

## Death cultists with backing from abroad

by Mary Goldstein

The bodies of fifteen children were found in August 1984, their throats slit by Shining Path murderers. The mother of a mayor who refused to resign his position was tied to a chair and burned alive. Government-run experimental farms have been razed and livestock butchered as part of the terrorists' assaults against "symbols of the bourgeois state." The group carried out thousands of bombings, assassinations, and massacres over 1983 alone—nearly 300 in the capital city of Lima. Its professional-level coordination and skill have allowed it to carry out major simultaneous assaults on the power grids of Lima and other cities.

Shining Path identifies itself as a radical Maoist grouping, following the tenets of Mao Tse-Tung's Chinese Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four. Its adherents are followers of Kampuchean radical Maoist Pol Pot, the Chinese-run fanatic whose regime, including Sorbonne-educated President Qhieu Samphan, exterminated half the population of Kampuchean in order to wipe out all traces of Western culture, including education, hospitals, teachers, and cities.

The ideology of Shining Path is Mother Earth cultism, based on the alleged superiority of the "indigenous" cultures, at one with nature and naturally "communistic." The magical death cult of the Wari culture, which preceded the Inca civilization in Peru, is part of the belief structure of Shining Path. The Wari lunar calendar, as well as the coca growing season, is used by the terrorist group for planning its guerrilla actions.

While Shining Path's range of actions has spread rapidly to include most of Peru, its base of operations remains the desolate, geographically isolated and difficult terrain of the Andean highlands in the Department of Ayacucho. The group has demonstrated an ability to move quickly and clandestinely around the rugged country—a fact which supports the belief that Shining Path has at its disposal the logistical aid of Peru's narcotics traffickers.

Operations are now spreading abroad, and new Shining Path groupings have recently formed in Colombia and Bolivia. Argentine sources report Shining Path infiltration in the north of that country. Death threats, in the name of Shining Path, were issued in August against three Argentine parliamentarians, supporters of the Argentine-Peruvian nuclear program.

Peruvian Interior Minister Luis Percovich announced on Aug. 30 that "in Spain, England, and France, propaganda pamphlets supporting the subversive Peruvian Communist Party in the Shining Path of Mariátegui are being sold. . . . We are coordinating with the Spanish police to find the people passing out these leaflets, and to establish the possible link with the subversive action in our country. . . . Evidently, it has foreign links, but we cannot establish the magnitude, nor the manner in which they work."

One good lead is the U.S.-based **Revolutionary Communist Party** and its international affiliates. The RCP was represented, together with 20 other groups including hard-core terrorists, at the London founding of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) in 1984. Representing Peru was the Communist Party M-L, which has acted as an above-ground arm of the Shining Path. Shining Path members also participated in a May Day march organized by the RIM in Paris this year. In the United States, the RCP has set up a Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, which will give forums and organize speaking tours for Shining Path representatives.

West German terrorist involvement in Peru was positively established with the arrest on May 1, 1983 of Renata Herr, a member of the Red Army Fraction (Baader-Meinhof Gang) who is charged with participating in some 25 attacks in Peru since 1980. On Jan. 16, 1984, police arrested two German nationals among Shining Path terrorists captured following a shoot-out in the department of Huancavelica. The German Federal Criminal Bureau (BKA) has reportedly deployed agents to Peru to aid in the investigation.

In addition, U.S. intelligence sources report that members of the Italian Red Brigades used Peru as a safehouse after the 1978 murder of Italy's Prime Minister Aldo Moro.

In June 1983, the Peruvian government began to investigate foreign support and aid to Shining Path, following the first massive strike against Lima. President Belaunde Terry charged on June 4 that international aid and human rights organizations, foreign-financed religious congregations, and international institutions carrying out social research were fomenting and financing Shining Path's activities within Peru. Money given under the cover of "sentimental postures," he charged, is "simply to give tips to intellectualoids who, instead of building [the country], indirectly back discord and death."

Accusations were leveled against five international agencies on July 6: the Canadian Overseas Service; World University Service; International Potato Center; the Convenio por El Taller de Promoción Andino; and the Swiss government's Technical Cooperation Service. Anthropological networks were put under close scrutiny, and a number of anthropologists, Peruvian and foreign, were arrested. But this investigation was dropped almost as quickly as it began—no doubt because of outside pressures on the Peruvian government.