accusations made by anonymous witnesses. After the coup more than 4,000 people were arrested and charged with terrorism or treason under the harsh legislation, and more people were tried than had been during the previous 10 years. The legislation also contained a limited amnesty plan for guerrilla members or their sympathizers, with the military in charge of supervising the system.

The military, whose powers to fight the insurgency through whatever means possible were reinforced with the coup, would become an important political power base for Fujimori. One of those believed to be the mastermind behind the *autogolpe* was Vladimiro Montesinos, a former army officer and one-time lawyer for Peruvian and Colombian drug-traffickers who reportedly became a close advisor to Fujimori after helping him resolve a real estate irregularity that could have threatened his bid for the presidency. Montesinos had been cashiered from the army on suspicion of selling Peruvian military secrets but had plenty of connections inside the army and

an intimate knowledge of its workings from the time he served as a personal aide to Gen. Edgardo Mercado Jarín, who was prime minister, minister of war and commander-in-chief of the army in the Velasco government in the early 1970s. Montesinos reportedly used his influence to convince Fujimori to purge the police and the judiciary following the coup and to displace those in the military opposed to the disruption of constitutional order. The reorganization sparked serious discontent among military ranks, public revelations by a high-ranking military officer about Montesinos, and a thwarted coup by 25 military officers in November, 1992. Gen. Rodolfo Robles, a former army inspector-general and third-ranking officer in the military chain of command, sought U.S. asylum after he publicly accused Montesinos of being the leader of a paramilitary death squad working inside the national intelligence agency. Montesinos had become the de facto head of the agency following Fujimori's election in 1990 and was believed to have played a key role in the centralization of Peru's intelligence services and the devising of new strategies to fight insurgency and drug-trafficking. In November, Montesinos's intelligence gathering helped put down a coup by the 25 army officers who wanted to displace Fujimori and restore full democracy. Robles maintained that Montesinos directed the activities of a paramilitary squad named La Colina, named after an undercover army officer who was accidentally killed while on duty as an infiltrator among the Shining Path. The Colina squad's most notorious activities were the abduction and execution of people suspected of involvement with the Shining Path -- nine students and a professor from the Enrique Guzmán y Valle University just outside Lima, known

popularly as La Cantuta, in July, 1992 -- and the massacre of 15 people attending a chicken barbecue in the a poor central neighbourhood called Barrios Altos in 1991.

Under stiff international pressure, Fujimori agreed to enter into dialogue with political opposition parties, and to return constitutional rule to Peru through the holding of elections for a constituent assembly in November 1992. Fujimori moved quickly to bolster his own powers through the holding of a referendum to get approval to change the constitution to enable him to run for a second successive term. He continued to vow that insurgency would be eliminated by the end of his term in 1995.

Bombings in Lima

The Shining Path intensified its attacks in Lima following Fujimori's coup. In July 1992 it resorted to a new, dangerous tactic: the setting off of car bombs in Lima. The bloody offensive was deliberately designed to create civilian casualties in middle and upper class districts, areas that had remained largely immune to Shining Path attacks in the past. In the first seven weeks after the coup, Shining Path was responsible for 11 car bombs and 40 killings in Lima alone, including bombings of police headquarters near the presidential palace, the wealthy shopping district of San Isidro, and a police station that had been built in the shanty town of El Salvador. In the most daring and terrifying attack, on July 16, guerrillas set off a powerful bomb in the upper class district of Miraflores. Twenty civilians died and dozens more were injured. The guerrillas followed the car bombs with a series of armed strikes called for all of Lima on July 23 and 24. A taxi driver who continued

to work despite an armed strike called by the Shining Path was shot and set on fire in his car and dynamite was tossed among shoppers and workers at Lima's largest wholesale food market. What was even more disturbing for some was the fact that the guerrillas seemed to be able to monitor people's movements and know exactly who was defying them. The Shining Path had informants everywhere, even in the most unsuspecting places. In one case, the trusted valet of a military officer turned out to be a member of the Shining Path, in another an army general's son was a member of the Shining Path. One young police officer was shocked when colleagues knocked on his door and found weapons and guerrilla propaganda hidden under his sister's bed.

Shining Path's new tactics, especially the bombings, created a climate of terror throughout Lima. All of a sudden the middle and upper classes were being given a taste of what people in remote parts of Peru and in the shantytowns around the capital had been confronted with for years. Many had beefed up personal security and carried guns to protect themselves against growing crime, but the possibility of being the victim of a bombing attack caused a degree of hysteria.

The climate of intense fear broke on Sept. 12 when authorities announced they had captured Guzmán in an upper-middle class neighbourhood. Guzmán was captured without incident following months of police detective work. The capture of eight of the 12 members of the movement's central committee followed. What shocked many Peruvians was the accompanying capture of a well-known, upper middle class ballerina who had been hiding Guzmán above her dance studio. It

belied their image of Shining Path as a product of the shantytowns. In fact, most of Shining Path's leaders were middle-class professionals who would have no trouble navigating through Peruvian society without suspicion.

The following year, from January to December, the government reported that it had captured more than 5,800 subversives. Statistics kept on political violence indicated that on a national level, political killings had decreased to one killing every two days, compared to more than three a day in the late 1980s. Guerrilla sabotage attacks also slipped to about 22 attacks a month, less than half the average monthly rate in 1981. Daily television news reports included a steady diet of alleged Shining Path prisoners who were shown off to the public wearing black and white striped prisoner suits by black-suited security officers wearing sunglasses to hide their identity. This media campaign was clearly designed to give viewers the impression that the Shining Path threat was not only over, but under complete control.

The call for peace

In October 1993, Fujimori reinforced this message in a more dramatic way. The president released two letters and a videotape featuring proposals from a conciliatory Guzmán recognizing the government's victories against the insurgency and calling for peace talks. Guzmán's proposals to postpone the revolution to well beyond the year 2000 were seen as part of a plan by Fujimori to elicit support for changes to the constitution, including the one that would break with tradition and allow him to run for another immediate term of office. Two days before the referendum, Fujimori made public another letter by four of Guzmán's closest

advisors, also in jail, echoing the calls for peace. Some of the Shining Path's jailed leaders were reportedly allowed to travel to meet other high-ranking members of the movement jailed in other parts of the country to convince them to support Guzmán's position. Speculation continued well into 1994 about whether or not Guzmán's appeal to his followers was real. Some suggested the peace call was aimed at exacting better terms of confinement for himself and other jailed leaders. Other, more cynical critics advanced theories that the peace proposals were part of a plan by Guzmán to guarantee the long-term survival of the movement.

THE SIERRA

Source: Peru. Time of Fear, Latin American Bureau, London, 1994

There was a lot of life here because there was a lot of death.

Lithuma in Mario Vargas Llosa's Death in the Andes

The sheer enormity of the problem of war refugees is starkly visible in Ayacucho, the Andean city where the Shining Path began its revolution. While the colonial architecture of the mountain city famous for its 33 churches has not changed, the human face of the city has. From 1980 to 1993, Ayacucho's population swelled from an estimated 90,000 to more than 145,000 as people from the surrounding countryside moved to escape from violence by the Shining Path or the Peruvian military. Poverty was always more evident in this city, located in one of the poorest regions of Peru, but now the problem has multiplied. The dusty, cobbled streets are overrun with peasants whose utter destitution is immediately obvious. Most of the recent arrivals used to have their own houses and a regular supply of food to eat and trade with from small-scale farming on small parcels of individual or community land. Now many live 14 or more in rented rooms and must hunt for odds jobs in the street in order to survive. So many people displaced by the violence -- *dezplazados* they are called -- long-time Ayacuchanos feel like they are the outsiders.

President Alberto Fujimori has said that re-populating the war-torn Andes is an important step toward the pacification of Peru. But the problem of war refugees

is monumental. The Centro de Promoción de Desarrollo Poblacional (CEPRODEP), a small non-profit agency that works to promote development for people displaced by violence estimates that at least 600,000 people -- between 100,000 to 120,000 families -- became refugees within Peru's borders during the first 13 years of the insurgency. The vast majority, about 70 percent, are Quechua-speaking Indians. Almost half of the displaced come from the region around Ayacucho.

By 1994, many war refugees from the Ayacucho area were trying to find a way to return home. Peasants used to being poor but independent in the countryside found little room to survive among the ranks of city poor whose meagre resources were already stretched to the limit. The region had also become safer because of the successful mobilization of peasant patrols trained and armed by the military, and the capture of many of the Shining Path's leaders in 1992.

After the number of peasants planning to go back to their communities began to escalate, the Fujimori government finally officially recognized the problem of the displaced in 1993 and promised development assistance for returning peasants. When I visited Ayacucho early in 1994, the Peruvian government had petitions for help from at least 200 communities abandoned because of war that wanted help for rebuilding. Requests for assistance were coming in from peasant communities at the rate of five a day in Ayacucho alone, said Santiago Campos, an engineer who heads the Support and Re-Population Program (PAR), the agency that co-ordinates assistance for the re-population effort through the National Institute of Development (INADE). But with huge sums of money still going to support the military effort to

ensure stability and security throughout the country, and to pay Peru's huge foreign debt, the Fujimori government is hard-pressed to respond to the social fallout from the war. Campos said the government is far short of the money needed to provide a minimum of that required to rebuild villages in the Ayacucho, Junin, Huancavelica and Apurimac regions, which were hardest hit by the violence. "The money we have is limited to some basic infrastructure for a few communities," Campos said. "But people need work and there are still no credit mechanisms to help farmers."

Confronting the past

The people of the village of Umaro are among the groundswell of Peruvian peasants who are confronting the past and trying to rebuild their lives. Umaro was one of hundreds of tiny communities located in what was known as the *zona roja*, or red zone, a strip of territory south of Ayacucho that came under the control of the guerrillas within a few years after the Shining Path launched armed warfare in 1980. For years, the rebuilding of communities like Umaro was only a distant dream kept alive by networks of village associations that sprung up wherever those displaced by political violence settled.

Land and birth-towns in the *sierra* are powerful forms of personal identification, even for those who moved away years ago. Dario Palomino, an Umarino who moved to Lima in the 1960s, was one of those spearheading the campaign to resettle Umaro. Mostly Indian, but with a touch of Spanish on his mother's side, Palomino's short stocky body is as strong as an ox, as I later discovered when we climbed over several mountains for a visit to Umaro. But as

tough as Palomino is, he found it hard not to cry when he talked about everything that has happened in the village. "I cry because I was never in agreement with what went on there," he said, almost sobbing, after one meeting in a tiny community house Umarinos have set up in the Ate-Vitarte district of Lima. What hurts him most is that the young people brought death and destruction to the village instead of making it better, he said.

Mountains limited access

To hear proud village elders describe it, Umaro was a small paradise before the war. An estimated 700 people lived in Umaro in about 145 adobe houses, while another 200 lived in its sister hamlet of Bellavista. The people who lived there knew how to exploit the riches of the soil and worked hard together in an attempt to bring progress and modernization despite almost no help from the government. Unlike many other tiny communities in the rugged, desolate stretches of the southern central Andes, all residents had running water. The village had an electric generator and there were plans to bring electricity to each house. Many say Umaro looked like a large, private hacienda. Residents' gardens and fields overflowed with fruit trees. There were pears and lemons, figs and avocados. On the higher ground, people grew beans, potatoes and other tubers. The village was famous for making accessories for horses like riding mounts and each year it held a horse run during a three-day festival honoring its patron saint. It also did a brisk trade selling fish from the teeming river that runs beside Umaro. Because of the hard work of the peasant farmers and artisans in the community, an unusually high number of village sons

and daughters had gone away to university and become professionals. Umarinos who migrated to Lima scoured the capital city to find an organ for Umáro's tiny church, and they brought in specially-made bells to ring in the church tower.

The Shining Path saw the area around Umáro as a strategic location for the start of its "People's War." The valley community of Umáro, and Bellavista, located on an adjoining mountain, nestle at an important regional junction of the Andes. The surrounding territory borders three departmental provinces -- Victor Fajardo, Cangallo and Huamanga -- making it an ideal service base from which to branch out. Because of the imposing nature of the geography, especially the balcony-like overhangs of the mountain sides, access is difficult and people who live in the area can see outsiders coming long before they arrive. Umáro itself was targeted for the formation of the Shining Path's first *comité popular*, or people's committee, one of the base units in the guerrillas' organizational plan to involve the masses in social "restructuring" and widescale revolution.

Two brothers from Umáro who went to study at the National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga in Ayacucho, where the Shining Path hatched its strategy and formed a core base of cadres in the 1970s, were among those who imported revolution into the community. Education commanded respect and the Shining Path cadres knew how to explain their revolution in terms their families and neighbours could understand. Victor, one of the villagers the Shining Path recruited to be on the people's committee formed in Umáro, remembers one of his first meetings with Shining Path organizers. "They explained their whole geographic strategy one night

using a small pile of wooden matches. They had everything figured out." As elsewhere, Shining Path recruits worked to convince fellow villagers that their revolution would bring better living conditions for all peasants and an end to centuries of racism, social inequality and exploitation. Once the Shining Path had enough key people on side, it stepped up efforts to introduce its own form of organization in the village. By 1983, it had replaced local authorities and primary school professors who did not agree with them with people who were sure sympathizers. Food and other community resources were commandeered by the guerrillas and village women were forced to knit socks and wash clothes for them. Some of the richer members of the community were fingered as being exploiters and fled after being denounced in a people's court organized by the guerrillas. At the beginning, anyone opposed to the new system could freely leave, but by 1983 the guerrillas forbade anyone from coming or going. Dario Palomino's 80-year-old mother, who ran a small store in Umaro, managed to escape by climbing into the hills at 2 o'clock one morning.

"The situation," as people from Umaro now refer to living during wartime under the thumb of the Shining Path, ended drastically when the army, stung by guerrilla attacks and frustrated at fighting a seemingly invisible enemy, apparently decided that the total elimination of Umaro would be the most effective counter-insurgency solution. At least 44 people were shot on September 3, 1985, according to a list of the dead drawn up by a 70-year-old man who survived the killings. Questions about the Umaro massacre were raised publicly in the National Congress

in Lima when members of an association representing migrants from Umaro to the capital city brought the declaration to an elected member. However, as with many of the wartime massacres in the Peruvian highlands, no conclusive investigation of what happened in Umaro was undertaken by the civilian government or the military. The simple, typed declaration drawn up by village elder Gregorio Quispe Huamani, now a fragile 80-year-old living in Lima, is an honest attempt to record abuses by the army. But it leaves unanswered questions about how and why the massacre occurred.

Army burned bodies

Huamani's declaration documents army killings of people from Umaro on five occasions from April to September 1985. "The killings in the zone started during the first two weeks of April," the declaration stated. The first victims during that period were four men: three, each 60 years old, and one, 50, all killed when they went to the weekly market in the town of Colca, across the river and on the other side of a mountain from Umaro. "The other massacre happened on May 3, 1985, and they too were killed by the military. They are my neighbours and I heard the bullets and the bombs. When I went out to see, I saw the soldiers leaving. I found the bodies of 14 people in Clotilde Janampa's house. They had burned all of them. I cleaned them up one by one and buried them in the same spot." Clothilde Janapmpa, 60, and four children, a girl and three boys, all younger than 11, were killed with her. Huamani wrote that seven more people were killed by soldiers wearing black sweaters and black wool hats -- typical army garb, along with regulation olive-coloured pants -- on

May 27 and 28. Then he records the names of 44 people killed in the final massacre in the village on September 3. At the top of the list is Anatolia Prado, Quispe Huamani's 55-year-old wife, and three children, two girls, 10 and three years old, and a boy of eight. What is most shocking about the final massacre is that almost all of the dead are either very old women and men, or very young children. Valentina Huamani is described as being 100 or more years old. Domtilda Ayarsa, 70. Hilario Escriba, 90. Elisa Prado, 40, and her son, a child of eight months.

