Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past

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"Terror in the Name of Mao"

Revolution and Response in Peru

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Peru is a major South American country replete with contradictions and anomalies, past and present. The highly developed, heavily populated, and well-organized Inca Empire, with its capital in the Peruvian Andean highlands city of Cuzco and with control of what is now Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, southern Colombia, northern Chile, and northwestern Argentina, collapsed in weeks after the arrival of a small band of Spanish conquistadors. With the coastal city of Lima as the Spanish Empire's administrative center for all of South America for more than two hundred years, until the Bourbon reforms of the 1760s, Peru was favored over the rest of the region by the concentration of the Crown's human and material resources.

Perhaps due in part to Peru's privileged position within the empire, independence came late, in the early 1820s, and reluctantly, achieved largely through military forces and leaders from the South American colonial periphery of Argentina and Venezuela. The same explanation might also apply to some degree to the late arrival in Peru of the first wave of democracy, limited as it was, that gradually spread through Latin America from the 1850s onward. Only in the mid-1890s, after a succession of military heads of state and a devastating loss in the War of the Pacific (1879–83) against Chile that contributed to further political instability as

well as virtually complete economic collapse, was limited liberal democracy established in Peru. Though lasting only about two decades (1895–1919, with a brief coup in 1914), this period represents to this day Peru's only extended experience with civilian-elected rule. Augusto Leguía, the last of the elected presidents in this period, carried out a "self-coup" in 1919 to rule as a civilian dictator for the next eleven years. From the 1930s through the 1970s, anything more than a brief return to democracy was thwarted by a deep animosity between the military and the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, or APRA), a well-organized and ideological but noncommunist party of the left.[1]

By the 1960s, in an ironic twist, the progressively stronger and more institutionalized armed forces took upon themselves as their core national security strategy the banner of reform once espoused by their archenemy. When the military-supported elected government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1963–68) and his Acción Popular (Popular Action, or AP) Party stumbled in its efforts to effect change, the armed forces took over once again, this time with a comprehensive plan, largely borrowed from APRA, to transform Peru through major social, economic, and political reform.[2] Although the twelve-year military regime (1968–80) was ultimately unsuccessful for a variety of reasons, most importantly because it attempted too much with too few resources, it was still able to bring about a number of important changes. One was to open up political space for the mostly Marxist left, which the military favored as an alternative to APRA, to organize and grow into a major political force.[3]

By the time the military government—battered, bruised, and chastened by its experience with long-term institutionalized rule—agreed to turn power back to civilians between 1978 and 1980, the multiple parties of the left were major political players, particularly in unions and universities. With Peru's first presidential elections in seventeen years in 1980, also the first ever with universal suffrage, the historical and political landscape was dramatically changed. It was into this unlikely political context that the radical Maoist guerrillas of Shining Path, formally known as the Partido Comunista del Perú–Sendero Luminoso (Communist Party of Peru–Shining Path), were also to emerge.[4]

As we know, social revolutions usually arise in a context of political polarization, repression, authoritarian rule, and economic crisis. Each of the five successful social revolutions in Latin America (Haiti 1794–1804, Mexico 1910–17, Bolivia 1952, Cuba 1953–59, and Nicaragua 1974–79) occurred under such conditions. Peru's "people's war" (1980–95), although ultimately unsuccessful, began and developed under quite different circumstances. Shining Path launched its first revolutionary operations in May 1980, at the very moment Peru was establishing the most open democracy in its long and often turbulent political history.[5]

The theory of revolution would predict the early demise of such a quixotic initiative.[6] A decade later, however, Peru's democratic government was on the verge of collapse. Political violence had become generalized, the government's responses were ineffective and counterproductive, and the economy was in a shambles. Over the first ten years of the radical Maoists' people's war, more than twenty thousand Peruvians were killed, $10 billion worth of infrastructure was damaged or destroyed, some five hundred thousand internal refugees were generated, along with an almost equal number of emigrants, and there was a decline in gross domestic product of 30 percent and a cumulative inflation of more than two million percent.[7] By 1990, such discouraging indicators suggested that a Shining Path victory was close at hand.

Why Revolution under Democracy?

How can we explain such a confounding set of developments? Several forces and factors were in play. One set of explanations relates to the origins, characteristics, and dynamics of Shining Path itself; another set, to those of the policies and mindset of various Peruvian governments from the 1960s through the 1980s.

Factors Relating to Shining Path

One important factor is that the group that eventually became known as Shining Path began and took root in the early 1960s largely out of public view—in Ayacucho, a remote and isolated department (state) of highland Peru. While a very important region historically, since the final major battle securing Latin America's independence from Spain was fought there in 1824, the area had only sporadic and limited central government attention for many years. As late as the 1970s, there were no paved roads in the department, only one single-lane dirt highway connecting the city of Ayacucho to the capital city of Lima, no telephones, sporadic electricity limited to three

or four urban centers, a single radio station, and one weekly newspaper. In addition, both the Belaúnde government and the military regime that followed tolerated Marxist groups among students and in teachers' and labor unions. While there were occasional police roundups of militant student and union leaders in the late 1960s and early 1970s, including in Ayacucho, the detainees were soon released. As a result, Shining Path and its leadership could operate and expand over seventeen years, almost unperceived by the outside world, before the declaration of the people's war in 1980.[8]

Second, the original ancestor of this radical Maoist group organized initially at the National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga (UNSCH) in the department's capital. While the university dated from the 1670s, it had been closed for almost eighty years before being refounded in 1959 with a mission then unique to Peruvian institutions of higher education—the promotion of development in the region.[9] The government also provided the resources necessary to pursue that mission. This meant that the university provided an opportunity unmatched in the country at that time for faculty and students to pursue either development or political agendas in the field.

