

## Andean Report by Sara Madueño

### Dialogue with terrorists on agenda

*Peru's narco-terrorists hope to emulate their Colombian colleagues in blackmailing the country into "dialogue."*

Last month's orchestrated "kidnaping" of Peruvian Congressman Gerardo López by the narco-terrorist Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), has placed the issue of negotiating with subversives high on the country's political agenda, through the same *modus operandi* employed in Colombia to admit narcoterrorists in that country into the political arena.

López, a former militant of the Marxist-Leninist Socialist Revolutionary Party (PSR-ML) which was once a part of the MRTA, is today the head of ruling party Cambio 90's congressional bloc. López's suspected cooperation in the staged abduction took place Sept. 23, likely at the behest of one of his former MRTA comrades. Despite the widespread public belief that the kidnaping was a hoax, López's "liberation" was nonetheless carried out on Sept. 30 amid great media fanfare, thanks to a prior arrangement with Channel 5 television, owned by another former MRTA kidnap "victim," Genaro Delgado Parker.

On the night of his release, López told the nation—courtesy of Channel 5—that he was ready to "serve as a liaison between the MRTA and the government . . . since the MRTA is ready to lay down its weapons." The next day, the daily *Expreso*, owned by Manuel Ulloa, revealed the crux of López's chat with MRTA chieftain Victor Polay Campos, who reportedly stated that "the MRTA wants a process like that which occurred in Colombia with M-19 leader Carlos Pizarro." Deputy López has since undertaken to campaign, together

with Peru's second Vice President Carlos García García—former president of the Peruvian Evangelical Church—in favor of "a national consensus for dialogue with the rebels."

Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori has so far responded to the López proposal with a strong "no." "How can one dialogue with an insurgent group which, through violence, assassination, and confrontation with our forces of order, are trying to shatter democratic stability and a state of law?" the President said Oct. 4. "Definitely, under these conditions, there cannot and should not be any kind of dialogue. Pacification cannot mean dialogue for dialogue's sake." Fujimori added, alluding to both López and García, that "a democratic government has no need of hanging rope bridges in order to dialogue." On Oct. 6, Peru's Defense Minister Gen. Jorge Torres Aciego stated his firm opposition to any dialogue with the terrorists.

The MRTA immediately moved to implement Phase 2 of its strategy. In the pages of *Cambio* magazine (no connection to Cambio-90), the MRTA denounced the Fujimori government for its "imposition of shock economics against the people," and declared that its dialogue would be solely with "the people." The MRTA presented what it called its "Plan of National Emergency," striking for its absolute silence on the question of the drug trade. "To this dialogue," insists MRTA, "we call all national patriotic sectors. The Catholic and Evangelical churches, the popular organizations, the United Left, APRA youth and rank and file, the patriotic sectors of

the Armed Forces and police, the small and medium-sized businessmen." In fact, everyone but Fujimori's government.

The MRTA's strategy is transparent enough; namely, to polarize the nation around the dialogue issue, and use that artificial polarization to absorb the widespread and growing resistance inside Peru to shock economic policies dictated by the International Monetary Fund. Although the Fujimori government and Armed Forces have taken a clear stance in rejecting negotiations with narco-terrorism, the issue of dialogue has nonetheless made it onto the national agenda, and many prominent figures are now playing the MRTA's game.

Immediately following the López "kidnaping," the president of the Peruvian Bishops' Conference, Ricardo Durand Florez, rushed to offer himself as an intermediary in dialogue between the MRTA and the government. "For a while now we have been coming out in favor of dialogue of the subversive movements with the government," he said. Similarly, the dean of the Colegio de la Inmaculada, Jesuit Father Felipe MacGregor, enthusiastically urged that "we should all desire as soon as possible to sit down not only with the MRTA but with any other rebel group. . . . Something similar occurred in Colombia," he pointed out.

Among industrialist layers, similar opinions could be heard. Raymundo Duarte, former president of the National Society of Industries, expressed his support for dialogue, saying, "If they ask us businessmen to participate, I believe that 90% of us are prepared to do so." The leftist secretary general of the National Workers Confederation of Peru (CGTP), Valentín Pacho, received deputy López with open arms, and applauded the idea of dialogue.