Putting the pieces of Umaro's recent history together was difficult because people who come from the village, or who had relatives there, either don't know what really happened in the community or don't want to talk about it. Many Peruvians who had direct contact with the Shining Path still suffer from the conspiracy of silence that was such an integral part of the war. It was only after conducting numerous interviews with people who lived in Umaro before, during and after the Shining Path took over the village and who survived the killings or lost family members that I began to understand the secrecy -- and the sense of fear, horror and guilt of the people from Umaro. One of the most revealing interviews was a secret, reluctant meeting late one evening in a shantytown in Lima with a man I was told knew a lot about the guerrillas. Like many other early Shining Path followers chosen to be leaders in villages that Shining Path wanted to control, Victor was reluctant to admit his voluntary support for the rebels or the role he played in making sure others followed. However, the admiring tone he used to describe the system the Shining Path used to hide from the army and the outcome of the army massacres in Umaro

and Bellavista gave him away.

I learned that Umaro was more than just a village targeted for recruits by the Shining Path. By the mid-1980s, Umaro and Bellavista were well established as a strategic hideout and launching pad for Shining Path operations elsewhere in the Andes. Up to 300 soldiers from the guerrilla army slept in the village at any given time, 40 or so to each house, men and women guerrillas packed in like sardines. While the guerrilla soldiers slept, villagers had to take turns as sentinels, watching surrounding mountain sides for any sign of unusual activity. When the army showed up, guerrillas and villagers either fled into nearby mountains or hid in camouflaged holes in the ground that were equipped with special breathing tubes for access to air. "Everyone had his own hole. No one was supposed to tell anyone where his hole was for security reasons," Victor explained to me. "The hole was just long enough to lie in and we would have enough food for about three days."

Once a female villager caused a false panic when she alerted people about a mass of figures moving down the mountain on the other side of the river. The invaders turned out to be a herd of sheep. If soldiers were spotted advancing, guerrillas would order some of the elderly, women and children to stay in the village to give an appearance of normality. Soldiers would then see them carrying out daily village activities. They would be told that people were working an hour or two away in high pastures and fields, or off doing commercial business. This deadly game of hide-and-seek ended with the September 3, 1985 massacre. People who survived were either away on the day of the army's land and air assault, managed to escape,

or hid in their secret holes nearby.

Even after talking to villagers who survived, I cannot be certain exactly what happened in Bellavista or Umaro, whether the arrival of the army was foreseen or a surprise. According to some accounts of the massacre in Umaro, villagers were summoned to the main square for a meeting after the church bell was rung. The women were separated from the men, raped and then killed. In Bellavista, about an hour's walk up the mountain from Umaro, the situation was apparently more chaotic. There, the army attacked from helicopters or by land on foot. In both villages, bodies were haphazardly buried or destroyed. According to Victor, the Shining Path saw the final massacres in Umaro and Bellavista as an opportunity to advance its public relations campaign to discredit and demoralize the Peruvian army. "They dug up some of the bodies and rearranged them in the graves," he said. "They brought in a photographer to take pictures and then published them in their newspaper, *El Diario*, in Lima, with a condemnation of the army."

Almost overnight Umaro and Bellavista turned into ghost towns. An estimated 350 families fled after the massacre. The only person who stayed, say people who know the area, was a deaf mute who roamed the towering mountains around the two villages. Victor claimed the Shining Path forced him to move with the guerrillas to Huambalpa, another village farther south in the red zone where some people from Umaro had family connections. For the most part, other people who were still living in Umaro fled to Ayacucho or Lima. The 44 people who died, having perhaps stayed for the sake of appearances for the guerrillas, were sacrificial lambs in the annals

of a dirty war that was escalating and obviously out of control.

Ruben, an officer who worked in army intelligence during most of the insurgency war, told me he found the military operating in degrading circumstances when he was first assigned to Ayacucho in the mid-1980s. "You would not believe, you would not want to know all of the horrible things," he said, chain smoking, in the office where he is trying to set up a civilian business in Lima. The office in Miraflores, a well-watered, middle-class suburb built on the desert sands of Lima, contrasted sharply with the isolated and often barren nature of the *sierra*. "When I first got there, soldiers were betting on how many thumbs they could bring back after going out on a search mission," he said. Soldiers would kill suspected guerrillas and cut off their thumbs to prevent identification. "I told them we had to stop that," the officer said. "If we were going to get intelligence information about Shining Path activities, we needed suspects alive."

Collecting thumbs

The Shining Path gave the appearance of being able to strike at will and then disappear into the population and maintained a level of secrecy that was difficult to penetrate. Collecting thumbs and, on occasion, wiping out whole villages, gave some military officers a sense they were making some headway against an enemy they could not see. "The Shining Path had no face," the officer said. "They dressed, looked and acted like peasants." Racism, high levels of ignorance about the different culture in the *sierra*, and highlanders' often mistrustful nature toward unaccompanied strangers, contributed to the army's negative view of and disrespect for the peasant

population. As a consequence, all peasants were often deemed to be potentially subversive. Army General Luis Cisneros, former minister of defence, characterized this attitude in 1983 when he said in what would become an often-quoted phrase: "The security forces will have to kill Shining Path and non-Shining Path alike. They will kill 60 people and maybe three will be Shining Path members, but they will say that all 60 were." Massacres in the highlands were usually revenge for some attack on the army, the intelligence officer I talked to off the record said, and took place in villages believed to be frequented by guerrilla leaders. Such was the case in Accomarca, a village where the army killed 69 men, women and children in 1985, he said. Only a few days before the massacre, the Shining Path had ambushed an army patrol, killing among others, a favorite personal attendant of one of the army leaders.

Soldiers stationed in the *sierra* also became easily demoralized and in many cases were ill equipped, both physically and psychologically, to deal with the harsh living conditions and the seemingly invisible enemy they encountered. One villager told me that soldiers would fire warning shots before entering some areas to prevent confrontations. As time went by, desertions increased and there was corruption as officers augmented their rations with animals usually taken by force from peasants who often had no means to replace them. Rotation of security forces every three to 12 months also prevented soldiers from acquiring in-depth knowledge about the area they were fighting in or its inhabitants. The intelligence officer I interviewed told me about the change in morals he saw over time and how some soldiers turned into

automatons. "You lose your instinct for survival," he said. "Living or dying is the same. At the beginning, when someone brought in a body of a dead soldier, it would affect the men terribly. As the number of dead increased, we thought less and less of it. By the end, you could just as easily be walking down the street and, for no reason at all, decide to blow off someone's head."

Peasants caught in the middle

As the war progressed, peasants found themselves in the middle of brutal violence by both the Shining Path and the military. Even though its intelligence was improving, the army still staged killings in villages where people were suspected of helping the Shining Path. Often they rounded up people who were never seen again; even being a witness could mean a death sentence. Guerrillas, in turn, killed peasants for any kind of collaboration with the army. While riding on a bus, a woman pointed out to me an isolated boarded-up building that used to be a roadstop restaurant. The owners, and two people staying with them, were killed by the Shining Path because they had served food to the military. An Indian woman explained to me during an interview in 1985 how she had abandoned her home in an isolated spot on the rolling plains of the mountains to live next to a temporary army barrack in Sachabamba, a community of 800 people, after rebels slit her sister's throat. The army had moved in and turned the village schoolhouse into barracks after a series of killings in the community. Before the army came, rebels had killed an army lieutenant and two other officers. Then the military killed 36 people in a punitive expedition. Four months later, the guerrillas came back and killed a further 26. "At

any time the Shining Path or the armed forces could come in and 'disappear' us," she said, abruptly halting her conversation when neighbours stepped inside her dark, two-room adobe hut. A few days later, an army officer at the heavily militarized airport in Ayacucho told me: "There is only one way to fight subversion and there are always excesses."

While the Shining Path presents itself as the vanguard of a peasant revolution, peasant support for the insurgency was often weak from the beginning. What support there was decreased rapidly once the army took charge and the Shining Path became more authoritarian. "People started realizing that deaths (from the military) was because of them (the Shining Path). Theirs (the guerrillas's) was a system of force," Auriol Chuchón, who left his job as a teacher in Umaro to live in Ayacucho when the Shining Path began to consolidate its control over his village, told me. His family now sells flowers cultivated in a large garden behind a new house in Ayacucho to make a living. Chuchón's pretty, young wife turns pale and begins to tremble after I ask her to tell me about her experience in the village. When she was on a trip to harvest oranges outside the family's house in Umaro, Shining Path warriors surrounded her and strung her up in a tree. They threatened to kill her with knives, but then unexpectedly let her go with a warning never to come back. The memory of the experience still clearly haunts her.

Jorge Loayza Camargo, director of the Instituto de Estudios Regionales José María Arguedas, a rural development organization that works in 23 peasant communities around Ayacucho, told me that during the first five years of armed

struggle many peasants passively supported the existence of the Shining Path. "The attitude was, 'Don't touch me and I won't touch you,' " Loayza said. By 1985, many communities had decided that the price of co-habitation was too high. "They had paid enough. Shining Path took their animals, their food and their children." Shining Path often recruited young peasant children to fight in its army, especially if brothers and sisters were already in the ranks. Young minds could be shaped easily and prepared for extended warfare. The Shining Path also tried, without much success, to impose its own economic system on the peasants, telling them they had to cut themselves off from the local markets. In many cases, this was a hardship peasants were unwilling to accept or bear.

Organizing to fight

Early attempts by the military to form *rondas campesinas*, civilian defence patrols, to fight against the Shining Path and protect people did little to foster a sense of security or co-operation. But by the late 1980s, peasants in the highlands were actively looking for ways to defend themselves better. The Garcia administration openly began talking about the need for citizen participation in the government's counterinsurgency operations but there were concerns that arming peasants would only increase violence. Peasants decided to organize themselves to work actively against the Shining Path, with or without the help of the government or the military. This resulted in a dramatic increase of Shining Path violence against whole communities as it became increasingly evident that what bases of support --

either active or passive -- the guerrillas had once relied on to move about without interference had eroded.

In 1992, President Fujimori made military support for peasant patrols that wanted to fight the Shining Path part of official government policy. More than 11,000 rifles and shotguns were distributed among 200,000 peasants recruited by 526 officially registered civil defence patrols. What happened in the village of Nuñunhuaycco helps explain the pressure on the government to follow this course of action. In 1991, Nuñunhuaycco had formed its own peasant patrol to keep out the Shining Path and protect residents from Shining Path attacks. One week after members of its peasant patrol turned over three armed Shining Path guerrillas they had captured to another peasant patrol in Sachabamba, some 400 Shining Path guerrillas staged a surprise attack on Nuñunhuaycco. The guerrillas set the village houses on fire and began a killing spree that lasted more than two hours. Villagers tried to resist the attack armed with only five guns, rocks and *huaracas*, an Incan fighting weapon, Augustin Ochante, secretary of the community since 1981, told me. "People really didn't have a way to defend themselves," he said. The incursion left 48 villagers dead and the community in ruins. The October harvest was destroyed and guerrillas robbed all of the community's cows and sheep.

Today, Ochante, who has returned to rebuild the village with 247 other people, echoes a sentiment I heard voiced by many peasants who come from the Ayacucho region. "They (the Shining Path) cheated us. They came to trick us," he said. "Now all areas have peasant patrols. We will win the war." Some 100 men in

Nuñunhuaycco have already received training and weapons to operate a civilian defence patrol. Still, it is going to take a long time to erase ingrained fear. "At night we are afraid," Ochante said. "There is no light and we are always thinking they (the Shining Path) will come for us."

Freedom is fragile

Even though memories of past horrors are still fresh, especially in the countryside, there is a fragile sense of freedom in the city of Ayacucho. Tourists, who stayed away for more than a decade, are beginning to return, especially for the city's famous Easter celebrations. The presence of the army, which still maintains a large headquarters just outside the city, is no longer dominant. "Now we can wear running shoes," a sprightly, retired man who used to work as a chauffeur for the university told me. "Before, the army thought that anyone who wore running shoes was a *terrorista* (terrorist)."

The atmosphere in Ayacucho has changed dramatically since the capture of Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán in 1992. "Before the capture of Guzmán, there was still a dominance by the Shining Path, power blackouts and disappearances," development worker Jorge Loyaza, a native Ayacuchano, explained. "With the capture there came calm. It was like a hand wiping the slate clean. Before there were two or three funerals a day. Now when people see that it is a natural death, they feel happy."

"There is not a single corner in the city that has not witnessed death," Sister Muniz, a Spanish-born nun who has become famous for her work organizing

programs to help the poor and downtrodden, told me. "People would often come and ask me to help them. I have been to cliffs on the edge of the city and seen faces of people no longer recognizable because of acid splashed on them." Support for the guerrillas seemed strong at the beginning but began to evaporate with the killings. "From 1980 to 1983, people had full hope that violence of the armed struggle was going to be the salvation of the people. But then, the sense of life was completely lost. They would just kill anyone. Your life was not your own. They controlled everyone's movements."

One frequent guerrilla tactic was to stage *paros armados* -- armed strikes -- often accompanied by sabotage of the city's power supply. Anyone who dared to venture outside would be killed. "You couldn't even make noise inside your own house, because then they could say that you were working," the nun said. "And there would be no light." When several meat-sellers decided to work anyway at the market one morning, they were gunned down. Another time, a shopkeeper who sold sundries in the front room of her house was shot because she dared to accommodate a neighbour during a strike.

It is hard to find anyone in Ayacucho who has not suffered directly because of the war. One hears a constant string of sad tales. A woman describes how she and a family member had to push her dying daughter to the hospital in a wooden cart. An armed strike had been called and there was no other way to get the young teenager to the hospital. A taxi driver tells me how his 80-year-old father just

disappeared one night, never to be seen again. "He just didn't come home," the driver said.

Francisco Chong, who ferries passengers in his car from Ayacucho to Huanta, about an hour's drive away, pulls up his pant leg to show me 19 spots where he was hit with nails from a *queso ruso* (translated as a Russian cheese), a primitive bomb made inside an ordinary can. One nail is still lodged near his ankle. The Shining Path also dynamited a restaurant he owns in Huanta two times. Chong has lots of contacts with the military and at one time carried a gun, a grenade and had his own bodyguard because he worked as a *regidor*, a municipal official who registers people during elections. "We lived for three years with a curfew," he says. "At 6 p.m. you wouldn't see a single person in the street. Today, people are still afraid to go out at night, particularly after 8 or 9 p.m."

Fighting without bullets

The military have made a concerted effort to be seen as friends of the people. Much of the road to Huanta is now paved. A large sign placed strategically on one bend in the road says that the work has been carried out by the army with funding coming direct from the presidency. There is a vast difference from the early 1980s, when gorges that drop down below the road's twists and turns were used as dumping grounds for people believed to have been killed and 'disappeared' by the police and the army.

Once in Huanta, Chong drove me to meet the local military commander Lt Col. Maximo Salazar Valdez, commander of an anti-subversive batallion, is the

embodiment of the new spirit of cooperation the military wants to foster with people in the *sierra*. "Our mission now is to fight the Shining Path without firing a single bullet," the jovial Salazar said in an interview before heading out to a local bullfight. "Today our actions are psychological. Let's forget about repression. We want to see what people need and how we can help them solve their problems." Salazar arranges parties with some of the best local bands and tries to attend every community gathering and function. "I dance with the *ancianitas* (little old women) and while we are dancing, they point out people who belonged to or supported the Shining Path," he said with an affable grin. Salazar also sponsored breakfasts for children of the area and one of his soldiers composed a hymn dedicated to the people of Huanta. "Songs are my weapons. Words are the bullets," he said.