Third, the opportunity to carry out such a mission attracted a number of Peru's best scholars, as well as a few with more of a political than an academic agenda. Among the latter was the young Communist Party militant Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, later to become the head of Shining Path. Within a few months of his arrival in 1962, through his unshakable convictions and force of personality, he had revitalized the almost moribund local party organization and established his presence in the still small university (with about four hundred students and forty faculty members at the time) as a committed and charismatic professor of the left. Over the next few years, he built from the ground up a communist student association and led vanguard student elements as well as their faculty counterparts to victory in university elections in 1968. The UNSCH then served even more than before as forum, incubator, and launching platform for the expansion of Guzmán's radical organization and ideology.[10]

Fourth, given the extreme poverty and the almost entirely rural, indigenous, peasant-dominated nature of Ayacucho that provided the external context within which the UNSCH operated, it is no surprise that Guzmán sided with China after the Sino-Soviet split of 1963–64. With this new ideological commitment, he worked diligently and successfully to build a strong Maoist party both within the university and in the countryside. As a professor in the university's education program and director of its training school for several years in the 1960s, Guzmán prepared and in many cases radicalized a generation of teachers who took up positions in Ayacucho's rural communities. These teachers—often from the countryside, with Spanish as their second language, and the first generation to get a university education—in many cases became the proselytizing front line of their mentor's political organization.[11]

A fifth important factor revolved around Guzmán's relationship with the Chinese. He and his principal lieutenants made several extended trips to China beginning in 1965 in the midst of the Cultural Revolution. Over these years, they became adherents of the most radical faction in that struggle, the Gang of Four. When their Chinese mentors lost out to their more moderate adversaries in the struggle for political control in China in 1976, the Communist Party of Peru–Shining Path (PCP-SL) was cast adrift and forced to fend for itself. Totally radicalized by his Chinese experience and convinced that the world communist revolution was lost unless it could be purified and returned to its original Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideals, Guzmán concluded that only a properly directed people's war in Peru could bring a true world communist revolution about.[12]

A sixth element was voluntarism. Even though the so-called objective conditions for the armed struggle did not exist in early 1980, as Peru prepared for the return to democracy with great enthusiasm and popular support, Guzmán concluded that Lenin's voluntarist dictum could be appropriately applied. By launching the people's war at this moment, he believed, its actions would sow disquiet, chaos, and indiscriminately repressive government responses, thereby creating over time the more favorable objective conditions required for continuing and expanding the revolution.[13]

A seventh factor concerned how Shining Path could find the resources necessary to carry out its people's war, since after 1976 the organization no longer had international patrons in its quest for power through revolution. Although the group was formally affiliated with the Revolutionary International Movement (RIM), this relationship was dictated by the ideological imperative to be connected to a worldwide communist movement and involved little, if any, financial support. In the first years, Shining Path secured guns, ammunition, and dynamite through raids on isolated police stations and the hundreds of small mines that dotted the slopes of the

highlands. As the movement gathered strength, its needs increased correspondingly.[14]

By the mid-1980s, it had found a new source of both local support and significant funding in the coca producers and the drug trafficking of the Upper Huallaga Valley in north-central Peru. Although it had to compete there at first with its smaller and less-radical guerrilla rival the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA),[15] Shining Path soon achieved a dominant position in the valley. By the late 1980s, it is estimated, the guerrillas were extracting at least $10 million a year from "taxes" paid by the Colombian operators of small planes that worked out of more than one hundred clandestine airstrips in the Upper Huallaga.[16]

Shining Path was able to set up a finance committee to distribute funds to the organization's central and regional committees to buy weapons, bribe local officials, and pay cadres regular stipends. The guerrillas were also able to enlist the support of many local associations of coca growers by forcing buyers to pay higher prices for their production. So Shining Path, having decided to go it alone, was in no way dependent on always uncertain outside sources of financial and material support or the dictates of others but was able to garner substantial internal resources to finance its operations and to maintain its autonomy.[17]

Factors Related to the Government

Aiding the PCP-SL in its quest, however unintentionally, were the failed efforts of the reformist military government in Peru in the late 1960s and 1970s to effect major change in economic and political organization during its tenure. This reform was based on the principle of integrating large private estates with small peasant parcels to create new wealth through increased production. The model applied, however, was not well suited to the community-based agriculture of most of the highlands, particularly Ayacucho, the center of most PCP-SL activities, where only a very few productive private agricultural properties operated. The reform's implementation actually further degraded the already precarious position of most indigenous peasants, opening up opportunities for proselytizing and support that the radical Maoists could exploit.[18]

A second factor contributing to Shining Path's ability to expand its operations, once it declared the people's war in 1980, was the official response to the early activities of the Maoist guerrillas—the reluctance of the new dem-

ocratic government to recognize the presence of an insurgency on its watch. President Belaúnde (1980–85), who had been ousted by a military coup during his previous term of office in the 1960s, was so fearful of renewed military influence in his second administration that he downplayed the problem for more than two years before committing Peru's armed forces to a military response. Although he did order specialized police forces, the *sinchis*, into Ayacucho in 1981, their extraordinarily bad comportment forced the president to withdraw them within a few months. In addition, throughout his administration, he resisted calls to provide both military and economic support, focusing the government's response almost exclusively on military actions.[19]

The sinchis' activities highlighted a significant third factor that was in play, the long history of misunderstanding and exploitation between the white and mestizo center, based in Lima, and the largely indigenous highland periphery in Peru.[20] This relationship contributed to a racist mindset among police and the military that often produced, once they intervened in the largely indigenous countryside of Ayacucho and its environs, totally inappropriate responses that amounted to state terrorism. Such actions not only served to drive indigenous peasants into the arms of Shining Path but also provided the insurgents with further justification for their armed struggle.[21]

After APRA's historic electoral victory in 1985, President Alan García Pérez (1985–90) initially suggested a shift in counterinsurgency strategy to include economic as well as military initiatives in the highlands. However, his misguided economic policies at the national level produced hyperinflation and a virtual economic implosion over the last half of his administration, not only forcing the abandonment of the highland strategy but also creating a serious erosion in both civil government and military institutional capacity.[22]

One result was a sharp decline in military and police morale, as defense budgets were cut by more than 50 percent in the late 1980s and hyperinflation reduced salaries to less than 10 percent of mid-1980s levels.[23] Exacerbating the problem was the growing number of police and armed forces casualties at the hands of Shining Path—from 31 police officers and 1 soldier in 1982 to 229 police officers and 109 soldiers in 1989, for a total of 1,196 deaths (795 police and 401 military) over the first ten years of the conflict.[24]

These developments provoked hundreds of resignations at both the officer and technical personnel levels across the armed and police services and contributed to a decline in the armed forces' readiness status from 75 percent in 1985 to 30 percent by 1990.[25]

Such corrosive dynamics played out in the field in a loss of discipline, increased corruption, and, all too often, virtually complete operational ineffectiveness. With the U.S. government increasing its counternarcotics assistance to the police in this context of institutional erosion and extremely scarce resources, and as the police force felt it was bearing a disproportionate share of the counterinsurgency burden, tensions between the police and the military grew. They reached a flash point after the army failed in March 1989 to respond to urgent calls for help from a besieged police detachment in the Upper Huallaga town of Uchiza and allowed its officers to be slaughtered by Shining Path guerrillas.[26] Although the García government undertook an organizational overhaul of the armed forces, police, and eight separate intelligence agencies by consolidating and renaming them, the lack of resources, both human and material, ensured that no effective change would be immediately forthcoming.

