

Andean Report by Manuel Hidalgo

Shining Path offensive builds

While Peru's Armed Forces are being dismantled, terrorism can be the pretext for foreign intervention.

While the U.S. Congress debates what to do if Shining Path takes power in Peru, the narco-terrorists have launched a new wave of violence in the country. During the week of March 16, in a series of assaults and "popular trials" held around the country, they murdered 36 people. The group is also advancing toward its goal of taking over the "poverty belts" and communities surrounding Lima as "bases of support" for an eventual takeover of the capital.

The narco-terrorists have already murdered more than 100 community leaders, such as María Elena Moyano, vice mayor of Lima's largest slum, Villa El Salvador. As the March 23 *Caretas* magazine reported, they have taken over seven of Lima's poorest neighborhoods—or "red zones"—and have begun to infiltrate another 21, known as "pink zones." But Interior Minister Gen. Juan Briones has informed local leaders who oppose Shining Path that the state cannot protect them. He recently recommended that they "organize a security system similar to those in the private sector."

Shining Path, meanwhile continues to organize unimpeded. Weeks ago, its well-organized propaganda machine, run from Brussels by Luis Arce Borja, stepped up its campaign to present the group as "romantic revolutionaries struggling against a corrupt state," and to portray the Armed Forces as criminal violators of human rights. Hardly accidentally, at the same time, Amnesty International also geared up its worldwide campaign against Peru, which it character-

izes as "the world's worst violator of human rights." The Foreign Ministry has given instructions to its embassies in both Europe and the United States to counter Shining Path's propaganda. Augusto Blacker Miller told the Congress in March that the practice of granting "political asylum" to terrorists, typical of Sweden's social democratic government, for example, is an affront to Peru.

Domestically, however, the Fujimori government has limited itself to offering rewards for the capture of subversive leaders, rather than devising an effective anti-subversive strategy. Moreover, local press recently reported that many terrorists are being released from jail due to "lack of evidence" or, worse, "good behavior." In the Congress, the left, the social democrats of the APRA party, and the liberals have banded together to tie the Armed Forces' hands, thus sabotaging any serious anti-subversive strategy.

When President Alberto Fujimori sent a package of anti-subversive decrees to the Congress, limiting the Armed Forces' institutional autonomy but granting them greater leeway in fighting subversion, Congress annulled the latter decrees but approved establishing civilian control over the Armed Forces. Just a few days after Congress denied the military the right to enter state university campuses, which have been infiltrated by terrorists, Shining Path murdered three soldiers who were standing guard outside the entrance to Lima's Engineering University.

During his recent trip to Japan, Fujimori announced that Shining Path would be defeated before 1995. Few believe him, however. Commenting on the President's remarks, the former archbishop of Lima, Cardinal Juan Landazuri, said in an interview with *La República* published March 15, "I think this is excessively optimistic. . . . We all wish subversion to be defeated as soon as possible but . . . we have to be realistic and see what's happening around us." "It's very serious to say that we're losing the war," the cardinal continued, "but there are actions which cause us to see that terrorism is ever more present. We used to hear that Shining Path was in the mountains or in the jungle. Now we see it here in the capital." The cardinal explained that subversion is taking advantage of the social crisis "especially when it sees that there is no coherent command which is leading the fight against subversion."

The liberal press, meanwhile, is peddling the fantasy that "the United States will not permit a victory by Shining Path"—even if it's at the cost of Peru's sovereignty. "To put it briefly and bluntly, neither our neighbors nor the United States would tolerate a Shining Path victory in Peru," said Fernando Rospligiosi in an article in the March 23 *Caretas*. "Countries like Brazil, and obviously the United States, have the capability and the possibility of intervening in the event the situation deteriorates." Ominously, on March 25, *Expreso* published an unconfirmed report that the Bush administration will soon replace U.S. Ambassador Anthony Quainton with Alvin Adams. Adams, now the ambassador in Haiti, was one of the most vociferous advocates of an multinational military intervention into Haiti following the overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in September 1991.