Salazar said the establishment of small army bases in strategic areas once dominated by the Shining Path that guaranteed the return of residents to more than 47 communities in early 1994 under the supervision of the army.

"Pacification is happening gradually," Salazar said, "but new problems are likely to develop in the years ahead." One potential problem is conflicts over land use in communities where peasants return to find that others have been farming their land during their years of absence. Another is the festering animosity against those who supported the Shining Path. Even though many people collaborated with the guerrillas because of threats and some were forced to kill or be killed themselves, the fact remains that they acted, Salazar said. "In the future the problem is not going to be the Shining Path," he said. "The war has left a lot of hate and resentment.

People were put up against a wall between the Shining Path and the army. With people now armed, there is a potential for violence if people are provoked or come up against people they feel are responsible for past or present injustices."

Critics say the government's pacification efforts in the *sierra* fall far short of the kind of approach needed to begin a national process of reconstruction that will see displaced people integrate productively back into society. "The problem is that up to now the government programs have only been partial and are not part of an integral development plan that involves different sectors of society," says Jaime Antesana, national co-ordinator of CEPRODEP, who works on the front line with peasant leaders trying to organize resettlement efforts in 22 villages and communities in the *sierra*. "What good is pacification if people return to the same situation?" Antesana asks. "People need development, support, aid. If there is no food, people leave."

Eliminating militarization is another issue. "The hope is that, as local authorities reassert themselves, the military structure will be displaced," Antesana said. Many Peruvian and international human-rights and development organizations still have strong reservations about the military's role in helping displaced people return to the highlands and its control of the formation and activities of the *rondas campesinas*. Some fear that could provoke a violent response from the Shining Path, since it is clearly part of national counterinsurgency strategy. Others are concerned about the continuation of the culture of militarization: the gun-toting leaders of the *rondas* are vetted by the military, rather than elected by the community as is

tradition, and operate with code names and other intrigues of war. "The army has resisted any loss of power," CEPRODEP's Isabel Coral told me. "But the key to the success of the return (of refugees) is how civil society will regain control over the process of development."

José Coronel, an anthropologist who lives in Huanta and teaches at the university in Ayacucho, told me in some cases peasant patrols formed primarily for self-defence have become democratic entities whose members work together to promote community development. Still, there is little doubt that the social fabric throughout the region has been torn apart and is in a transition stage. "Many of the base organizations have been left headless by the violence," Loyaza said, "and a lot of people with experience have migrated."

Security still a concern

The resettlement of Umaro is an example of how far-flung residents of one community are working together to recover the community's lost sense of self-sufficiency and pride. The logistics of the return were hammered out by associations representing former Umaro residents in both Ayacucho and Lima. Leaders of the two groups organized an inspection of the village, then set about raising funds and lobbying the government bureaucracy for any kind of government assistance. Once they made a collective decision to proceed with the return, assemblies were held to elect a new leader for those who planned to return to the community. The Umarinos have already devised a system to share land and resources to avoid conflicts among

villagers, but no decision has been made about whether those who were active supporters or members of the Shining Path should eventually be allowed to return.

Despite the Umarinos' organization and determination, security is still a concern. The Shining Path has sent several ominous notices to executive members of the Umaro association in Lima organizing the resettlement. The message is: "We will kill you if you return." The guerrillas no longer have any credibility or support among the Umaro community, but the psychology of fear has incredible staying power. The remoteness of the community makes it an easy target, and Umaro still doesn't have the required minimum of 30 men to gain recognition and obtain training and arms from the military for the formation of a peasant patrol.

Not all of the leaders of the community believe there should be one. Raul Huamani, the newly elected leader of the peasant community, said he thinks it will invite trouble if villagers are armed. Others, obsessed by the Shining Path because they are still infected with fear, can't stop talking about it. There is a proposal to use a piece of land by the nearby river as a heliport for army helicopters to land and disperse troops quickly. Because of the uncertainty about security, a small contingent of soldiers was providing temporary protection when I visited the village. Many villagers are still afraid of the army. But they also fear retaliation by the Shining Path.

I could feel the fear as the sun went down and people prepared for bed. Almost all of the 58 men, women and children who have returned to resettle the village spend the frigid mountain nights huddled together with a scarce supply of

blankets in what used to serve as the village council offices and the local jail. The only sound during the night was the changing of the guard among the soldiers who stood on alert with their guns in full defence position inside the empty bell tower of the tiny church.

The village was still filled with reminders of death and ruin. The returnees had spent most of the daytime hours during the first few weeks hacking away at the giant cacti and dense prickly weeds that have choked the life out of the village irrigation system, fields and gardens. All of the houses fanning out from the main square were either ransacked and burned or have caved in. A few of the houses still have parts of human remains from the massacre, making fumigation an urgent task. Some who headed out to fish during my visit discovered an entire skeleton sprawled and pinned down by rocks on the side of a mountain. Community leader Huamani shrugged off the question of death. However, his wife, Teresa Mendoza, who sleeps with her husband and three children on blankets and plastic in the front part of a building where a skeleton was found, admitted she was scared. "Death is something that is normal for me," Huamani told me, matter of factly. Huamani's father, who worked for the municipal government in Ayacucho, was assassinated by the Shining Path, probably because he worked at registering people during elections. Huamani is also one of those who are returning to the sierra to escape violence in other parts of the country, especially in jungle areas where drug-trafficking continues. Huamani told he that one day while night-fishing in the jungle, he saw what appeared to be about 100 bodies dumped by the military onto the edge of the river before being plowed over.

Huamani's top priority is working to ensure a regular food supply and jobs for the people who have returned to Umaro. In early 1994, returnees were living on corn and rice, a diet that was stretched into watery soups and stews by his wife Teresa, who learned survival cooking while working in a community kitchen for poor children in Ayacucho. A typical meal is rice and potatoes and a hot cup of sweetened cinnamon water, served up from huge community cooking pots placed on eucalyptus-wood camp fires. Basics like matches and candles are in short supply. So are shoes, which are quickly worn down by the rough terrain. The food is provided free by the government, but the community still has no independent way to make a living. Food and other supplies provided by the government must be trucked in from Ayacucho, an eight- to eleven-hour drive away, once you cross over a rickety cable suspension bridge that leads to the entrance of Umaro. It will take months before several new plots of beans, corn and potatoes are ready to be harvested. The community lacks money to buy more seeds.

Only a few survivors of the 1985 massacre have come back. Alberta Cerda Yupanqui, 44, escaped because she had gone to work in the fields on a nearby mountain. The army killed her father and mother and an eight-year-old son. She and her elderly husband and baby recently made the journey back to Umaro by bus with their worldly possessions: a bundle of clothing and three young chickens in a burlap sack. "In Ayacucho, there just was never enough," the woman, explaining futile efforts to make a living.

"We know it will take one year, maybe two years, before we can make a living here," Ambrosio Mendoza, 45, who moved to Umaro with his wife and six children, said in Umaro. "But here we have no rent to pay and the land and what we produce on it is ours. The most important thing is education for our children." A crisis over how the community's 312 children would start school was resolved after Umarinos living in Lima and Ayacucho scraped the money together to buy 100 new desks to send to the community. After an exhausting series of bureaucratic meetings, the government is paying for three teachers to instruct the community children in one of the buildings people were sleeping in. There were plans to rebuild and enlarge the local school.

Many of the young people who have come to live in Umaro only know it from the talk of elders and people who migrated from the village to live in Lima before and after the violence. "We didn't want the old people to cry any more," Misael Quispe Mendoza, a 33-year-old former brick factory worker in Lima, says when asked why he would leave the city to begin a new life in the countryside. There are also practical reasons. Water, firewood and rent are free and many peasants own or have access to small, ancestral plots of land. "Life is healthier here," said Quispe Mendoza, who plans to move his wife and five young children to the community once things get better. "We have everything we need. There is more respect for older people and the climate and the food we grow here are much better."

The vision of what Umaro used to be is helping to push people forward. The government has agreed to provide funding to build a new school, a clinic and a

seven-kilometre road that will link the community with nearby towns and villages for the resettlement. But the difficult conditions in the meantime -- lack of food and ways to make a living -- had community leaders worried about the staying power of returnees. "People have no shoes and they got used to life in the city," said Pompeyo Chuchón, who spends much of his free time when he not was working as a teacher in Lima to lobby with other leaders of the Umaro association for services and assistance for the village. "But if we don't succeed with the resettlement now, the village will be lost forever."

THE SELVA

Source: Peru: Time of Fear, Latin American Bureau. London, 1994

Nothing has changed, only lives have been lost.

*Aucayacu resident speaking in 1994 about the
impact of Shining Path's revolution*

One of the few signs that greets the traveller about to make the unpredictable journey from Tingo María to the town of Aucayacu, up what is known as the Marginal Highway, reads: "This is a war zone. The order is to attack." But beside the presence of young conscripts posted at three military checkpoints along the way, there is little visible evidence that a war is still going on here in the Upper Huallaga Valley, a tropical zone on the edge of the Peruvian jungle, mostly known for its production of coca leaves, the raw material for cocaine. Passengers in the collective taxi heading up the road for the muggy, two-hour journey don't even take a soldier's demand to see their identification documents seriously. "Come on," one travelling pharmaceutical salesman sitting beside me tells the sun-browned officer peering in the rear-side window. "We all live in the area."

People from Aucayacu and dozens of other tiny communities sprinkled throughout the mass of lush, bright green trees and vines covering the 150-kilometre valley have little faith in the official system of government and authority. For years the Upper Huallaga has been a no-man's-land characterized by corruption and violence related to drug-trafficking. Life in the valley took on another, even more confusing, dynamic throughout the 1980s as the Shining Path shrewdly capitalized on lawlessness, fear and lack of development alternatives and imposed its own

system of authority on the people. By the end of the decade, the Huallaga had become a major guerrilla stronghold and was producing up to half the world supply of coca leaves for cocaine. The Shining Path controlled dozens of small towns and villages and even operated its own military training camps in remote areas only accessible by boat or plane. The guerrillas' grip on the valley was finally broken in the early 1990s following a series of brutal military interventions and the appearance of a mysterious fungus that pushed the drug trade deeper into the jungle. Today life in the region appears normal again as we travel up the Marginal, the only main road that enables access by land to the valley. The blood-red revolutionary slogans of the Shining Path that used to shout out from the dilapidated greying-wood shacks built in clusters along the highway are gone, hastily blocked out with blue or white paint. Bridges, once bombed so often by guerrillas hoping to isolate the area that the government stopped rebuilding them, have been replaced. In at least three tiny communities on the way, children and adults are playing soccer outside small, concrete schoolhouses as people celebrate the February carnival season. Some cows are grazing. The scene appears relaxed. But people and places have rarely been what they seemed in the Upper Huallaga.

In early 1994, the Fujimori government claimed the Upper Huallaga was close to being pacified. The military staged several media events at its base near the airport in Tingo Maria, the largest population centre in the valley, to show off hundreds of people it said had turned themselves in under a law called the *Ley de Arrepentimiento*. The law, part of a package of tough anti-terrorism measures

decreed by Fujimori in 1992, was intended to encourage the process of national pacification by giving guerrillas a voluntary way to reintegrate back into Peruvian society. It promised fair treatment and benefits for "subversives" who wanted to repent and surrender. "Every day, the waves of people who have chosen the path of pacification are more frequent and massive," a report published in *La Republica*, a daily Lima tabloid, extolled after one of the Tingo Maria events. It described the *arrepentidos*, or repentants, as people "who mistakenly served in the Shining Path ranks, or who were kidnapped and forced to collaborate with this criminal organization." It explained that members of the Shining Path who want to turn themselves in usually first have a family member or a friend intercede for them with the military to obtain legal guarantees for their safety. Once in custody, the repentants are classified according to the level of involvement they had with the guerrillas and have a chance to legalize their status. Repentants who have strategic information to provide about the Shining Path are promised military protection and in some cases, relocation and new identity papers. Those judged to be minor players are released and must report to the army base for weekly meetings designed to imbue patriotism. During the gatherings, everyone stands alert while the flag is raised and then they sing the national anthem. By mid-1994, the government said, more than 3,000 guerrillas had turned themselves in under the repentance program. Many of them came from the Upper Huallaga.

Human-rights organizations protested that the legislation providing for a limited amnesty for guerrillas had spawned a new set of human-rights violations

According to the law, simply being fingered by a member of the Shining Path participating in the program could be enough for someone to be detained by the military and thrown in jail. "This constitutes a new and extremely disturbing pattern of human rights violations," the Toronto-based Inter-Church Committee for Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA) said in a report on Peru. "Hundreds, if not thousands, of people now languish in Peruvian prisons falsely accused or, in some cases, convicted of being members or supporters of armed opposition movements." After extensive checking, Peruvian human rights groups gathered documentation proving that at least 700 of those held in jail but thought to be innocent of terrorism charges had nothing to do with the rebels.

While the amnesty program has helped the army find and capture active members of the Shining Path, it presents problems and a new kind of fear for many people living in the Upper Huallaga Valley. Because of the extent of guerrilla control in the area from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, almost everyone who has lived in the valley at one time or another has had to support or, at the very least, stay quiet about guerrilla activity. Whole communities of people forced to collaborate with the guerrillas fear they might be the next to be pointed out. Others suggest that members of the Shining Path use the repentance law to protect themselves, exact revenge, or eliminate people who opposed them.

Springtime of hope

They hardly fit today's reality, but the names of some communities along the Marginal Highway are token reminders of the heady optimism of the people who

flocked to settle in the Upper Huallaga Valley in the mid-1960s. Primavera -- Springtime. Progreso -- Progress. Government promises of land and development assistance in the form of agricultural credits and infrastructure like roads and schools attracted droves of impoverished migrants from Peru's highlands and urban areas to the *selva alta* (high jungle), a region made up of the eastern foothills of the Andes and the valleys that divide them. Fernando Belaúnde, then in his first term of presidency, saw development of Peru's tropical zones as an answer to problems with land reform in the *sierra* and the heavy migration that was flooding Peru's major cities, especially Lima. Influenced by tales of the settlement of the wild west while studying to be an architect at the University of Texas in the 1930s, Belaúnde envisioned the jungle as a kind of last frontier that, if invested in, could unleash enormous economic potential through the exploitation of natural resources and the production of agricultural crops like cacao, citrus fruits, and coffee. Part of the dream was to build a 5,635-kilometre highway that would cut through the continent's jungle highlands and rainforests and plains from northwest to southeast through several South American countries. Belaúnde's grand scheme came to an abrupt halt with the 1968 coup led by army general Juan Velasco. Agrarian reforms introduced by the junta focused on the transformation of private estates into collectives. As in the *sierra*, some administrators of the collectives abused funds and were given little in the way of training or agricultural credits. Subsistence, including slash-and-burn methods dangerous for the delicate jungle ecosystem, became the norm

Alongside the colonization, coca production sprang up in the jungle department of Huánuco and San Martín, the two main administrative departments into which valley territory falls. Peasants from the highlands used it for their own personal use -- as their ancestors had done for thousands of years --to decrease hunger and fatigue. Some also marketed their leaves to the Empresa Nacional de la Coca (ENACO), the government-controlled coca company that legally markets the leaves and their by-products for medicinal purposes and coca tea. The Colombian drug mafia targeted the valley as a cultivation ground for the expansion of the cocaine trade in the 1970s when demand for the drug was increasing rapidly in the United States drug market. As a consequence, coca production in the Huallaga mushroomed, increasing from an estimated 1,500 hectares in 1972 to as much as 200,000 hectares by the early 1990s.