In summary, the insurgents were able to initiate and expand their people's war through a combination of long preparation, charismatic leadership, a remote base, a radicalized ideology, and voluntarism. They were aided in their efforts by government inaction, a belated response, massive human rights violations, and economic crisis. This combination produced a set of conditions favorable for revolution that had not existed at the outset of the people's war. The continuing ineffectiveness of elected civilian regimes, including misguided economic policies in the latter half of the 1980s that produced hyperinflation, economic crisis, and the virtual implosion of government, enabled the forces of Shining Path to make major advances toward their goal of revolutionary victory.

Why Rebel Failure on the Brink of Success?

This set of considerations raises a second fundamental question. If Shining Path was poised for victory by the early 1990s, why did its revolution not succeed? Within five years, the revolutionaries were a spent force, dead, in jail, or rehabilitated, the remnants scattered and no longer a threat to the state. Part of the explanation has to do with ways in which Shining Path contributed to its own collapse, and part with major shifts in official strategies and policies.

Rebel Mistakes

One of Shining Path's problems came to be overconfidence bordering on hubris. Although the organization's leadership envisioned at the outset of its people's war a long-term revolutionary struggle, its successes against a government almost pathologically unwilling to mount effective responses gave rise to the belief that the regime was about to collapse and that Shining Path was on the brink of victory. Such overconfidence led the leadership to exercise less caution in its security and in tracking the rural support structures that had long provided its core cadre.[27]

Another problem could be characterized as ideological myopia. While Shining Path's radical Maoist ideology had been a potent unifying force for its supporters and helps explain how the group could justify even the most barbaric acts, the ideology simultaneously served to alienate most of the presumed beneficiaries of the revolution. The peasantry, initially attracted by the promise of a change in status, found cadre and local commissar alike so blinded by their convictions that they imposed on the peasantry a revolutionary organization that related to neither its heritage nor its needs, and they compounded the negative effects of their efforts by using terror and intimidation to maintain local "support."[28]

A third problem was the hydrocephalic nature of Shining Path's organization. True, at the group's height, the guerrillas had a well-developed set of national, regional, and local organizations with corresponding central and regional committees to direct and coordinate. Ultimately, however, all power flowed from a single individual, President Gonzalo (Guzmán's nom de guerre). He was the group's founder, ideologist, strategist, and internal contradiction synthesizer, and he explicitly fostered a cult of personality within the membership. All other leaders, from the Central Committee on down, were subordinate. As a result, Shining Path was particularly vulnerable as a guerrilla organization should he be killed or captured.[29]

Fourth was Guzmán's decision to initiate more systematic urban terrorism in the late 1980s, particularly in Lima. Following Lenin, he justified this terrorism as necessary to build support within the urban proletariat. Operations in the capital city sowed havoc and panic but also brought the people's war to the doorsteps of the political elite for the first time, contributing

thereby to the realization at last that the very survival of the nation was at stake. The terrorist actions in Lima strengthened the resolve of the central government to find solutions. They also made the guerrillas more vulnerable to counterintelligence operations, due to the intelligence services' greater familiarity with urban surroundings than with the highlands.[30]

Government Successes

Just as much of the explanation for the ability of Shining Path to advance its revolutionary project can be attributed to government errors during the 1980s, the guerrillas' own mistakes contributed to its failure in the early 1990s. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the Shining Path threat could have been overcome without a number of significant adjustments in the government's approach to counterinsurgency as well. These occurred over a period of several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when it appeared to many that Shining Path was gaining the upper hand in the conflict in a larger socioeconomic context that was rapidly deteriorating as well. Taken separately, it is doubtful that any one of the changes made would have been sufficient; together, however, they combined over time to turn the tide in the government's favor.

A New Approach to Counterinsurgency. One significant change was the top-to-bottom review by the military of its counterinsurgency strategy in 1988 and 1989. The initial result was the compilation of a comprehensive *Countersubversive Manual,* which systematically analyzed the antiguerrilla campaign to that point and developed a new strategy that included the political, economic, and psychosocial aspects of counterinsurgency as well as the military components.[31] This manual served as a guide for the progressive introduction of several major adjustments in the Peruvian armed forces' approach to dealing with the now-palpable threat of Shining Path.

Beginning in 1990, the military began for the first time a "hearts-and-minds" civic action campaign in a number of the urban neighborhoods and communities that had been most susceptible to Shining Path influence, as well as strategically important to the guerrillas in many cases. The initiatives were modest, such as free haircuts and health clinics, whitewashing and reroofing of local schools, trash cleanup campaigns, soup kitchens, and the building of access roads or trails. Very quickly, local indifference, fear, or hostility toward the military turned to support. With carefully coordinated

publicity for these initiatives, the media began to convey a more positive image of the military in newspapers and newsmagazines that reached a wide Peruvian audience, helping change public perceptions as well.[32]

Another change was the attachment of a soldier or two from the community or area to the unit conducting operations in that locality. The individuals involved knew the community, spoke the local language or dialect, and often could help the military unit communicate with the local population and gather much more accurate intelligence on Shining Path sympathizers and operations. Given the physical and human diversity of Peruvian neighborhoods and rural communities, particularly in the highlands, one would have expected such procedures to be a component of military counterinsurgency strategy from the outset.