From the beginning, government efforts to get rid of illegal coca growing concentrated on repression and eradication. The first attempts to curb the illicit trade of leaves began in 1978, when General Francisco Morales Bermúdez decided to make coca growing outside legal arrangements with ENACO a criminal offence. The United States Drug Enforcement agency became involved in Peru in 1979-1980 through Operation Green Sea One and Two, which included operations to burn coca plantations growing freely until then along the sides of back roads in the Upper Huallaga. In 1981, with U.S. funding, the Peruvian government established the Proyecto Especial de Control y Reducción del Cultivo de la Coca en el Alto Huallaga (CORAH), a program designed to control coca cultivation through manual

eradication. CORAH was provided with logistical support and armed protection by the Mobile Rural Patrol Units (UMOPAR), an anti-narcotics division of the Peruvian police trained by U.S. Special Forces personnel.

The next year, the government began operating the Proyecto Especial del Alto Huallaga (PEAH), a five-year, US\$26.5-million crop substitution and agricultural development program in Aucayacu, one of the main frontier towns in the Upper Huallaga, and at that time the centre of drug-trafficking activities. PEAH was supposed to work hand in hand with CORAH to help peasants substitute for their coca crops following eradication. But it often was run more for the benefit of its administrators than the people. Most of its leaders and staff members were recruited from outside the valley and few of them had an understanding of the mentality of Huallaga residents. "PEAH has no credibility with the people," one Aucayacu resident told me when I visited the town for the first time in 1985. "It came in promising all kinds of stuff but it has a negative attitude toward *campesinos*." Farmers who were supposed to get land titles and credits for traditional crops often didn't because of complicated credit conditions that were difficult for most of them to meet. Substitution programs were often not timed to coincide with eradication activities, leaving farmers with no immediate way to make a living. Life for those who worked at the PEAH compound was often dramatically different from that of the average citizen. People who worked at the project were well paid, and had access to things like electric typewriters with electricity powered by generators, while teachers in the local school lived on meagre salaries and had to struggle to scrape

together enough money to buy their own paper and pens. PEAH also spent lots of money on studies, but offered little in the way of practical assistance to farmers.

Eradication of the coca, meanwhile, was slow, inefficient and increasingly dangerous. Eradication workers soon learned they had to uproot the coca bush completely, because simply cutting the plants just above the roots, as was originally the case, worked to increase farmers' yields by making the bushes grow back stronger. If one field was destroyed, farmers simply found another, usually a more inaccessible mountain slope, on which to plant. "The concept of the fight against coca is all wrong," said René Rodríguez Heredia, a Peruvian who supervised a small rice-growing program in the early 1980s with money from the Canadian International Development Agency. "It's wrong because the repression apparatus is corrupt and the eradication is insufficient." By 1988, only 680 hectares of coca had been destroyed, compared with thousands of others that were flourishing. Police forces weren't numerous enough or equipped with enough arms to repel surprise attacks against the eradication teams. Besides being seen as directly threatening the economic livelihood of the region, members of UMOPAR soon became known for widespread abuses, like stealing peasants' radios, blankets and any other valuables. Repression tended to focus on the *cocaleros*, small coca farmers, while bigger fish either never got caught or bribed their way out of trouble. As well as raids and abuses by the police, coca farmers were often at the mercy of the *narcotraficantes*, the people who oversee the processing of coca leaves with chemicals to make *pasta basica de cocaína* (PBC), the paste later transformed into cocaine powder, and its

sale to the Colombian drug mafia. The *narcos* had bands of hired guns called *sicarios* to protect their operation and keep peasants in line. "We've had hundreds of people killed because of coca," Canadian priest Daniel Leblanc told me during a visit to Aucayacu in March 1986. "There is a lot of infighting and anybody involved with coca just can't get out. The narcos put everyone in a position of owing them. Once you're in, you're stuck."

Profits from coca

Despite the violence, residents continued to grow coca because of economic advantages. In the 1980s, one acre of coca produced an income equivalent to that from five acres of coffee or seven acres of corn. Traffickers supplied seeds, technical assistance, a guaranteed market and payment in U.S. dollars. People harvesting coca could earn four times as much as peons working in a traditional crop field. Coca requires little maintenance and can be harvested four times a year. In contrast, those who grew traditional crops like fruits and cacao could harvest only twice a year and had to worry about fertilizers and pesticides and how to get their produce to market.

Many people didn't want to get involved with coca or wanted to get out of it because of the high stakes involved, but there was little in the way of alternatives. "Before, even to speak of drugs was a sin," Lorenzo, one of the early colonists in the Huallaga, told me in 1985. "In 1960 we tried corn and bananas. By 1965 we were growing coffee, but then the world coffee market fell. By 1978, everyone was planting corn again, but that created an excessive supply. Now the most difficult

problems are prices and transport." Lorenzo started operating a restaurant to earn more money, but many others began to supplement what little they earned from legal crops with a field or two of coca. The drug trade also worked to corrupt people's morals. "Initially, people trusted one another," Lorenzo said. "We worked together to build the schools with materials the government gave us. People didn't even have doors on their houses, and no one ever missed a cent. Now you don't trust anybody, not even your son-in-law. Coca has changed everything.

Shining Path moves in

Resentment due to failed government promises and repression and abuses by the anti-narcotics police and the *sicarios* helped make the Huallaga a fertile ground for the Shining Path. Members of the Shining Path moved into the valley between 1980 and 1982, settling anonymously into communities along with other migrants who saw the valley as a land of opportunity. In 1982, the Shining Path officially declared open warfare -- "*guerra popular*" -- and made the area in and around Aucayacu the centre of its highly secretive organization and activities. Its presence was most directly felt in the small villages in what was unofficially known as the *banda*, a strip of territory across the river from Aucayacu that was only accessible by boat. "The Shining Path came in, organized assemblies, asked for support and then started to recruit," one teacher who worked in an isolated riverside village that would later become part of territory completely controlled by the Shining Path, told me in 1985. "The Shining Path won the support of people because UMOPAR was afraid to come into areas where drug-trafficking was proliferating. The

guerrillas go house to house and oblige young people to join them." Another young man told me that once they had one member of the family, they often pressured others to join. "How lovely they talk at first, nothing is said about the violence," he said, speaking from personal experience. "Later, they tell people that if they leave their villages they can't come back. If even one member of the family helps the military in some way, all must die." Community leaders who disobeyed Shining Path orders had to pay. The leaders of Pucate, a tiny cooperative of about 30 families in the *banda*, alerted the military after guerrillas insisted on coming in and raising their red flag every day. Within 24 hours, the Shining Path returned and gunned all of the leaders down. One victim left behind a widow and eight children. Pucate was completely abandoned following the attacks. More people flooded out of the area after the army carried out a brief, brutal campaign in several villages, including Primavera and Venenillo, both believed to be beds of support for the Shining Path. I was told that members of the Shining Path had managed to escape, leaving villagers to deal with the wrath of the army.

By 1985, residents of Aucayacu referred to la banda as the territory of *ellos* -- them. The boat operators at the edge of Aucayacu looked shocked when a guide from Aucayacu who knew the area and its history asked them to take him and myself and a motorcycle there. A boy of 12 named Cyrille who accompanied us on the handlebars told me how the military came to his village, rounded up the men, put feed sacks on their heads and made them change clothing before taking them away. This helps prevent identification when their dead bodies are found later, I was told.

A few mass graves had turned up filled with mutilated bodies. There was almost no sign of life in the *banda* as we travelled through the jungle-like brush to the village where the cooperative leaders had been assassinated on gravel roads built partly with Canadian development assistance. The United States had chipped in some money to help the cooperative start a dairy with 200 cows and the community built up a small plantation of bananas. The people lived in simple plank-wood buildings with cement floors and thatched roofs. They had a tiny schoolhouse, electricity from a generator and running water. When we arrived there, everything, including the community tractor, was covered with vines. The only sign of human life left in the debris-strewn offices of the cooperative was a tiny piece of paper on the floor -- a receipt for a small sum of money that had been lent to a villager for Christmas. In another abandoned village, filled with orange trees laden with drying and rotting fruit, we met a lone woman walking along with an apron full of coca leaves.

Not long afterwards we ran into a column of Shining Path guerrillas who were having a drink at the only place of business open, a small stand that sold cola and other soft drinks. All of the guerrillas were young, bright-faced teenagers. Just after I asked one of them if we were in liberated territory -- members of the Shining Path had never spoken directly to the media before -- and he said "yes," an older, hardened man with a military composure appeared carrying a machete. "You have been here before," he said sternly, staring at me close up while swinging his machete against his heavy boots. I told him he must have mixed me up with someone else. Then we quickly left.

While the Shining Path moved about openly in the *banda*, Shining Path infiltration in Aucayacu and other larger towns was hidden. There was so much movement, no one ever knew exactly who was who. Those that had been recruited by the Shining Path operated in the strictest of secrecy. In those days, manifestations of the Shining Path usually came in the form of nighttime attacks, either blazing shootouts or selective assassinations. No one would dare to go out if they heard shots fired, but all of the town's dogs would start incessant barking. The presence of the Shining Path added another dimension to what was already a lawless, confusing dynamic. "So many interests are at stake no one knows who is doing the killing any more," Daniel Leblanc told me in 1985 after living in Aucayacu for four years. "The majority of deaths, except the major attacks, are by the *narcos*. There are lots of deaths from infighting and then day-to-day killing by someone obviously wanting to create a situation of terror. It becomes very confusing and everyone is pretty well scared, not knowing what's going to happen when, where, or because of what. Here the absurd is real, the irrational is rational, there is no real justice."

A massive massacre

A horrible massacre took place only a few weeks before my first visit to Aucayacu in 1985. Around 10 o'clock at night, some 300 hooded men began hauling men, women and children out of the wooden houses scattered in communities along the sides of the Marginal Highway and killing them. In one community, the people were rounded up in the local school and machine-gunned down. In another, the

2 OF 2

PM-1 3 1/2" x 4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
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PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

victims were tortured, slashed with machetes and axes and then decapitated. The bodies were strung out at different spots along the Marginal Highway. The killers ordered other residents to paint revolutionary slogans on nearby houses and on the highway: "Power is born from a rifle. The revolution does not forgive. Soldier, join the armed struggle. Soldier, why do you kill me?" They cut down the telephone lines to Aucayacu and blocked parts of the 60-kilometre stretch of road between Aucayacu and Tingo Maria with huge tropical tree trunks and dug shallow ditches in the road by hacking out the asphalt. Many family members of the dead did not claim the bodies for fear of reprisal. Taking the bodies away might appear to show disapproval of what had happened and risk some kind of retaliation, Leblanc explained. It was not clear who had done the killing: whether it was the Shining Path repeating what it had done elsewhere to establish a presence, or drug traffickers trying to make it look like the Shining Path to divert attention from their own activities. In any case, few murders were ever investigated or solved in the Upper Huallaga. "No one sees anything, no one knows anything," said Mario Arévalo Ramirez, justice of the peace and the only civilian official left in Aucayacu in 1986. "Here the law of silence reigns. There is no control."

By that time, the Shining Path was well advanced in its campaign to eliminate systematically the vast majority of civilian authorities in valley communities. Aucayacu, whose population was swelling because of violence in remote parts of the surrounding countryside, had no mayor and no one wanted the job. The previous mayor had been gunned down three months earlier; and the mayor before that had

left town when his house was burned down. Six months earlier, about 100 guerrillas, most of them armed and wearing masks, had invaded Aucayacu and left a trail of destruction. The scars of the rampage were as evident as the signs of wealth from the lucrative coca trade. The town's police station, bombed by the guerrillas along with the office of the justice of the peace, two banks and the main compound of the crop-substitution program, was a burned-out concrete shell used as a public toilet by people from the adjacent town market. The nearby town hall had been converted into a military garrison filled with young soldiers who stood on guard with machine guns but rarely left their barracks. Across the street, a store sold the latest in stereo systems and luxury appliances, motorcycles and status symbols like gold-plated lighters and pen sets. Aucayacu's streets, unpaved and full of potholes from the torrential rains of the wet season, were filled with shiny new customized vans, cars and small motorcycles paid for in cash from the coca harvest. Heavy drinking and prostitution also came with the drug-trafficking. An informal study conducted by the Catholic mission counted no less than 850 places to drink alcohol in Aucayacu. But the town's 15,000 residents had no regular supply of drinking water or a sewage system.

Most people, including the soldiers who established a base in the PEAH headquarters following the Shining Path bombing, were too afraid to go out at night. People knew which villages had come under the control of the Shining Path, but felt powerless to do anything about it. "We are surrounded by them," one resident told me. "They can come at any time and they know everything." As in the *sierra*, the

Shining Path told residents that "a thousand eyes and ears" would be watching and listening to them all the time. Rumours constantly circulated that the Shining Path was going to carry out a siege of Aucayacu, that 2,000 armed men would storm the town and take it over. Meanwhile, the Shining Path was working to extend its influence in the countryside. They held candlelight meetings to describe how they would liberate the *campesino* and create a new system called the *sociedad azul* -- the blue society.

Three main groups made up the Shining Path organization in the Huallaga, one young man explained to me in 1985. The so-called local contingent was responsible for organizing villages, deciding what to do, how to do it and with whom to do it, he said. The *compagna* carried out attacks and was responsible for fighting the army. The *ejercito popular*, or guerrilla army, worked to prepare young people for armed struggle and then sent them off to reinforce the *compagna*. "The government is reactionary, we are the true nationalists," he told me. "Young people are aware that there are injustices and everyone is looking for liberation. If the Shining Path gives liberation and at the same time is just, why shouldn't they have success?" The Shining Path usually recruited people who were not literate, he said, and mostly brought in people from outside the Huallaga to carry out attacks in the area, "so they would not be sentimental." He also said that "once you're in, you can never leave because they kill you."

Throughout 1987 and 1988, there were an increasing number of clashes between the armed forces and Shining Path troops, particularly in isolated areas of

the *banda*. While many people left, others could not afford to leave and had no guarantee of work elsewhere. People who did own land could not sell it because of the violence. New people, hoping to make some money from coca, moved in to replace those who left. Some coca growers began to process the paste as well, since they could more than double their earnings.

As the Shining Path extended its control of territory in the valley, it stepped up direct involvement in the drug trade. The Shining Path positioned itself as the defenders of the coca growers who, while wary of the guerrillas, welcomed protection against the traditional exploitation of drug-traffickers and local police. Guerrillas forced the *narcotraficantes* to pay a set price for coca leaves and ordered them to disband their armed gangs of enforcers. Peruvian journalist Raúl González reported that when an armed gang belonging to "Cejitas," a known drug-trafficker working in the area, resisted attempts to disband it, the Shining Path killed 13 of its 18 members. The surviving five, he reported, joined forces with the Shining Path. In return for protection and mediation, peasants had to pay guerrillas "taxes" from their coca crops, and other means of support like food or clothes, and were expected to participate in indoctrination sessions and live by guerrilla rules. Over time, the Shining Path system became more entrenched. Mondays were for meetings, Tuesday to Saturday was for working in the fields, and Sundays were for community labour called *faenas*.

Drug traffickers also had to pay taxes and set amounts of cash to land planes to pick up bundles of the cocaine paste. They supported the guerrillas because the

Shining Path ensured a steady production of coca leaves and allowed their operations to continue while distracting or terrorizing the police. Much of the trade took place in river communities that could only be reached by boat. The Shining Path was also able to capitalize on the corruption of police and military officers. Even as the Shining Path was extending its grip on the region, I heard several reports of military officers accepting bribes for letting well-placed members of the Shining Path go or for agreeing to sell them weapons.

Peak for Shining Path

By 1988, the Shining Path seemed to control and dominate most of the Upper Huallaga. People were obeying Shining Path orders and laws, and young people were supporting the Shining Path voluntarily. The change in Aucayacu was noticeable when I returned to the town in 1988 and 1989. While it was invisible to outsiders, I learned from talking to local people that the Shining Path was consolidating its grip on the population. The Shining Path had divided the town into neighbourhoods, each with its own *delegado*, or delegated person in charge. The *delegados* were the people who issued Shining Path orders. Permission was required to go into certain areas. "The Shining Path controls everyone here," one teacher in Aucayacu told me in June 1988. "They choose people and give them orders. If the people they pick don't do what they say, they kill them. It doesn't matter if you are a member or in agreement with their ideas, the important thing is to do what they say, just like a robot, to carry out their orders." Another long-time resident told me how he had to keep quiet about a murder being planned after the

Shining Path organized a residents' meeting to decide the fate of three drug addicts who frequented his neighbourhood.

"The meeting was a horrible experience because at first we thought they were going to tell us that we ourselves would have to kill the drug addicts." the man said. "When they asked people at the meeting what we should do, unfortunately the majority agreed that the addicts should be executed. Even though I felt really bad that they were going to lose their lives. I couldn't warn them because we were all under threat of being killed if we said anything. People from the party (the Shining Path) were always watching to see whom we spoke to

"When it was my turn to speak during the meeting, I said that the addicts were guilty but that those who sold them the drugs were more guilty but then the *delegado* said that maybe then we should all die. I asked to speak again and said they should be given another chance, but they said that they had already been warned more than once and they would have to die. I felt really bad because I knew that night they were going to kill them but I couldn't let them know. It was a very tense night because we knew what was about to happen. We asked them that, if they were going to do it, that they at least do it far away so that our children wouldn't see them. But the next morning we discovered that they did it right in the street. One of them was even still alive. They killed them with knives, just like an animal is killed. First the head is cut so that they lose consciousness and then the whole body is stabbed. They leave the dead person where they killed him."

Although it was involved in the drug trade, the Shining Path refused to tolerate drug addicts. Prostitutes, homosexuals and adulterers were also candidates for Shining Path's capital punishment if they did not change their ways. It was forbidden to steal or to lie. One man was killed for continuing an incestuous relationship with his daughter. Another died because he lied about stealing a calculator. A secret death squad called the *urbana* usually carried out the killing of those who didn't obey the rules. Sometimes innocent bystanders would have to help with the killing. The Shining Path chose a man and his son to hang two young men who had been robbing and raping women in a neighbouring village.

In another case, an Aucayacu man I knew had to attend an impromptu public trial called when he was providing agricultural assistance in one of the villages on the Marginal highway. The Shining Path had accused a young man of buying his new motorcycle from money he got from being a police informer. Villagers attending the trial said he should be given a chance to prove his story that he got the money from his family, but the Shining Path decided to kill him anyway by stabbing. When the man I knew couldn't contain his horror at the execution, he was ordered to stab the corpse repeatedly in the back of the neck. A woman who was crying hysterically at the scene was told she would be next in line. He later found out that at least one of the Shining Path women who participated in the killings had to go for treatment at the Aucayacu clinic because she was sick to her stomach. "Sometimes I just can't sleep at night," the man told me. "But mostly I have to try and act like it doesn't

bother me, so that it doesn't affect my family " He was also worried that the Shining Path would forcibly recruit two of his pre-adolescent children

Merchants, doctors, bus drivers and anyone else who had something to offer had to subject themselves to the new rule and were expected to provide logistical support to the Shining Path at a moment's notice. The Shining Path was reorganizing the state-run education system. Teachers were told they would soon only be allowed to teach four basic subjects: mathematics, natural sciences, history of the Shining Path revolution and military formation for armed warfare. "There is no freedom. You feel like they know what you are doing all the time," one student who had been recently ordered to join a group sent out to paint Shining Path slogans and burn down the town hall in one Huailaga community told me. "If they knew I was talking to you about them, they would kill me "

The extent of guerrilla control was publicly underlined in 1988 when the Shining Path ordered Aucayacu's schools and stores closed for five days to mark the May 17 anniversary of the start of armed warfare. On May 1, International Workers Day, they bombed Aucayacu's town hall and a local bank. They hung their flag in the town square and ordered slogans heralding armed revolution and Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán on dozens of town buildings. The Shining Path also controlled the 200-kilometre stretch of the Marginal Highway from Tingo Maria to Uchiza and Tocacne, two towns that replaced Aucayacu as drug centres when anti-narcotics repression intensified around 1983. Bus schedules, fares and even pickup points were controlled by the rebels. Residents were periodically ordered to set up

roadblocks or to paint slogans on vehicles travelling the highway. One man who protested at the painting was shot dead. Two state employees working to repair the damages were also killed.

While the Shining Path economic and moral order was harsh, it gained the respect of some members of the population. "The Shining Path puts order in the violence here," one development said in an interview. "They don't kill people indiscriminately like the police and the military do." Paul Feely, a Canadian priest who worked at the Catholic mission in Aucayacu, said the Shining Path appeared to be making headway because "they are putting order in the chaos. You may not like the order that they want to be established but at least they are putting order."

Feely, who like the other priests at the mission had lots of contact with young people because of the church's training program for community leaders, told me that one young, university-educated man gave him the Shining Path line. "We can't live under a democracy, we have to have someone tell us the way," he told the priest. "The Shining Path is answering that need that down in their hearts they are looking for somebody who will tell me the way to run and which road to go, and I will feel safer," the priest said. The Shining Path wanted to be the exclusive agent of change. In one community, they let the mayor stay in power because he did nothing, while the deputy mayor, who was actively trying to make changes, was shot. I was told that the Shining Path said, "We are the ones who are here to do something, you're not, so don't do anything." "It is a power thing," said Feely. "The policy of the Shining Path is to come in at the very beginning and scare the hell out of everyone

Once you are sufficiently afraid then you are cowed under. Everyone recognized that no (other) system is working. The only system that was working here was "you buy it, the only value is the coca dollar." A lawyer from Tingo Maria told the Peruvian magazine *Quehacer* "Formal justice here is inefficient, corrupt and drawn out, while the Shining Path's is free, fast and effective." One woman in Aucayacu put it another way "There are no political parties here, only *the party*," she said, referring to the Shining Path.

The imposition of economic, political and moral order started producing results. "In the last year, the Shining Path has accomplished more convincing by showing people their way of order and justice." Feely told me in 1989. "There is less violence and people feel some sense of order and security. Not everyone agreed, it's just that if you say no sufficiently loud enough you are dead. Now people are starting to accept the Shining Path, not just out of fear or because it is imposed. They are starting to see that, well, maybe Shining Path is a viable way to go. It's also survival tactics. People have learned to survive." The priest related people's reactions to an anecdote told to him to explain how people adapted to so many military coups throughout Peru's history. "When the wind blows one way, the palm tree bends with it. When a new wind comes, the palm comes back up and bends a new way."

Despite the measured support for the Shining Path, some people in the Huallaga continued to question the guerrilla system. "A lot of people are starting to feel the weight of bowing to the Shining Path and are asking, If we didn't have

cocaine would we have all these problems?" one man told me "There are too many problems Most people don't make that much money from the coca, they have half a hectare or less " The situation became more complicated because of apparent divisions within the Shining Path over the role coca and cocaine should play in the revolution Some told farmers that if they produced crops other than coca, they would die Others told them that 50 percent of their earnings from crops would have to go for the purchase of arms Yet another account said that soon people would have to stop growing coca and return to other crops because the guerrillas planned to cut off all access to the area While it was never clear how much money the Shining Path made from the drug industry, the figure most often mentioned is US\$30 million a year.

War on the traficantes

Two events at the end of 1988 and in mid-1989, dramatically changed the direction of the situation in the Huallaga a bloody attack by the Shining Path on the police station in the town of Uchiza and the Colombian government's decision to declare war against the drug traffickers The Uchiza attack caused a national scandal Shining Path cadres led residents in a massive attack on the police headquarters in the town, which had become a notorious centre for traffickers and drug kingpins. The army in nearby Tingo Maria did not respond, in part because of long-standing rivalry with the police force The officers at the embattled police post were slaughtered

Following the attack on Uchiza, a new state of emergency and military jurisdiction was imposed on the region. General Alberto Arciniega, commander of the new emergency zone that included the Central and Upper Huallaga, moved the army headquarters from Tarapoto to Uchiza and implemented a counter-insurgency strategy aimed at breaking the Shining Path's ties to the coca growers. Arciniega openly criticized police harassment of coca farmers. "We are talking about 80 percent of the population!" he said. "What we must do, therefore, is to change this situation to prevent the *cocalero* peasant -- the base on which the Shining Path thrives -- from being harassed."

All of a sudden there was some recognition of the little people in the drug war. An estimated 250,000 people in Peru were growing coca by that time, involving with family members more than one million people. The army announced that it was on the *campesino's* side. It helped organize community work programs. Arciniega refused to accept programs aimed against coca producers. Coca producers were warned to distance themselves from the Shining Path and the military began a low-intensity war behind its curtain of goodwill toward area farmers. As of June 1989, disappearances began to increase. Dead bodies appeared without heads, hands or feet. Whole villages suspected of supporting the Shining Path were bombed. People I talked to from Aucayacu told me of seeing plumes of smoke from the bombs the military dropped from helicopters on parts of the *banda*. They also told of fishing out body parts from the Huallaga River. There was little -- if anything -- anyone could do. "Many people lost their lives saying, 'Just one more harvest,' " a

man in Aucayacu told me. The same man helped rescue body parts after one spree of military killing. He said his daily trips to the river were the least he could do to help family members of the victims. But he said being a witness to so much death and violence has left him numb, without much sense of feeling.

The Colombian government's decision to declare war against the drug traffickers in its country dealt another blow to the Shining Path because it had a significant impact on the coca trade in Peru. No more planes flew in to pick up the cocaine paste, meaning there were no more buyers. The economy completely broke down, leaving many residents with barely enough to survive. Then, following pressure from the United States, which saw Arciniega's pro-coca growers stance as being in conflict with its anti-narcotics objectives, Arciniega was transferred out of the zone by the army's central command.

Demand for coca leaves soon picked up again and more of the drug trade moved deeper into Central Huallaga jungle region and into the jungle backwaters south of Ayacucho. Reports said that the appearance of a mysterious fungus had destroyed many of the Upper Huallaga's coca crops. Some speculated that the fungus was introduced deliberately after successful protests inside and outside the Upper Huallaga resulted in the cancellation of plans to spray the Spike herbicide in an anti-drugs campaign. When I visited the Huallaga for a final time in 1994, some people told me that the damage was hardly permanent and that much of the coca had grown back again. Still, the obvious poverty in the area made it clear that coca had not yet re-established itself as the driving force behind the local economy. With

Shining Path no longer in control, local associations representing farmers were trying to organize again. An association for cattle owners was also being formed, now that there were no more Shining Path restrictions. Under guerrilla rule, no one person could own more than 40 cows.

However, old problems were surfacing along with the new efforts. "Now it's worse than ever before," Edmundo Comejo, an engineer with the Agricultural Association of Advanced Aucayacu, which has 11 committees representing 188 farmers, told me, explaining that the open economy measures introduced by Fujimori affect the prices of produce. "There is no planning. Cacao prices were low this year, so now everyone is growing bananas. Farmers can't afford pesticides, so the result is lower yields." Farmers also tried to save money by using their wife and children to harvest crops instead of hiring workers to do the job, he said. But, there was still a huge gap between the price for coca and cacao. A farmer could earn \$1,000 a year from 1,000 kilos of cacao, while one hectare of coca provided earnings of US\$2,375 every 60 days. "Many people are still subsistence farmers, they plant a little bit of everything," the engineer said. Although the association receives some money from an agreement with the United Nations International Drug Control program, there is no credit available for farmers. Most do not have the money it takes even to travel to the rural credit office to apply for consideration. "We need technology and training to set up micro-businesses," he said. One project the association is looking at is to find ways to add value to their products by turning fruits

into nectars; but for that they would need a processing plant. Another committee of residents is again lobbying for electricity for the community.

The people of Aucayacu and other communities in the Huallaga are still battling negative perceptions by people in Peru or abroad. "People outside think we are all drug-traffickers, or terrorists," the engineer said. "The people are no longer dominated by the Shining Path anymore. There is tranquility but at any moment, if you tell them (the military) you don't know when they ask you, they kill you. The strategy now is to say that they (the Shining Path) came but left. The army is still desperately looking for the enemy." The desire to wipe out any remaining vestige of the Shining Path still has innocent people being caught in the middle. In March and April 1994, reports surfaced that the army had massacred scores of civilians in several small communities in the *banda*. What was not clear was whether there were orders to go out and do the killing. Survivors said the army fired rockets at people from the air before ground troops moved in and razed the area. Local people said that most of those who died had only gone into the area where the killings took place to harvest crops. Most no longer lived there because of the feared incursions of the army.

Fear without end

The reports of the massacres raised new questions about President Fujimori's pacification program. At first, the government and the military denied the reports and there were repeated attempts to discredit Peruvian human-rights organizations. When the testimony of some survivors leaked out, the military cut off access for

independent observers including the Red Cross, journalists and members of a government-appointed investigation team. They claimed that the area was part of a war zone and was simply too dangerous. To the surprise of many, the Peruvian army announced that it was in the middle of Operation Aries, an all-out offensive to destroy remaining *bolsones* -- pockets -- of the Shining Path

Talking to people in Aucayacu in 1994 did not make the situation much clearer. One resident told me of another earlier massacre that happened in the *banda* and was not reported by anyone. An unknown number of men, women and children had been murdered and left to rot around the village of Primavera several months earlier. The person who told me this said that those killings were in retaliation for the killing of four soldiers. Members of the Shining Path had ambushed the soldiers, killed them and then placed their heads on a river bank near Aucayacu.

With such incidents continuing, there is still much fear in Aucayacu. Among the people whom residents fear most are the *arrepentidos* participating in the government pacification program. While many of the main Shining Path leaders in Aucayacu were reportedly killed during an army "cleanup" in 1991, others are still walking around freely. People were also wary of the kind of deals members of the Shining Path who turn themselves in made with the military.

Sonia, whose cousin works for the army, told me that, the week before I arrived, a local military commander ordered four guerrillas who turned themselves in under the repentance law either to go out and hunt down guerrillas they knew or face 20 years in prison. According to the story, the four set off for the *banda*

dressed in military uniforms and carrying guns provided by the army. They were accompanied by a woman who said she was willing to act as a guide to the guerrillas' location because she wanted to convince her son to leave them. Sonia told me that, along the way, the group managed to capture four guerrillas but had to shoot them. "The guerrillas recognized who they were and said they wouldn't go with them, so they shot them," she said, as we sipped cold drinks in a tiny soda parlour near the Aucayacu market. "Three died and the other was left bleeding and crawling away. When they returned to the army base and told the army commander they shot the guerrillas he demanded to know why they didn't bring their thumbs back for identification. "We couldn't," they said. "We didn't have a knife with us."

Other people told stories of a system of quotas and bribery imposed by the military on people who turned themselves in under the amnesty law. One man accused of collaborating with the Shining Path told Lima's weekly news magazine *Caretas* that the military detained him for more than one month and insisted he provide a list of 40 names of Shining Path members and \$500, or face life in jail. Henry had farmed a small plot of land with his wife and his five children across the river from Aucayacu in the *banda*. When the Shining Path first arrived in the community, he said, they told residents that they would have to live according to guerrilla rules or face death. Like other residents, he had to hand over half of his food supply and provide clothing for the guerrillas. At one point, he was ordered to use his boat to be on call for the guerrillas, either to help them mobilize or escape. A repentant guerrilla later fingered Henry as a member of the Shining Path. "I don't

know why they don't give the names of the real guerrillas," he said. "They are very *vivo* (cunning). Instead of giving the names of the real guerrillas, they give the names of those who were forced to go along."