The military's long reluctance to use personnel who were native to the areas of operations stemmed from a deeply held view in a highly centralized political system that such individuals would be likely to have a greater allegiance to their friends and relatives in the community than to the organization for which they worked. With the looming specter of failure and possible government collapse, however, the military changed its approach. Once again, the result was positive in many instances—better communication with the locals and the collection of intelligence on enemy plans, personnel, and operations that had heretofore not been available.[33]

In the early 1990s, the military also began to be much more sensitive to the negative effects of indiscriminate operations and attacks on local populations. The army initiated training for its operational units so that they carried out missions in neighborhoods or the countryside with fewer human rights violations and fewer misguided attacks on noncombatants. As their counterinsurgency activities became more precisely targeted and less repressive, they began to gain the support of local populations. They also began to demonstrate the contrast between their approach and the increasingly violent and indiscriminate actions of Shining Path in its desperate attempts to retain local control through force and intimidation.[34]

In another major shift in strategy and tactics drawn from the counterinsurgency review of 1988 and 1989, the Fujimori government persuaded congress to pass legislation that enabled the army to begin to formally support the training and arming of local peasant organizations (*rondas campesinas,* or civil defense committees) as a first line of defense against Shining Path attacks. For many decades, when local highland communities

found themselves threatened by cattle rustlers or attempts by neighboring communities to take some of their land by force and occupation, they would organize groups of community members into *rondas* to overcome the threat to their livelihood or well-being.[35]

Shining Path's activities in the 1980s represented to many communities one more threat that had to be resisted. Although many decided to allow the guerrillas' presence and control, thereby becoming communities of acceptance, many others organized rondas to fight them off, becoming communities of resistance.[36] Often, however, their primitive weapons of stones, slingshots, and sharpened sticks were no match for Shining Path's superior arms. Even so, for years the military resisted any initiative to support the rondas in their efforts, out of fear that training and arms could be turned against them. The army also displayed the historic racism so prevalent in Peru, which manifested itself in a lack of confidence in the ability of indigenous populations to use the assistance properly.[37]

Within a very short time after the army began its program of providing basic military training and an average of two or three rifles with a few bullets each for each ronda, ronda numbers and membership mushroomed. By 1993 more than 4,200 rondas had been organized across the highlands, with a membership of almost 236,000.[38] These civil defense committees, as the army called them, became the first line of defense against Shining Path. Examples abound of their ability to fend off guerrilla attacks long enough to enable army units to arrive on the scene and rout the invaders. Assisting the rondas may have been the single most important adjustment in the Peruvian government's counterinsurgency strategy, as it gave some measure of increased capacity for resistance to the local populations most affected by the guerrillas and with the greatest stake in overcoming the threat.[39]

Another significant change in the Peruvian government's approach to the growing threat of Shining Path was the decision in late 1989 by the APRA administration's minister of the interior, Augustín Mantilla, to create a small, autonomous police intelligence unit, the Grupo Especial de Inteligencia (Special Intelligence Group, or GEIN), with the sole mission of tracking the Shining Path leadership. After a shaky beginning, with only five members and outdated equipment, the unit was provided with resources and skilled personnel, increasing to about thirty-five by 1990 and fifty a year later.[40] The group was subject to intense political pressure in the waning weeks of the discredited García government as the APRA leadership looked

for some spectacular event to restore popular support. As a result, even though its intelligence was incomplete, the group felt forced to conduct a raid on a suspected Shining Path safe house in Lima that might have harbored Guzmán, a raid that confirmed his location but missed the leader.

The newly elected government of President Alberto Fujimori (1990–2000) could have been expected to terminate the previous administration's intelligence initiative as part of a complete policy overhaul. However, after Fujimori's July 1990 inauguration, he left GEIN in place. With virtually complete autonomy and with additional resources and personnel, the intelligence group slowly advanced in its ability to identify and follow the guerrilla leadership. Over the course of 1991, GEIN operatives were able to capture Shining Path's master files and round up some second-level leaders, even as the guerrillas were carrying out ever more brazen and violent terrorist acts. The culmination of GEIN's efforts occurred on September 12, 1992, when some thirty-five of its members burst into a safe house in a Lima suburb and captured a startled and bodyguardless Guzmán, along with several other members of the PCP-SL Central Committee.[41]

With this success, soon to be followed by the roundup of several hundred other militants and cadres, the government delivered a mortal psychological and tactical blow to Shining Path. The Fujimori government milked the moment to its full extent by publicly displaying Guzmán to the media in a cage especially constructed for the occasion and then quickly tried him in a military court under new procedures that kept the identities of judges hidden. Predictably, the court sentenced him to life imprisonment.[42]

Although violent incidents declined by less than 10 percent over the six months following Guzmán's capture and then increased by some 15 percent during the first seven months of 1993, these events proved to be the last gasps of a dying movement.[43] By the end of 1994, Shining Path, while still a nuisance in some parts of the country, had ceased to pose a threat to the Peruvian state. Because of the overconcentration of the organization's power in a single individual, Shining Path could not long survive Guzmán's capture. The intelligence unit received the $1 million reward the government had offered for getting Guzmán, and its members were lionized in the press—with good reason.

The Fujimori government also undertook two other important initiatives to assist its efforts to gain the upper hand over Shining Path. One was the establishment of a military and civilian court procedure of "faceless" judges

to try captured guerrillas, to ensure rapid trials and protection from reprisals. The new court procedures occurred shortly after President Fujimori's unexpected suspension of constitutional guarantees in an April 1992 *autogolpe* (self-coup). One of the major problems governments had had to that point was the long delay in bringing prisoners accused of subversion to court, with time in jail awaiting trial averaging more than seven years. Another was the systematic intimidation and even assassination of judges assigned to oversee the trials, which had a chilling effect on their willingness to convict and tended to cause them to find legal excuses to release convicted terrorists from prison.[44]

The initiative was controversial from the outset because of the courts' short-circuiting of due process (it was subsequently determined that several hundred convictions had been secured without legal justification). In fact, in 1999 the Inter-American Human Rights Court (IAHRC), of which Peru was a signatory, declared the faceless-judge procedure to be an unconstitutional violation of due process. Although the Fujimori government rejected the IAHRC decision, its democratically elected successor accepted it and has set up new trials for those convicted under the previous arrangement. The effect at the time, however, was to allow the government to quickly overcome the backlog of pending cases as well as to quickly process new ones, thereby increasing a renewed sense of government effectiveness among the public as well as making the public feel more secure.