Victor Atuncar, a priest at the Catholic parish in Aucayacu, told the story of a woman who worked with the parish's health care program until she was picked up by the military after her name was given to the army by a repentant. The woman had been kidnapped by guerrillas in 1986 and forced to provide emergency medical care for injured guerrillas before she was allowed to return home. One year later, the Shining Path killed two of her sons and three nephews because they refused to carry arms for the guerrillas up the river in their boats out of fear of being captured by the military. Following her detention as a Shining Path supporter, the woman was tortured and shown off before the press as a captured terrorist, the priest said. The only way she could obtain her release was by agreeing to pay the military US\$4,000.

By turning in people who were marginally involved with the Shining Path, the repentant fulfils the army's quota without identifying hard-core militants. While allowing himself, or herself, to be "captured," they avoid being killed by the military. Such was the case when the military used blackmail to lure four Shining Path guerrillas, including twin brothers, who were active in the Shining Path organization in and around Aucayacu. For several weeks, the military used local radio stations to broadcast messages to guerrillas from their family members. "If you don't turn yourselves in, we are going to have to spend the rest of our lives in jail," one message from the detained parents said. "Don't make us pay for a crime we didn't

commit, turn yourselves in under the repentance law." Within a week after the guerrillas turned themselves in, the military had detained -- temporarily at least -- hundreds of people living in Aucayacu -- farmers, doctors and business people. They were all fingered as Shining Path supporters by repentant guerrillas. "Before the Shining Path extorted from everybody," a *collectivo* driver commented. "Now they are working with the army "

Sonia told me another story about a repentant guerrilla who was given a gun by the army and allowed to go free in Aucayacu. Within a week, he was using the gun to force one of the local store owners to give him supplies. "We are still between the sword and the wall," Sonia said. "The Shining Path can still come and kill us. They have spies. If we denounce them, we will be killed."

Not trusting anyone

Another Aucayacu resident told me: "People are afraid of revenge by the small part of the Shining Path that is left. They are afraid the Shining Path will go after them because they abandoned it." He tries to explain this psychology by describing what it was like when the Shining Path was in control: "You couldn't trust anyone, not even your neighbour because you didn't know if he was involved with them or not," he said. "Many people who were not in agreement were killed especially when military action began heating up again in 1990. It is worse than being in jail, because you can't say what you think." The Shining Path's "failure was in committing so many excesses," he said. "Family members started collaborating with the army. What did they achieve with so many killings? Nothing has changed,

only lives have been lost. The revolution has done nothing and has had no impact. We just want it to end as soon as possible. Now people are desperate and living in misery. If the crisis continues, it will bring other problems."

Return of trafficking

I took another *collectivo* taxi when I left Aucayacu in 1994. But, to my surprise, once I was sitting in the front seat the driver did not wait for any other passengers to arrive. As we sped down the dirt road out of Aucayacu, I asked why he didn't wait for the car to fill up with five passengers as is always the custom. He told me he was picking up more people down the road. About 10 minutes later, he turned off into a driveway beside a freshly painted two-storey house with windows and flowers growing in the front garden. The house stood out compared with most of the greying shacks on other parts of the road. Waiting there were some sullen-faced people who protested to him when they saw me. "It's okay," he insisted. I got out of the car so I could have a better look at what was happening. Some men standing at the back of the driveway told him to move the car closer and began handling about 15 small blocks wrapped into packages. About five minutes later, two women and a man, all in their 20s, squeezed into the back of the car and we left. Along the road, the driver decided to pick up yet another passenger to complete his cover. A peasant woman with a baby squeezed in beside me and promptly pulled out a US\$20 bill to pay the driver. We passed through three military checkpoints along the way but only the men had to get out of the car. The driver told me that each paid a small amount of money to the soldiers so that they wouldn't have to go through the

bother of showing their identification. After the first checkpoint, the people in the back of the car couldn't stop giggling. The scheme to transport the cocaine paste to Tingo Maria was working well.

THE COSTA

Source: Peru: Time of Fear, Latin American Bureau, London, 1994

It is going to take many years, perhaps a generation, before people recover

*Enrique Bernales, former head of a Peruvian
Senate Commission on Violence and Pacification, 1994*

Moving about central Lima is a constant assault on the senses. There is noise, dust and congestion everywhere. Armies of street vendors hawk their wares on every sidewalk and street corner and hustle motorists on the street. They sell clothes, old books and magazines, even newborn puppies, along with pieces of hardware, plastic tubs, cassettes and fake designer perfumes. Some streets have row upon row of makeshift outdoor kitchens where cheap food is served out of huge blackened pots fired by kerosene. Buses careen down the crowded main streets, stopping frequently to pick up passengers even if they have no room. It is not uncommon to see people half-stuffed inside the bus doorways. Clouds of black smoke billow out from most exhaust pipes, adding to the grime in the city where there are few public toilets and it almost never rains. You don't realize Lima, once called the City of Kings under colonial Spanish rule, is built on a desert until you head out to the sand-filled shantytowns that have multiplied everywhere around the coastal capital.

Only a few years ago, it used to take several hours, and three or more buses, to travel from downtown to the shantytowns in metropolitan Lima's northern or southern cone. Today, the trip can be made in little over an hour in small vans called *combis*. The number of *combis* in Lima swelled to at least 55,000 in 1994 after the

Fujimori government deregulated the official transport system. The move was designed to save the government money by not having to operate a central transport system that was unable to keep up with the needs of Lima's mushrooming population. Only five percent of the estimated eight million people in Lima have cars. In the spirit of free enterprise, individual owners would be responsible for operating all buses and other vehicles for public transportation. But while Lima travellers save lots of time and some money under the new system, the *combis* are not always safe to travel in. Collisions are alarmingly frequent. Hardly a day goes by without someone being killed or seriously injured because of a *combi*. The *combi* drivers and the young men they hire to collect fares and entice passengers to come inside have the reputation of being ambitious to the point of being dangerous. In one *combi* I travelled in, our driver -- after colliding with another *combi* whose driver left the scene after he saw his vehicle was not damaged -- began a high-speed chase outside of his route to catch up with the man. He stopped about 10 blocks later, only after shocked passengers had gathered their wits and demanded to be let off.

The rush to make money

The heightened level of aggressiveness to make money has given rise to a new concept some are calling *combi* culture or *combi* capitalism. The term is used to describe what some consider to be overly ambitious efforts to get ahead by whatever means are possible. Others say *combi* culture is just another symptom of chronic disorder in Lima, of a system whose institutions clearly don't work for the majority, a system that makes people to submit to the "law of the jungle" to survive.

The decision to deregulate Lima's transportation system was partly motivated by the reality that most transport services were already provided by the so-called informal or underground economy, in which people operate businesses without formally registering or paying taxes. Since the legal, formal system does not work, or is too expensive, inefficient or unfair, people find their own ways to make money or to overcome daily obstacles by going outside the law. Peruvian Hernando de Soto captured worldwide attention when he wrote about the phenomenon in a book called *The Other Path*. De Soto saw two revolutionary forces at working in Peru: the Shining Path, and poor Peruvians working in the informal economy. "We might say that two uprisings are currently taking place...a massive but peaceful one initiated by the informals, and another isolated but bloody one initiated by subversive groups," he wrote. "No one has considered that most poor Peruvians are a step ahead of the revolutionaries and are already changing the country's structures and that is what the politicians should be doing is guiding the change and giving it an appropriate institutional framework so that it can be properly used and governed."

Lima's informal or underground economy has become so large that it now constitutes a virtual alternate public order. More than half the city's population that is economically active works in this part of the economy. Besides providing many essential services, the informal sector also helps keep people's hopes alive because it has provided a means to survive protracted economic crisis and the lack of economic development for the majority. The number of *ambulantes* -- or mobile street vendors -- alone is now estimated to number at least 1.3 million people. While

some are members of the middle class trying to make ends meet, the vast majority are one-time migrants who live in the shantytowns. More than one-third of Lima's total population of almost seven million lives in the shantytowns.

Large networks of self-help organizations grew up alongside the so-called informal economic system as Lima's population base mushroomed and confronted a series of economic crises. Grassroots organizations were at the forefront of the constant struggle for land and electricity, for water and sewers, for local clinics and schools. Men grouped together to build the schools, clinics and ditches for water systems, while the mothers of chronically undernourished families banded together to lobby for supplies for community soup kitchens and municipally supported programs to provide a glass of milk a day for children.

Taking grassroots control

By the early 1990s grassroots organizations were also in the middle of a vicious fight to prevent the Shining Path from taking total control over their communities. As in towns and villages in the *selva* and the *sierra*, the Shining Path sought to replace local leaders with their own recruits or were trying to supplant grassroots committees with parallel guerrilla organizations. Guerrillas were aided and abetted by the minimal or non-existent government presence. While residents of shantytowns often bore the brunt of army sweeps for Shining Path members, there was almost no police prevention work or protection inside most communities.

Shantytown organizer Maria Elena Moyano was one of the few who dared to speak out publicly against the Shining Path as guerrillas tried to consolidate their

control in shantytowns strategically located along the highways leading in and out of central Lima. On February 14, 1992, Moyano led the first-ever public march to denounce guerrilla attempts to destroy independent community organizations in Villa El Salvador, a large shantytown with more than 300,000 residents located on the grimy sand dunes south of Lima. Since its founding in 1971, Villa had become a role model for effective community management. Its neighbourhood form of self-government is based on residential units made up of 24 families. Each group of 24 families has a leader that represents it on an executive committee, which formulates policies for health care, education, cultural activities and business development opportunities. Because of its achievements in grassroots organization, Villa El Salvador was once nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Moyano, a 33-year-old black woman with a wide smile, had worked her way up to the position of deputy mayor of Villa El Salvador after becoming involved in community organization through grassroots programs for milk and food distribution. She had a public profile as a defiant community leader who assumed combative positions at the head of a movement of housewives mobilizing to protest against government austerity measures.

Because they worked on behalf of the poor within the official system, the Shining Path viewed community leaders like Moyano as competition. Guerrillas also opposed the help grassroots organizations received from domestic or foreign non-governmental organizations. An estimated one out of four Peruvians receives some kind of food aid from international donor organizations. To make its point in Villa El

Salvador, guerrillas blew up a town warehouse that supplied 92 of Villa's community soup kitchens. That action, along with the increasing incidence of murder of community leaders by the Shining Path, moved Moyano to take action. By 1991, the Shining Path had killed five leaders of the umbrella organization representing hundred of grassroots committees formed to administer soup kitchens and milk distribution programs in the shantytowns. Targeting community leaders followed failed Shining Path attempts to infiltrate and control two major unions. Between January and May 1989, the guerrillas assassinated more than 50 union leaders throughout Peru.

Moyano planned her march in Villa El Salvador on the very day the Shining Path had called for another armed strike throughout Lima. Anyone who works or participates in special activities on an armed strike day is considered to be in opposition to the guerrillas and risks being shot. But Moyano argued that the Shining Path could only be defeated by rooting out fear. During her public protest rally in Villa El Salvador, Moyano condemned the Shining Path's intimidation tactics. "We do not support those who undermine the people's organizations and wish to impose themselves by force and brutality," she said. "We do not support those who assassinate leaders of the people."

One day later, a Shining Path hit squad led by a woman shot Moyano at close range in the head and the chest when she stopped off at a community fund-raising event in Villa. Members of the assassination team dragged her body outside, then

blew up her body with five pounds of dynamite in front of her two sons and a nephew.

Moyano had known what she was up against. The Shining Path, while often brutal in its attempts to assert control, had a convincing appeal for legions of poor Peruvians, especially young people, who saw no possibility for improvement of their marginalized status within Peru's well-entrenched class- and colour-conscious system. Economic crisis made guerrilla appeals seem even more inviting. "Our politicians are more interested in their speeches than in the economic situation and are completely cut off from the grass roots," Moyano said in one interview the year before her death. "Our youth are rebellious, impulsive. In the Shining Path, you see expressed their doubts and frustrations about their lack of a future. It is a mystique, a total commitment that seems to answer their hunger for a complete change."

Killing the leaders

Moyano was not the first nor the last community leader brutally murdered or threatened with death by the Shining Path. In Huáycan, another Lima shantytown the Shining Path was trying to control, rebels broke into the house of Emilia Hilario, the president of the national commission of community soup kitchens, and sprayed a round of bullets, wounding her and two family members. Hilario survived by feigning death, but was forced to go into hiding. Pascuala Rosado, another Huáycan community leader threatened with death, escaped to Chile with the help of human-rights groups. In the sprawling community of San Juan de Lurigancho, a local leader was killed when he refused the Shining Path the use of the community

loudspeaker system. A man who tried to stop the killing was stoned to death. The guerrillas' fight for control of El Salvador did not end with the killing of Moyano: Rolando Gallindo, the man who replaced her as deputy mayor, was killed with six bullets. Moyano once said: "For a while, I thought the Shining Path was wrong, but at least they were fighting for justice. But when they began to attack and kill local leaders, I repudiated them. They want to stifle independent organizations so that malnutrition and death increase, and so favour their push for total war."

"The most important thing for the Shining Path is to dispute the political space occupied by other parties," said Peruvian sociologist Raúl Gonzalez, who has written extensively on the movement. "If anything characterizes the political work of the Shining Path, it is that the Shining Path expresses, or tries to hook itself up with, all the sectors marginalized by the official Peru. Peru is a state that has marginalized, and continues to marginalize, many sectors of society."

Michel Azcuete, a one-time mayor of Villa el Salvador, was also forced into exile after he survived a Shining Path assassination attempt. He escaped by throwing sand in his killers' eyes, but two of his bodyguards were killed. Community organizations acted as a barrier to the Shining Path and were a target of guerrillas because they "are the only element of Peruvian society which has remained immune to corruption and ineptitude," Azcuete said. "That is why, if the Shining Path is to destroy Peru, it must first destroy these organizations. The government should help strengthen local leadership and support local government efforts."

The 1992 capture of Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán and other members of the guerrillas' powerful metropolitan central committee, along with the earlier arrests of the leaders of some of Shining Path's parallel organizations, did much to loosen the grip on power the Shining Path had developed in many shantytowns. But the government's anti-insurgency and pacification campaign has done little to root out important side-effects of Shining Path's activities -- notably suspicion and fear.

Handling trauma

"In Villa El Salvador the Shining Path was able to make tremendous blows through murder, threats, infiltration," Greg Chisholm, a Canadian priest who lived and worked in Villa El Salvador before and after Moyano's murder, told me. "It takes a long time to recover from that, to provide an environment where you can recover space as a people to be heard and appear as a person." Chisholm said there is less fear now, but life has not returned to normal. "There are major wounds and there have been major setbacks," he said. "It was an extremely dangerous and tense time. People have been de-humanized. They have seen people blown to bits. When people are treated as non-persons, it is easier for them to treat others as non-people. There is a lot of trauma. The poor are more realistic at handling trauma because they have to keep going on. They can't stop or they will die. But there is a long way to go in overcoming suspicion about people's involvement with the Shining Path -- the question of 'maybe they were or weren't.' "

As in other shantytowns, the Shining Path spent several years infiltrating organizations and gathering intelligence before visibly emerging to organize the urban population. Residents knew who some of the local Shining Path leaders were, but the identities of the organizers and those who carried out sabotage and assassinations were subject to strict rules of secrecy. Many don't know who was and was not part of the movement. Those who do know are afraid of retaliation if they report Shining Path members or supporters to the authorities.

Moyano's small house has been turned into a foundation, but her family no longer lives there. Her husband, and the two sons and a nephew who witnessed the assassination, now live in exile in Spain. Her above-ground concrete tomb sits alone on the top of a windblown cemetery on one of the sand hills around the town. It has a huge crack in it from the time the Shining Path tried to blow up her grave to protest Moyano's new status as a martyr for peace and the resistance she stood for. Every year, people gather to herald her efforts to promote peace by defending the right of people to work for a better living.

However, her death has had an impact on the willingness of people to be involved in community organizations. "Those working on behalf of humanity -- human needs -- are often accused of being anti-government," Chisholm said. The government has tended to create publicity around big splashy projects, rather than supporting human-rights and popular movements, and non-governmental organizations and small job-creation projects, he said. Villa El Salvador's community kitchens, which are usually run for 25 to 75 families, have kept operating, but are

overburdened by the "poorest of the poor" clients who can't pay even the minimal price required. Food rations have been cut down, so everyone gets less. Many families are undernourished and sickly. "There are families who go without eating to pay for their children's school supplies. The children themselves are falling asleep at school at 10 in the morning because they are malnourished. The real violence now is hunger," Chisholm told me.

Combating the rise in diseases

It's a story I heard everywhere during my visits to several shantytowns. The product of increased malnutrition is a higher risk of getting infectious diseases like tuberculosis. The numbers of people with the disease has increased sharply since the *fujishock* economic measures were introduced in 1990. Many people survive the day only on bread and tea.

On the other side of Lima in the Comas district of shantytowns, a small group of people meet on the second floor of a community building to talk about how to fight tuberculosis. What is unusual about the meeting is that it is organized and run by people who have the disease.

One of the leaders of the group is a 17-year-old woman who told me, "our objective is to cure people and not to infect others." The problem, she explained, is that, while tuberculosis can be cured, having the disease is a social stigma. It is harder to get work and some families throw victims out because they don't bring in any money. The group meets twice a week to report on each other's progress and to plan how they can reach out to others who have the disease, which can recur

easily if people are not careful. They also teach people about ways to prevent spreading the infection.

A local man who works closely with the group tells me that belonging to it gives people more of a sense of self-worth, and they become more involved in other aspects of the community. The group is slowly beginning to reactivate itself after a period during which it was dormant because of infiltration by the Shining Path, he said, but there is less enthusiasm to get involved.

... and the rise in crime

In addition to deteriorating health conditions, all residents of Lima face new kinds of crime in their communities. The drama of this new reality becomes graphically clear during a visit with a friend who is a custodian for one of the large schools in the middle of a concentration of several shantytowns on the east side of Lima. It is a typically miserable existence. The family lives in a tiny three-room concrete building with a corrugated tin roof that does little to keep out the noise, dust and sandflies. The couple and their two young children sleep in one of the rooms on narrow hard beds. The beds are equipped with mosquito nets to keep out night bugs from the sand and dirt.

It is impossible to go out after 11 at night because that's when gangs congregate to make trouble. At about midnight, almost right on schedule, the daily ruckus begins. We hear yelling and the breaking of glass, and it sounds as if they are throwing rocks. The man explained that anyone who goes out will be robbed --

and left naked -- or even risks being killed. The perpetrators live in the community. They are either drug addicts or belong to youth gangs.

Tito, who used to work as a teacher, managed to get a custodian's job in Lima after living for more than four years in a guerrilla-controlled community in the Peruvian jungle. People abandoned the village after the military began a series of air bombings of communities suspected to be controlled by the guerrillas. He escaped being captured by the army because locals never knew his full name.

Lima's shantytowns are filled with people who moved to them to escape from political violence in the interior or to escape detection from the army. The most desperate cases are the *desplazados* -- people who were forced to leave their homes in the countryside for the first time because of violence or the destruction of their communities during the war. The lucky ones already had relatives in Lima. But many were forced to leave without identity documents. This makes it even more difficult for them to move around and more vulnerable during police road-checks. People living in the shantytowns are also suspicious of outsiders. Many mistakenly presume the newcomers are members or supporters of the Shining Path. Those who don't live in the shantytowns have little awareness of the plight of the war refugees and for the most part don't seem to care.

In its zeal to uncover all members of the Shining Path, the government has encouraged people everywhere in Lima to denounce anyone who looks or acts differently. Rather than encourage the stated aim of pacification, the government campaigns have made the deep divisions of race and social class in Peruvian

society much worse, psychologist Maria-Angel Canepes told me. She cited one government advertisement that suggested: "Contribute to the pacification of your country. If you see a stranger near your house, report them."

"Anything that makes someone different is now a reason not to trust that person," Canepes said. "Racism is now much worse than it was five years ago. There is a tendency in some social sectors to put all of the blame and pain on the people who live in the shantytowns."

Difficulties in integrating into Lima society put a further burden on those with wounded psyches because of the war. Canepes has been in direct contact with trauma victims by volunteering her time for counselling through Peru's Coordinador Nacional de Derechos Humanos.

The worst aspect of their trauma is internalized silence about what happened. "There are strong feelings of guilt and abandonment. Some of these people saw a lot of massacres, got a lot of threats. Some could not bury their dead because that would be interpreted as a sign of condemnation by the Shining Path. People have kept the fear inside. For many, there was the feeling that, if you talked about it, it meant you were afraid and you could infect others with your fear. They tell others, 'Nothing happened here, we are fine.' But it is like having a time-bomb inside."

Dezplazados are also haunted by the feeling that the Shining Path "will look for me and kill me," Canepes said. Those who worked as members of government security forces like the police suffer the same fate. One small parcel of land near the

Comas district is full of such war veterans, people who are missing arms or legs -- or both. They live in tiny concrete row houses awarded in a government lottery.

Anita, a 27-year-old former policewoman, told me how she constantly worries that a Shining Path hit squad will try again to kill her. Anita narrowly survived a Shining Path assassination attempt that happened just as she was about to board the early morning local bus for work on March 31, 1992. She remembers there was an unusually large number of people waiting at the bus stop. Her husband, who is also a police officer, and their two children saw her to the street, waved goodbye and waited for her to leave. Minutes later, Anita was lying face up in a pool of blood. One bullet ripped through her left breast, narrowly missing her heart, another pierced her right eye. A third penetrated her forehead and burst out of the left temple. Her would-be assassins, including one who had a grenade, escaped, simply by walking away. She doesn't know why she was targeted other than she briefly served as a guard for some Shining Path women prisoners. She never used a gun. She remembers telling one of the prisoners she could not go to the bathroom because it was being painted. She also tells me about a former school friend who told her that there had to be changes because there were many police and military abuses outside of Lima. Today, after months of being in a coma and enduring reconstructive surgery, Anita is blind in both eyes but says she is not bitter. Still she wonders when Shining Path may try and "finish what they couldn't before" and worries about the impact of the attack on her children who witnessed the first attack.

Rafael Rey Rey lives just down the street from Anita. He lost an arm and an eye during a six-hour shootout with the Shining Path while defending a police post in the jungle. The guerrillas threw a bomb inside, just missing him, but blowing to bits the soldier friend fighting beside him. "Not even the best training prepares you for war," said Rey, perched in a wheelchair. It is only in recent years that the most seriously injured war veterans have been recognized and awarded some compensation by the state, but nothing makes up for the horror of the war, Rey said.

Fears are real

The fears of these war victims about the Shining Path are real. Guerrillas have already attacked groups who work to help those displaced by violence, and they are still settling accounts. The Centro de Desarrollo Poblacional (CEPRODEP), a small Peruvian development agency that works with people displaced by violence, has been the subject of death threats and at least one bombing attack. Behind the guard who checks identities at a new wooden door in a stucco wall, the whole front part of the house behind is blown out. The Shining Path planned for the bomb to go off at lunchtime, when all the employees would be in the front of the building. But the guerrillas got their timing wrong, setting the bomb off on a day when employees had been given a holiday. Even though the bombing happened six months before my visit to these offices, the people who work there are still on edge. The secretaries and everyone else almost jump out of their skins when someone in the street outside bursts a water balloon as part of the traditional February carnival festivities. Political

analyst Carlos Tapia, who heads the centre, puts a gun on the table in front of him during our interview. He carries it around because of repeated death threats.

"The cost of defeating the Shining Path has been very high," said Tapia, who has been a leftist politician and was one of the leaders of another guerrilla group defeated in the mid-1960s. "On the one hand, society has become militarized and, on the other, there is now a culture of violence. Politics and daily life have gone the way of the Shining Path. All that is important is brute force. Force is considered to be the way to solve any kind of problem. There is no transparency and the sum of politics is confrontation. There is no search for convergence, for common interests to solve national problems. Instead, there is a drive toward destruction, not just to defeat, but to annihilate."

Enrique Bernales ran a commission appointed by the Peruvian Senate in 1988 to monitor political violence. He headed up the commission until it was disbanded, along with all other senate and congress activities, following Fujimori's 1992 auto-coup. "Terrorism has been defeated, but there is no pacification," Bernales said in his suburban Miraflores home. "This government is part of the violence. It violated the constitution and closed down the legal power. In doing so, it has divided the country. Fragmentation has increased."

Bernales, a lawyer specializing in constitutional and international law, and a long-time member of Peru's traditional political and aristocratic élite, also places blame on the contribution of traditional political parties to the climate of militarization and polarization. "If political parties had been representative, with a national

structure instead of mostly Lima-based, terrorism would have had a lot less impact," he said. "Political parties did not know how to respond to their responsibility to build a democracy, starting with the ability to be able to renew themselves from within. Political parties still have so many internal problems they can't be effective as an opposition."

Crisis of values

Bernales is bleak about immediate prospects for pacification and a resolution of the divisions in Peruvian society. "The impact has been brutal," he said. "It is going to take many years, perhaps a generation, before people recover. Solidarity among people and confidence in the law has been broken. Breaking the law doesn't matter any more. We have taken a terrorist approach to our problems. All of this has destroyed a nation and provoked a crisis of values."

The result is increased crime and tolerance of what would normally be considered deviant behaviour from the top to the bottom of Peruvian society. Researchers at Lima's Centre for the Study and Promotion of Development (DESCO) looked at the links between the atmosphere of political violence, insecurity and fear in the 1980s and early 1990s, and the rising levels of urban crime. What became evident, project leader Abelardo Sanchez de Leon told me, is that more than a decade of violence, along with severe economic and social crisis, has distorted both people's perception of crime and society's ability to respond.

"The concept of crime has become ambiguous," Sanchez de Leon said. "The line between what is legal and illegal has become increasingly blurred." Delinquency

has become part of a broader process of social decomposition in which people collectively adopt deviant behaviour because there is a lack of opportunities to achieve goals through legal means. The growth of multiple forms of violent crime has contributed to this dynamic. While violence by Peru's guerrilla groups was politically motivated, the rebels' methods, ranging from extortion and bank robbery to assassinations, were typical of those used by common criminals. Members of the police, the armed forces and several paramilitary gangs began to pose as guerrillas to commit hold-ups and other crimes, adding to the confusion. Members of 'The Destroyers,' an extortion band that police dismantled in 1994, had a cache of 72 weapons and dozens of grenades that were all traced back to police stations in the interior. Most of those in the gang were former policemen. The robbers dressed in fancy clothes and used cellular phones to track potential victims leaving banks.

Rising levels of violent crime, and increased petty crime, have had a substantial impact on the urban environment and urban development. Personal arms sales skyrocketed during the war years, and private security firms are doing a booming business. The DESCO study reported that Lima now has more than 2,000 companies that offer private security services and at least 312,000 people carry their own guns. Peru's rich have been surrounding their homes with high, thick walls topped with broken glass for years, but now people who live in middle-class areas are fencing themselves in and installing window bars, fences and other security systems.

Privileged *limeños* are discovering that not even thick walls covered with broken glass can totally shield them from the poor. In one case, a wealthy contractor decided to have a barbecue for some 300 guests in his huge walled backyard. Not long after the steaks were on the grill, a crowd of people had gathered from a poor settlement in the nearby sand hills. The people demanded that the food be shared with them, or else they would storm the party. The host reluctantly gave in and handed over some of the food.

Despite the flow of immigrants to Lima over the years, it has long been possible to live in entirely different worlds in the same city. The rich and wealthy middle classes live in well-watered suburbs with walled gardens and domestic servants to do the cooking and cleaning. They live and work in a handful of neighbourhoods and never venture into the shantytowns, other than to pass by them on the way to the airport or to coastal beaches during the summer. The poor live on top of each other in makeshift dwellings made of straw, tin and newspaper, until they can buy enough bricks to build sturdier walls. One middle-class Peruvian professional, whose father used to be a high-ranking police officer in Lima until his retirement, described his image of Lima this way: "The Lima I know is made up of about 100,000 people, that of my mother is about 50,000, and my father's is about half a million."

The new flows of immigrants from the highlands have caused increasing resentment as the poor, Indian face of Peru becomes more visible than ever before in all neighbourhoods. "Have you seen the faces of these people?" one upper-class

doctor commented, referring to the pure Indian features of many of the new arrivals. Another *limeño* told me that a friend of his refuses to go to the cinema any more "because there are too many *cholos*," the term sometimes used to describe Indian Peruvians who adopt the dress, attitudes and customs of the whites and mestizos.

Instead, the man stays at home and rents videos.

As the son of Japanese immigrants with humble beginnings, Fujimori is seen to be representative of the incredibly diverse racial mix among Peruvians who are not descendants of those that inherited power from the Spanish-born people who governed Peru after the Spanish conquest. But while Fujimori presents himself as a populist -- one of his 1990 electoral slogans was 'A Peruvian like you' -- some of his critics and even former advisers say that he has accentuated rather than eased the divisions in Peruvian society. "Fujimori has managed to neutralize his opposition, but the amount of connection between the government and the people is as divorced as before," author de Soto said in an interview. "He is successful because he gives the appearance of wanting to fight the status quo - people love that. He has also been effective in solving the problem of runaway inflation and the reinsertion of Peru into the international financial community. But the poor still have no way of coming into the system. With every change of government, another 43 or so families (a reference to the number of families who controlled Peru's wealth before the Velasco reforms) come into the circle of power, wealth and influence, and that is it. If there is anything the right and the left have in common, it is that they govern without feedback from the bottom."

The conditions that helped the Shining Path grow are still in place, even though the movement has been defeated as a war organization, de Soto said. In the medium to long term, he sees drug trafficking as a much bigger threat to the government and Peruvian society because of its corrupting effects. In its study of crime in Lima, DESCO, the development research institute, warned that the increasing sophistication associated with modern crime networks has put the whole system at risk. Organizations like drug-trafficking networks need to maintain links, either through corruption or threats, with the legal system -- the government, security forces, financial institutions -- in order to operate. This means new centres of power are developing alongside it and with the help of people in the formal system.

The lack of transparency and accountability in the system compounds this problem. There have been numerous reports that links between the military and drug-traffickers, for instance, have become well entrenched. When authorities in Colombia captured the Peruvian drug trafficker known as *El Vaticano* and wanted to extradite him, Peruvian government officials had little choice but to put him on trial. But when *El Vaticano* threatened to point the finger at military officers, he was tried in a closed military court specially for guerrillas. The authorities argued that this was because he had collaborated with the Shining Path, but critics maintained that this was the only way to prevent his testimony and accusations from becoming public. Throughout 1994 and 1995, there were increasing reports of the involvement of some high-ranking military officers using their positions to profit directly from the drug trade.

Ever since the capture of Guzmán, the Fujimori government has worked hard to promote the military as agents of development striving for peace and security. Victor Joy Way, a high-ranking official in Fujimori's government, questions any criticism of the military's role in Peru's pacification. "Two years ago, the country was asking that anything and everything be done to pacify the country," Joy Way said in an interview. "They wanted military intervention. Now we have to see soldiers and members of the military as partners in development."