The other important initiative of the Peruvian government was the implementation in early 1993 of a "repentance law," in effect until November 1994. It was designed to enable Shining Path cadres and sympathizers to turn themselves in with their weapons or information in exchange for support, retraining, and progressive reintegration into society. During the period the law was in effect, more than five thousand individuals availed themselves of this opportunity, although most were low-level supporters and sympathizers rather than regional or national leaders. Even so, the government gained additional intelligence in the process and offered an alternative to those who had chosen to support Shining Path. In the context of the capture of Guzmán and the clear shift in advantage to the government, the timing of the repentance law's implementation was ideal, as it came when the incentive for those who had been involved with the guerrillas to turn themselves in had increased markedly.[45]

A final government initiative, not only a component of the new approach to counterinsurgency but also a response to the economic crisis that had gutted the traditional government bureaucracy and left millions of Peruvians in desperate poverty, was the creation of a new set of small government organizations to focus on small development programs in areas of extreme poverty, mostly rural. Many of these areas were also centers of Shining Path activity.[46]

The new agencies were small (with about 300 employees each nationwide), and the employees were highly trained specialists, often engineers, who were recruited on merit criteria, paid high salaries, and given significant regional autonomy. The agencies focused on a set of small development programs that would have significant impact at the local level, among them irrigation, potable water, reforestation and soil conservation, electrification, school building, and trail or road access programs.[47]

Most projects cost $2,000 or less, with labor provided by the communities themselves and technical oversight by the agencies. In many cases, the requirement for beginning a program was for the community to decide what it most needed and to elect a small committee with responsibility for overseeing the project. Over the five years between 1993 and 1998, the agencies expended more than $1 billion on an array of programs and succeeded in reducing extreme poverty by one-half (from 31 percent to 15 percent). In addition to reducing extreme poverty in districts that had in many cases been affected by political violence, the programs also demonstrated to local citizens that the government cared about them and was able to extend its reach once again to even the most isolated parts of Peru. They also fostered new local organizations that helped re-create a measure of institutional capacity at the grass roots within civil society.[48]

Economic Recovery. Peru's economy was in a most precarious state when President Fujimori took office in July 1990. Hyperinflation was out of control at a 7,600 percent annual rate. The country had completely lost access to international credit because the previous government failed to pay Peru's foreign debt obligations for almost three years. Unemployment hovered at close to 30 percent. The GDP, down more than 20 percent during the last two years of the García government, was in free fall. Without immediate and drastic measures to turn the national economy around, it is quite unlikely that counterinsurgency initiatives alone could have stemmed the growing threat posed by Shining Path.[49]

The new president, having been briefed after his election on the seriousness of the economic situation by advisers in Peru, Washington, and New York, turned his back on his campaign promises not to take economic measures that would be drastic or pose short-term hardship. Almost immediately after his inauguration, President Fujimori instituted a drastic economic shock program to break the inflationary cycle by ending government subsidies and the indiscriminate printing of currency, among other harsh measures.

Peru also began within a few weeks to reinstate regular payments on its $15 billion foreign debt and soon created a new domestic tax collection agency to boost government tax revenues, which had fallen to 4 percent of GDP. The government also reduced tariffs on exports and imports to foster production and reduce inflation and set up procedures for the privatization of state-owned enterprises and the opening up of the national stock market to generate direct and portfolio foreign investment. To reduce an official bureaucracy bloated by 40 percent during the APRA government, mostly through political patronage, the government provided significant but one-time financial incentives for state employees to retire.

The draconian measures instituted during Fujimori's first months in office reversed the downward economic spiral within a year. Inflation was cut in half, domestic tax revenues increased, and the international economic community began to look again at restoring credit to Peru. By the second year, the cycle of hyperinflation had been broken at last, government revenues and expenditures were almost in balance, and Peru was able to reinsert itself into the international economic system. By 1993 inflation had been reduced to 65 percent, employment had increased, new foreign investment had begun, and positive economic growth had been recorded for the first time in almost a decade. By 1994 Peru had the highest economic growth rate in Latin America, with inflation down to 10 percent.

President Fujimori also made full use of his office as a bully pulpit to help restore public confidence, with a frenetic schedule that took him all over Peru, particularly to the areas most affected by the insurgency and historically least favored by the central government. In spite of the multiple problems the country was facing and the strong medicine the government was administering to try to overcome them, the president's public approval ratings remained consistently high. The general perception was that at last Peru had a head of state who was taking action rather than playing politics and was thinking about the public interest rather than personal gain.[50]

However dramatic the turnaround during these first years of the Fujimori administration, the people's war had exacted a high cost for the country and its people. Over the fifteen-year trajectory of Shining Path's revolutionary terrorism and the government's efforts to combat it, close to one million Peruvians, mostly humble highland peasants, were displaced from their homes and became internal refugees. Roughly an equal number emigrated, often the more skilled and educated, out of fear for their safety and despair of ever finding secure opportunities in their homeland. The dollar estimates of the total damage caused by Shining Path operations between 1980 and 1995 were more than $15 billion to infrastructure and $10 billion in lost production, or about half of Peru's 1990 GDP. The official estimate of about thirty-five thousand deaths and disappearances has recently been revised in a careful study by Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, particularly in rural areas most affected by the insurgency, which concludes that the correct number is about sixty-nine thousand, twice the earlier figure.[51]

Sadly, democracy was also a casualty, with President Fujimori's self-coup in 1992 suspending congress and the judiciary. While pressured to restore democratic forms a year later by the Organization of American States (OAS), following his 1995 reelection, Fujimori and his advisers progressively constrained democratic procedures with a set of provisions of dubious legality. Although Fujimori was forced from office in a spectacular set of developments in 2000, shortly after his fraudulent reelection, the path to democratic reconstruction has been a difficult one.[52]

At this moment, President Alejandro Toledo (2001–06), the hero of the resistance to Fujimori, has lost most of his popular support through his vacillation and indecisiveness. Shining Path is showing new signs of life, with new recruitment efforts in universities and peasant communities, incidents of political violence, and exploitation of a more transparent and human rights–respecting government to renew contacts from prisons and seek new trials. In Ayacucho, for example, Shining Path members have established a working relationship with local organizations such as the Frente de Defensa de Ayacucho (Ayacucho Defense Front) and the Federación de Cocaleros del Apurímac (Apurimac Valley Coca Growers Federation). A violent attack on the Ayacucho city hall, local businesses, and the new Regional Government Office on July 1, 2004, has been blamed on Shining Path instigators.[53] Even so, Shining Path no longer represents a threat to the Peruvian

state or to most of the population. Whatever the continuing difficulties of Peru's democracy, and they are many, it is unlikely that Shining Path will be in any position to exploit them for the foreseeable future.

Conclusions

Peru was eventually able to overcome the threat posed by the radical Maoist Shining Path, but at great human and institutional cost. Looking back, had the government taken the threat seriously during 1980–81, the first year of the group's self-declared people's war, it is likely it would have nipped the insurgency in the bud.[54] But the government's initial response was to withdraw from the more isolated police posts, which opened up additional space for Shining Path to build popular support groups in the communities and to strengthen its military capacity. When the government finally did begin to take the guerrillas seriously, it responded almost exclusively with military force, often indiscriminate. Field commanders who requested an economic development component to support their military activities were ignored or dismissed.

Although the APRA government that came to power in the 1985 elections made some initial gestures to build alliances in the highlands, it soon succumbed to military pressures to pursue the same repressive strategy followed by its predecessor. Its economic policies, furthermore, produced hyperinflation, virtual fiscal bankruptcy of the bureaucracy, and the almost total loss of vital international financial and investment support. By the end of the 1980s, then, Peru faced not only generalized political violence but also its most serious economic crisis in more than one hundred years.

It was only when the government found itself against the wall that it took the insurgency problem seriously enough to review its approach and to make a number of changes between 1988 and 1992 that significantly increased its ability to deal more effectively with Shining Path's advances. The most important steps were the creation of a specialized police intelligence unit to track the insurgent leadership, the complete overhaul of the military's counterinsurgency strategy, the implementation of approaches designed to garner local support, and the decision to train and arm community civil defense committees, or rondas. Once these measures had enabled the government to regain the initiative, the repentance law that

offered guerrilla sympathizers and militants rehabilitation, retraining, and reinsertion into society became a critical instrument of pacification.

Along with such specific and significant adjustments in the government's approach to counterinsurgency, the Fujimori administration established a set of new official agencies to carry out a range of small development programs in the poorest districts of Peru, often where Shining Path had a significant presence. These programs provided significant benefits in a short period of time to three to five million of the country's neediest citizens while simultaneously reestablishing the government's presence and legitimacy in the periphery. With parallel efforts to repair the severely damaged national economy, efforts that ended inflation, generated economic growth, restored the fiscal capacity of the government, and reinserted Peru into the international economy within two to four years, the Fujimori administration was able to overcome the Shining Path threat.

Unlike the government, the insurgents did not learn or adapt. From the outset, Shining Path pursued the single objective of overthrowing the regime through the people's war. Negotiation was never an option. Convinced of the ideological correctness of their approach, which included the complete reorganization of civil society along Maoist lines, Shining Path leaders tried to impose a model in their areas of operation that in no way reflected the traditions, patterns, and needs of those they said were to be the beneficiaries of their revolution. Their ideological fervor and successes against the government for a number of years blinded them to the possibility that they could be defeated. While they often learned from failures in field operations and adjusted their military strategy accordingly, they did not do so in their relations with the civilian populations under their influence. But their greatest failure was to underestimate the capacity of government to learn from its own mistakes, which led to the single most important turning point in the insurgency, the capture of President Gonzalo.

External actors, particularly the U.S. government, became sufficiently concerned about Shining Path's advances against the beleaguered Peruvian democracy to provide significant military and intelligence support in 1991 and 1992. With Fujimori's self-coup in April 1992, however, military assistance and training were immediately suspended. However, the U.S. government did not end its specialized intelligence support at this time; it is believed that such support was critical in locating the safe house occupied by Guzmán and in enabling the Peruvian police intelligence unit to conduct

its successful raid and capture Shining Path's leader.[55] The conclusion Peruvian authorities had reached—that the snaring of the head of the insurgent organization would be a devastating psychological and organizational blow—turned out to be correct. In an organization where a single individual held most of the power, removing that person was the group's death knell.

Beyond the physical and human destruction wrought by the insurgency and the government's response, another casualty was Peru's democracy. Although President Fujimori defended his self-coup as necessary to prevail against Shining Path, most observers conclude that success occurred *in spite* of the suspension of congress, the constitution, and the judiciary, not because of it. The military, frustrated by failures of the elected governments of the 1980s to stem the insurgency or to govern effectively, put together amid the chaos of the last months of the García government a plan for gaining greater control over the process, the so-called Libro Verde, or Green Book. This plan envisioned much stronger executive control, a comprehensive counterinsurgency strategy as articulated in the *Countersubversive Manual*, and the implementation of free-market principles to restore the economy.[56]

With the election of Alberto Fujimori to the presidency in 1990, the military saw an opportunity to accomplish the Libro Verde objectives through civilian rule. Since Fujimori did not have a strong party apparatus to support him, the military became his major pillar of institutional support and backed his decision to suspend constitutional government in April 1992. However, through patronage and careful cultivation of some top military officials, Fujimori and his close advisers, particularly Vlademiro Montesinos, and not the military itself became the controlling force in subsequent policy initiatives.

While it is not clear that Fujimori planned a coup from the outset of his administration, he certainly had no patience for the give-and-take of democratic politics with the opposition majority in congress. On balance, the formal breakdown of democracy in Peru in 1992 can be attributed primarily to the corrosive forces of the people's war and counterinsurgency that had been at work for more than a decade, along with the multiple errors of elected civilian authority in other areas of governance, most particularly economic management.

Shining Path initiated its people's war at what appeared to be a most inopportune moment, on the eve of the most democratic elections in Peru's

history. However, the guerrilla organization's visionary leadership, ideological conviction, and voluntarist strategy combined to enable it to advance in the remote countryside where the central government's control was tenuous at best. The government withdrawal from less defensible positions in the countryside created a political vacuum that Shining Path quickly filled. Whether by accident or design, Guzmán and his followers found that the central government lacked both the capacity and the commitment to respond effectively and that, when under growing pressure to do something, the government reacted with the repressive and insensitive force that Shining Path's radical Maoist ideology attributed to officialdom. This process served to create a cycle of negative causation that progressively created the conditions of a weakened and vulnerable state in a climate of increasingly generalized political violence. With the multiple errors of elected government in other arenas as well, especially in economic policy, the state's capacity for effective governance was progressively eroded.

Alberto Fujimori's election—the choice of someone who was not a career politician, who might lead the country out of the morass in which it found itself—was the public's act of electoral desperation. By its vote, the public in effect gave Fujimori the leeway to do whatever he thought necessary to overcome the profound and multifaceted malaise of the moment. Such popular desperation helps explain both public support for the harsh economic measures that were most painful in the short term and the public's willingness to accept the autogolpe as a possible solution to the Shining Path threat, especially in the context of Peruvian judges' release in early 1992 of more than 200 convicted guerrilla cadres "for good behavior."

Fujimori, without a party and with only the military to provide institutional support for his government, could not have acted without the armed forces' blessing. But the overriding concern at the moment of the self-coup was how to counter the continued advance of Shining Path within a context of severely weakened civilian institutions, intimidated officials, and discredited politicians. So on balance, whatever Fujimori's antidemocratic tendencies, the primary force that motivated and justified the autogolpe can be attributed to public support as well as official perception of the imminent threat of a Shining Path victory in a larger context of frustration over Peruvian democracy's multiple missteps and progressive delegitimization as a result.