Many of those I interviewed told me that concerns about personal safety now far outweigh concern about Peru's other problems. And this is likely to continue for the short- and medium-term future. "In spite of all the terrible problems we have had, there has never been a real feeling of war in Lima, that made people think that their security was really threatened," said Héctor Béjar Rivera, director of a Peruvian think tank that has started to conduct research on the impact of insurgency on community development. The Shining Path's killing of community leaders in the shantytowns and its bombing campaign of middle-class neighbourhoods drastically changed that sense of reality. "Now security has become a commodity. Security and a sense of peace are highly valued," said Béjar. "Now everything comes second to maintaining a situation of peace. Before, speaking about revolution was part of politics, part of intellectual life. Now anyone who talks about revolution is considered to be crazy or a terrorist. Certain problems, like poverty and inequality, have been put aside. The problem is establishing the necessity of a dialogue."

Because of the impact of the war, that could be difficult. "To get involved in the democratic process is now considered dangerous," Canepes said. "People think that it is better to keep a low profile. No one wants power because it is dangerous. Fear is a totally corrosive thing. Restoring confidence means speaking and understanding, not just in terms of justice, but in terms of understanding what happened."

Epilogue

*We're heading for the top
We're going to wear out a lot of shoes to get there.*

*Words to a hit song by a Lima rock group,
sons of migrants from the sierra, 1995.*

Some people started calling President Fujimori the 'Teflon president' following his re-election for another five-year term in April 1995. No problem, nor even a series of human rights and drugs scandals, seemed to stick to him or significantly affect his public support among Peruvians. With the horrors of more than 12 years of political violence associated with the Shining Path insurgency barely behind them, Peruvians appeared to place a higher value on the relative economic stability and public order that they began to experience under Fujimori's rule than anything else. Voters rejected opposition claims that the choice was between democracy and what amounted to dictatorship under Fujimori. In fact, opinion polls have almost consistently indicated overwhelming support for Fujimori's authoritarian style, with Peruvians giving him usually no less than a 70 percent approval rating. Economic growth was 13 percent in 1994 and nearly seven percent in 1995, among the highest in Latin America. Inflation, more than 7,500 percent when Fujimori began governing in 1990, was 10.2 percent in 1995, giving people hope that the bitter

medicine of austerity measures would bring them a direct payoff. In the past two years, foreign investment has flooded in as the government, turning the tide of the nationalization by the military government more than 25 years earlier, privatized state-owned industries, including large mines and the telephone and telecommunications company.

What was perhaps more telling about Fujimori's election win was the apparent lack of political alternatives or real competition among political parties. Fujimori himself heralded his victory as the end of *partidocracia*, a reference to the near total defeat of Peru's traditional political parties in the elections. Those parties, Acción Popular, Partido Popular Cristiano, Partido Aprista de Perú and the Izquierda Unida, failed to win even the mandatory five percent of the vote necessary to remain registered with the National Elections Board. Fujimori told reporters that "democracy should no longer include political parties." He attributed his win to the success of his own formula of "direct democracy," a self-styled concept based on a strong, elected president able to bypass traditional democratic institutions and rule through direct contact with the people, opinion polls and referenda. Indeed, Fujimori constantly jots down reminders on a small note pad on his whirlwind tours throughout Peru to inaugurate small public works paid for by the 15 percent of public funds now administered directly through his own presidential office. The National Intelligence Service, the powerful national security agency, has assumed polling as one of its many duties. Some analysts suggest that the agency contributes strongly to the design and execution of government policy. Critics of Fujimori admit that the idea

of direct democracy is not bad in itself, but they say that it is insufficient unless linked with initiatives to strengthen political representation and participation from all sectors of society.

Throughout 1995 and early 1996, some loosening appeared in Fujimori's iron grip on government and popularity. Candidates belonging to his governing *Cambio 90-Nueva Mayoría* coalition failed to win the key metropolitan Lima electoral district and many rural constituencies when up against independents and opposition candidates during municipal elections in November 1995, a sign of weakening support for the central government. Fujimori has stalled on plans introduced by the García government to decentralize and give more powers to the regions and has never re-instituted elections for regional governments, a practice that was ended by the 1992 *autogolpe*. The affairs of many rural communities, particularly those in the highlands, remained under the vigilance of more than 4,500 civilian defence patrols, whose work is supervised by the military.

The impact of Fujimori's approach of concentrating power and his neo-liberal economic agenda has been significant, according to political scientist Sinesio López Jiménez. "Institutional changes in the state have been radical," he wrote in an evaluation of Fujimori's first five years in power. "With the exception of the armed forces and the national police, almost all state institutions have collapsed on a technical as well as an administrative level. The policy of co-opting the higher echelon of the armed forces (by appointing those who guarantee automatic support), established by Alan García and continued by Fujimori, has debilitated the

institutionality of the armed forces, but they have seen an increase in their operating power and efficiency."

Military given amnesty

In what was seen as a move to guarantee a docile military for the foreseeable future, within weeks of his re-election Fujimori moved quickly to obtain approval for a controversial law granting a blanket amnesty to military and police officers accused of human rights violations during the insurgency war. Because the law was rushed through Congress -- introduced a few minutes before midnight on June 13, 1995 and voted on three hours later -- the surprised opposition had no time to organize against it. The amnesty law was one of the most sweeping of those adopted in Latin American countries following the military dictatorships of the 1970s and early 1980s. It freed the tiny group of security officers sentenced to house arrest for their part in the notorious La Cantuta murders and effectively barred any recourse for human-rights violations committed by the military during the counterinsurgency war. About 70-odd other human-rights cases were pending before military courts at the time. Fujimori said the amnesty law was aimed at "forgetting" the past. "The law does not justify the acts but forgets them," he said, reminding people to remember the thousands of victims killed by the Shining Path. "This is necessary because Peru needs to consolidate its pacification through national reconciliation." Leading Peruvian liberation theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez called the amnesty law "impunity disguised as reconciliation." Opinion polls showed that the vast majority of Peruvians surveyed agreed. Even some members of Fujimori's own government

coalition voiced disgust at and rejection of the new law. "Amnesty under these conditions does not heal the wounds but only makes them deeper, something we will come to realize in a few years," Carlos Ferrero, a congressman in Fujimori's coalition, was quoted as saying.

Leaking evidence

Around the same time, military tanks appeared on the streets. At first, some thought that it was a show of force by the army. But the weekly magazine *Caretas* produced evidence that the military display was actually a demonstration by army officers opposed to a blanket amnesty for military human rights abusers. It had been anonymous army officers who originally leaked the evidence to the media that led to the discovery of the bodies of the Cantuta victims and the identification of officers involved in a clandestine military hit squad formed to try and eliminate Shining Path suspects through extralegal means. Speculation persisted that the amnesty law was motivated in part by fears that sentenced soldiers would reveal, as they had reportedly been threatening to do, proof that the highest echelons of the army and Vladimiro Montesinos, Fujimori's powerful personal adviser, gave direct orders to the military death squad that carried out the killings. Gustavo Gorriti, a journalist who has written extensively on the Shining Path and Fujimori's relationship with the Peruvian military, and military analyst Enrique Obando, saw another, more Machiavellian motive. They argued that the amnesty was really intended to weaken the secret lodges of middle-rank officers who helped expose alleged human rights abuses by their colleagues and superiors. They had done this in part because they

were opposed to Fujimori's reorganization of the army to favour those loyal to him instead of an institutionalized system of recognition for career officers.

The setback over the amnesty proved to be temporary. Fujimori began a new public relations campaign. In public appearances, the president told Peruvians that, with liberalization of the economy under way and insurgency in check, his main priority for the next period in power from 1995 to 2000 would be to reduce extreme poverty by half. "This is the stage of development that comes after the defeat of terrorist violence and the restoration of economic stability," Fujimori told residents of war-torn Ayacucho, where he racked up support of 70 percent during national elections.

Unemployment continued to be the main problem for the majority of Peruvians. An appalling 70 percent of the population live below the poverty line and a substantial minority of those in destitute conditions. According to the Peruvian Labour Ministry, underemployment and unemployment affect about 83 percent of the economically active population. The productive sector, particularly the agriculture industry, remained a trouble spot in the economy, along with Peru's rising trade deficit. By mid-1996, problems with the current account and new measures to prevent inflation had translated into an economic recession in which the gross domestic product had shrunk by about four percent alone in January. Voters were beginning to tire of waiting for Fujimori to deliver on his promises to attack poverty and lessen unemployment. By May 1996, Fujimori's popularity took its first sustained beating as the proposed privatization of Petroperú, the state oil company,

met with widespread public opposition. The proposed sale came on the heels of a series of hikes in gasoline prices that will undoubtedly result in price increases for other goods. Boosted by some of the largest demonstrations in Peru in years and opinion polls indicating that 64 percent of Peruvians opposed the sale of the strategic resource to foreigners, the opposition began collecting the 1.2 million signatures required by the constitution to call a national referendum. The issue appeared to challenge seriously Fujimori's commitment to "direct democracy" after the government coalition changed the direct-participation mechanism in the new constitution, requiring that any referendum result also receive the support of 40 percent of the Congress, which is controlled by pro-Fujimori forces.

Shining Path still in action

Another promise Fujimori has not been able to keep was to wipe out insurgency completely by the end of his first term in 1995. Although the Shining Path no longer represents a serious threat to the stability of Peru, it still remains active. In August 1995, *Latin America Report* wrote that "it is now widely accepted that the Shining Path still has some 400 heavily armed fighters in the Upper Huallaga region, and that reports of its imminent demise are perhaps excessively optimistic." The Lima press said that a 200-member guerrilla column called Mar Rojo -- the Red Sea -- is still active on the left bank of the river across from Aucayacu, where the Shining Path reportedly held a party congress in 1995. There was some evidence to suggest that this diehard faction of the Shining Path was helped by the deployment of counter-insurgency commandos from the Upper Huallaga Valley to

the northern frontier during the border conflict between Peru and Ecuador in early 1995. The Shining Path had once again begun its tactic of blocking roads in the valley and killing local authorities and residents who opposed it. In Lima, the Shining Path set off a series of bombs, outside a hotel and in front of five banks, in an obvious attempt to discredit Fujimori before the elections. Later, in a vicious offensive in the interior, launched days before Fujimori's inauguration ceremony in July 1995, the Shining Path killed 16 soldiers and wounded six others. Only two months earlier, Fujimori had marked the 15th anniversary of the start of the Shining Path insurrection by predicting that Abimael Guzmán, the imprisoned founder and chief ideologue, would be dead within three years. Guzmán is serving out his sentence for life in solitary confinement in an island jail.

Guerrilla violence has escalated since the beginning of 1996. In February, four villages along the Marginal Highway in the Huallaga were attacked by guerrillas. Victims killed were said to be either *arrependedos*, former guerrilla members or supporters who turned themselves in under a limited amnesty plan, or rural leaders who refused to co-operate with the guerrillas. In addition, the Shining Path assassinated mayors in two towns in the Huallaga, marking a return to tactics common before the capture of Guzmán. On July 29, the rebels bombed a central police station protecting the Peruvian congress and the Lima home of the military chief in charge of the Upper Huallaga region. The Shining Path was also reported to be active in the Apurimac Valley, a jungle-like territory in the Ayacucho department where drug trafficking has steadily increased in recent years. Armed

civilian patrols sent up to fight Shining Path guerrillas in the area were threatening to turn their guns against the government unless it took into account the proposals from coca growers organizations to provide support to substitute other crops for coca. It is exactly in these kinds of conflicts that the Shining Path has been able to advance its cause in the past. "The government seems to have forgotten that we fought the terrorists using arms that we bought with coca money," Hugo Huilca, president of the Federation of Coca Leaf Producers in the Apurímac region, told *Latinamerica Press*. "There are 25,000 civil patrol members who could turn their weapons away from the subversives and point them in another direction."

Reorganizing Lima

In addition to trying to build up strength and capitalize on conflicts in some interior regions, there were clear signs that the Shining Path was trying to reorganize in Lima, by continuing attacks on community leaders and working to recruit young people. On March 6, the Shining Path murdered Pascuala Rosado, mother of seven, and a former grassroots leader in the shantytown conglomeration called Huaycán. Her assassins, two men and a woman in their teens, were waiting for her as she walked through the local market at 7:30 in the morning on her way to work at a nearby textile factory. Guerrillas killed Rosado in the same way they executed Maria Elena Moyano, the community leader gunned down in Villa El Salvador in 1992. Rosado was shot in the head, then blown up with dynamite in front of onlookers. The scene was strewn with pamphlets with a red hammer and sickle glorifying Shining Path's "People's War." Rosado had escaped to Chile with the help of Peruvian

human rights groups in May 1993 after she received death threats. She returned to Peru in 1995, believing that her life was no longer threatened because Guzmán and many of Shining Path's other leaders were behind bars. Months later, in early August, two Shining Path gunmen shot community leader Epifanio Santamaría Rodríguez in the Lima shantytown of San Martín after he opposed their efforts to make inroads into the community.

Peru's Institute for Legal Defence warned that the Shining Path was trying "once again to paralyze neighbourhood organizations through fear, and clear the ground for an eventual strengthening of their proselytizing activities in those areas." Shining Path graffiti have since reappeared in shantytowns as well as in some rural villages. The non-jungle sections of Ayacucho are still difficult to penetrate because of the proliferation of civil defence patrols, but there were persistent reports of guerrilla columns moving about the *puna*, the upper cap of the mountains, around the Cangallo province of Ayacucho, only a few hours by truck from Umari. In its propaganda, easily downloaded from a site on the Internet under the heading PCP (Communist Party of Peru) Most Frequently Asked Questions, the Shining Path claims that 30 to 40 percent of Peru's national territory is under the control of the insurgency's "new Power." In response to the question how the capture of Guzmán affected its "People's War," the Shining Path replies: "Having long had a policy of strategic centralization and tactical decentralization, as well as developing leaders from the ranks of the people, the leadership of the PCP rapidly regrouped and reinforced the new Central Committee. After a temporary government offensive

against the base areas, the PCP launched a counteroffensive and by 1996 the People's War, and has recovered much of the territory that had been said to be 'pacified' and expanded its operations in several other areas (e.g., Huallaga, and the Northern region.). Large areas of Peru are under a state of emergency (about 65 percent of the population), its facade of security and 'economic miracle' are crumbling as the PCP builds a new Power in the countryside."

Peruvian media have identified the new leader of the Shining Path as Pedro Quinteros Ayllón ("Comrade Miguel"), a 60-year-old former teacher and colleague of Guzmán, who is believed to function mainly as an ideologue and tactician. The person reported to head up the military side of operations is Oscar Alberto Ramirez Durand ("Comrade Feliciano"), the son of a retired Peruvian general who was born into a middle-class home and was one of the first young cadres trained to serve as a trusted lieutenant of Guzmán in the 1970s in Ayacucho. Feliciano's faction of the Shining Path, called Sendero Rojo, the Red Path, has called Guzmán's appeal for peace in 1993 through letters and recorded statements a government trick. The Shining Path rejects claims that its revolutionaries are "isolated terrorists" with this message on the Net: "How is it possible that after Fujimori claimed that 4,500 'terrorists' have repented, 7,000 have been imprisoned, and while he claims that 99 percent of the leaders are dead or in prison, the PCP has been able to conduct thousands of military and political actions in 1994 and 1995?"

Héctor Jhon Caro, the retired general and former director of Peru's anti-terrorism police from 1990 to 1991 put it another way: "The war is won, but it is not over yet."

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