As subsequent events were to demonstrate, even after the threat of Shining Path had passed, the Fujimori government continued to manipulate the

system to stifle dissent and to ensure that it would continue to run the country. So instead of receiving acclaim for the success of the counterinsurgency effort and for the significant improvement in the economic and personal security of much of the citizenry, the former president continues to be pilloried for the abuses of power that he and his closest advisers committed while in office.

Shining Path, while still a minor presence in a few isolated parts of the country, has divided into radical and moderate factions. Guzmán, with a new trial that began in late 2005, has called for the end of the armed struggle for the nonce, so the once-feared insurgent organization no longer represents a threat to the Peruvian state, or to most of the population. Democracy has been reestablished, although it is still fraught with problems and challenges. While Peru still faces many difficulties, terrorism in the name of Mao is no longer one of them. Nevertheless, the continuing fragility of democratic process and procedures, the erosion of confidence by most Peruvians in their government, and the inability of the Toledo administration to channel constructively almost constant local and regional protest movements provide a context within which another insurgency, perhaps even one led by Shining Path, could emerge.

Notes

1. Carol Graham, *Peru's APRA: Parties, Politics, and the Elusive Quest for Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 23–35.

2. Ibid., 37–39.

3. Philip Mauceri, *State under Siege: Development and Policy Making in Peru* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996), 21–25.

4. Gustavo Gorriti Ellenbogen, *Sendero: La historia de la guerra milenaria en el Perú* (Lima: Editorial Apoyo, 1990).

5. David Scott Palmer, "Rebellion in Rural Peru: The Origins and Evolution of Sendero Luminoso," *Comparative Politics* 18, no. 2 (January 1986): 128–29.

6. Cynthia McClintock, "Theories of Revolution and the Case of Peru," in *Shining Path of Peru,* ed. David Scott Palmer, 2nd edition (New York: St. Martin's, 1994), 244–45.

7. David Scott Palmer, "Peru's Persistent Problems," *Current History* 89, no. 543 (January 1990): 6–7. The casualty figures cited here have been revised sharply upward by Peru's Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) in its 2003 report, noted below in note 51.

8. Carlos Iván Degregori, *Ayacucho 1969–1979: El surgimiento de Sendero Luminoso* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1990).

9. Fernando Romero Pintado, "New Design for an Old University: San Cristóbal de Huamanga," *Américas* (December 1961).

10. Gustavo Gorriti, "Shining Path's Stalin and Trotsky," in *Shining Path of Peru,* ed. Palmer, 167–77.

11. Degregori, *Ayacucho 1969–1979,* 41–47.

12. Gorriti Ellenbogen, *Sendero,* 51–54.

13. Peter Flindell Klarén, *Peru: Society and Nationhood in the Andes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 369–70.

14. Simon Strong, *Sendero Luminoso: El movimiento subversivo más letal del mundo* (Lima: Peru Reporting, 1992), 106.

15. For a comprehensive overview of the MRTA, see Gordon H. McCormick, *Sharp Dressed Men: Peru's Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993). It should be noted, however, that the MRTA was responsible for only a small proportion of incidents of political violence (less than 3 percent) and even fewer of the deaths attributed to guerrilla activity in Peru through the early 1990s (less than 1 percent).

16. José E. Gonzales, "Guerrillas and Coca in the Upper Huallaga Valley," in *Shining Path of Peru,* ed. Palmer, 123–44.

17. Gabriela Tarazona Sevillano, *Sendero Luminoso and the Threat of Narcoterrorism,* Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington Papers, 144 (New York: Praeger, 1990).

18. David Scott Palmer, *Revolution from Above: Military Government and Popular Participation in Peru, 1968–1972* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Latin American Studies Program, 1973), 230–37.

19. Roberto C. Noel Moral, *Ayacucho: Testimonio de un soldado* (Lima: Publinor, 1989).

20. Julio Cotler, "La mecánica de la dominación interna y del cambio social en el Perú," *Peru Problema,* ed. José Matos Mar and others (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1969), 145–88.

21. Carlos Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso: Dos estratégias y un final* (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1997), 27–43.

22. Philip Mauceri, "Military Politics and Counter-insurgency in Peru," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 33, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 100.

23. David Scott Palmer, "National Security," in *Peru: A Country Study*, ed. Rex A. Hudson, Area Handbook Series, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1993), 289, 292.

24. David Scott Palmer, "The Revolutionary Terrorism of Peru's Shining Path," in *Terrorism in Context*, ed. Martha Crenshaw (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 271, table 7.1.

25. Palmer, "National Security," 292.

26. Ibid., 300.

27. Carlos Iván Degregori, "After the Fall of Abimael Guzmán: The Limits of Sendero Luminoso," in *The Peruvian Labyrinth: Polity, Society, Economy*, ed. Maxwell A. Cameron and Philip Mauceri (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 179–91.

28. Carlos Iván Degregori, "Harvesting Storms: Peasant Rondas and the Defeat of Sendero Luminoso in Ayacucho," in *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980–1995*, ed. Steve J. Stern (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 131–40; Billy Jean Isbell, "Shining Path and Peasant Responses in Rural Ayacucho," in *Shining Path of Peru*, ed. Palmer, 77–100; Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 103–4.

29. See the revealing interview given by Guzmán to Luis Borje Arce and Janet Talavera Sánchez in *El Diario*, a sympathetic Lima weekly, which they titled "La entrevista del siglo: El Presidente Gonzalo rompe el silencio." See *El Diario*, July 24, 1988, 2–48. Also, regarding the organizational structure and its vulnerabilities, see Benedicto Jiménez Bacca, *Inicio, desarrollo, y ocaso del terrorismo en el Perú* (Lima: SANKI, 2000), vol. 1.

30. Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 133–52.

31. Ibid., 43–55.

32. Orin Starn, "Sendero, soldados y ronderos en el Mantaro," *Quehacer* 74 (November–December 1991): 64–65; and Lewis Taylor, "La estratégia contrainsurgente: El PCP-SL y la guerra civil en el Perú, 1980–1996," *Debate Agrario* 26 (July 1997): 105–6.

33. David Scott Palmer, interviews with military personnel in Ayacucho, July–August 1998.

34. Orin Starn, "Sendero, soldados, y ronderos," 64; and Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 47–48.

35. Orin Starn, ed., *Hablan los ronderos: La búsqueda por la paz en los Andes*, Documento de Trabajo no. 45 (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1993), 11–28.

36. Ponciano del Pino, "Family, Culture, and 'Revolution': Everyday Life with Sendero Luminoso," in *Shining and Other Paths*, ed. Stern, 161–62.

37. José Coronel, "Violencia política y respuestas campesinas en Huanta," in *Las rondas campesinas y la derrota de Sendero Luminoso*, ed. Carlos Iván Degregori and others (Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 1996), 48–56.

38. Ponciano del Pino, "Tiempos de guerra y de dioses: Ronderos, evangélicos y senderistas en el valle del río Apurímac," in *Las rondas campesinas*, ed. Degregori and others, 181.

39. Orin Starn, "Villagers at Arms: War and Counterrevolution in the Central-South Andes," in *Shining and Other Paths*, ed. Stern, 232.

40. Gustavo Gorriti, "El día que cayó Sendero Luminoso," *Selecciones de Reader's Digest*, December 1996, 121, 123, 127.

41. Ibid.,136–42; and Benedicto Jiménez Bacca, *Inicio, desarrollo y ocaso del terrorismo en el Perú*, vol. 2, 740–56.

42. Sally Bowen, *The Fujimori File: Peru and Its President, 1990–2000* (Lima: Peru Monitor, 2000), 137–43.

43. Palmer, "Revolutionary Terrorism of Peru's Shining Path," 284, 304.

44. Comisión de Juristas Internacionales, *Informe sobre la administración de justicia en el Perú*, November 30, 1993 (typescript; International Commission of Jurists, Washington, DC, 1993).

45. Tapia, *Las Fuerzas Armadas y Sendero Luminoso*, 80–81; Bowen, *Fujimori File*, 55–57; and del Pino, "Family, Culture, and 'Revolution,'" 171, 177.

46. David Scott Palmer, "Soluciones ciudadanas y crisis política: El caso de Ayacucho," in *El juego politico: Fujimori, la oposición y las reglas*, ed. Fernando Tuesta Soldevilla (Lima: Fundación Fredrich Ebert, 1999), 285–90.

47. David Scott Palmer, "FONCODES y su impacto en la pacificación en el Perú: Observaciones generales y el caso de Ayacucho," in Fondo Nacional de Compensación y Desarrollo Nacional (FONCODES), *Concertando para el desarrollo: Lecciones aprendidas del FONCODES en sus estratégias de intervención* (Lima: Gráfica Medelius, 2001), 147–77.

48. David Scott Palmer, "Citizen Responses to Conflict and Political Crisis in Peru: Informal Politics in Ayacucho," in *What Justice? Whose Justice? Fighting for Fairness in Latin America*, ed. Susan Eva Eckstein and Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 233–54.

49. Much of the information derived for the economic policies of the Fujimori government is from Javier Iguíñiz, "La estrategia económica del gobierno de Fujimori: Una visión global," in *El Perú de Fujimori*, ed. John Crabtree and Jim Thomas (Lima: Universidad del Pacífico y el Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, 2000), 15–43.

50. John Crabtree, "Neopopulismo y el fenómeno Fujimori," in *El Perú de Fujimori*, ed. Crabtree and Thomas, 45–71.

51. Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación Perú, *Informe Final,* vol. 1, *Primera parte: El proceso, los hechos, las víctimas* (Lima: Navarrete, 2003), 169. But also see other sections of this volume for basic information and analysis of Peru's political violence.

52. Among others, Carmen Rosa Balbi and David Scott Palmer, "'Reinventing' Democracy in Peru," *Current History* 100, no. 643 (February 2001): 65–72.

53. "Estallido Vandálico," *Caretas* no. 1831, July 8, 2004, 10–15.

54. There are precedents. In 1959 the military responded quickly to a Trotskyite-organized rebellion in La Convención Valley of Cuzco, and again in 1965 to a Castro-inspired attempt to establish *focos* (small local centers of revolutionary instigators) in three isolated locations in the central Andean highlands. For La Convención, see Wesley W. Craig, Jr., "Peru: The Peasant Movement of La Convención," in *Latin American Peasant Movements,* ed. Henry A. Landsberger (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969), 274–96. For the Andean highlands, see Luis de la Puente Uceda, "The Peruvian Revolution: Concepts and Perspectives," *Monthly Review* 17, November 1965, 12–28. The failure of the Peruvian government to respond quickly to this new rural insurgency is puzzling, given its earlier successes. The explanation rests in part on President Belaúnde's aversion to deploying the armed forces again, as he had in 1965, because he feared a new cycle of military assertiveness and the possibility of another coup against him, as had occurred in 1968. In addition, the military itself, weakened as an institution by twelve years in power, was reluctant to get involved.

55. For this and other information on the U.S. role, see Cynthia McClintock and Fabian Vallas, *The United States and Peru: Cooperation at a Cost* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 69–73. See also Cynthia McClintock, *Revolutionary Movements in Latin America: El Salvador's FMLN and Peru's Shining Path* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 145, 238, and passim. While not the focus of this study, the United States also contributed to the Peruvian military's preparations to end the dramatic December 1995 takeover of the Japanese ambassador's residence by the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. When extensive and drawn-out negotiations faltered, in mid-April 1996, Peru's counterterrorism unit mounted a spectacular and successful operation. It freed forty-two hostages, killed all fourteen MRTA guerrillas, and demonstrated the effectiveness of the counterterrorism capacity originally developed to deal with the Shining Path threat.

56. Enrique Obando, "Fujimori y las Fuerzas Armadas," in *El Perú de Fujimori,* ed. Crabtree and Thomas, 361–62.

8

Colombia and the FARC

Failed Attempts to Stop Violence and Terrorism in a Weak State

Peter Waldmann

Colombia is a paradoxical case, probably as hard to understand for its own citizens as for foreigners. Although a country with an almost uninterrupted democratic tradition of more than 150 years, it has also been marked by periodic outbursts of violence, with hundreds of thousands of deaths. The following chapter has three purposes. First, I want to show that in cases such as Colombia, where violence has been increasing over decades, there is no "solution" in sight, at least not in the short run. This situation has much to do with the nature of the conflict in the country. Second, although the violent nonstate actors are often classified as terrorist in the political discussion, *terrorism,* in the narrow sense of the term, is only of limited significance in Colombia. The dynamics of violence are rather pushed forward by a war system that has pervaded all segments of society and penetrated all regions of the country. The third point refers to democracy. The Colombian case demonstrates that democracy not only can constitute an obstacle to effectively combating terrorism and political violence but can even, under certain circumstances, help to fuel both.

This paper is divided into two parts. The first is an introduction to the Colombian conflict setting, beginning with a brief overview of the