

## Shining Path arrest is a black eye for State Dept.

by Valerie Rush

Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori is using the special wartime powers he assumed last April 5 to pursue a war against Shining Path, the narco-terrorist insurgency which has kept his impoverished nation under siege for over a decade. At the same time, he is scoring those governments and international human rights organizations, and most emphatically the U.S. State Department, for having *aided and abetted* the Shining Path mass murderers for years.

The Sept. 12 capture of the allegedly untouchable Shining Path ideologue Abimael Guzmán (a.k.a. "President Gonzalo"), along with a dozen of his top henchmen, was but the opening shot of a well-planned and -executed anti-terrorist strategy, which could not only break the back of that organization while giving the Peruvian Armed Forces back their dignity and sense of mission, but may inspire other similarly besieged nations to fight for their sovereignty.

Peruvians are in a state of euphoria, as the nation's defense forces—under the personal direction of President Fujimori and a purged and upgraded intelligence service—begin to clean out the nests of terrorists, and their supporters and sympathizers, which have held the nation hostage to their psychotic violence. Lightning police and military sweeps in the so-called "red zones" of Lima, Cajamarca, Huancayo, Ayacucho, Arequipa, and Huacho have netted scores of Shining Path guerrillas, including some of their top military commanders.

Legislation is being readied to punish "terrorist apologists," such as Shining Path teachers who have infiltrated the Peruvian school system, tearing up the official curriculum and imposing their own brand of "revolutionary education." Declared President Fujimori, "There are teachers who, instead of teaching love of family, country, liberty and patriotism, are deforming the minds of children. Well, my government is going to prepare a mechanism that, for this kind of

participation in terrorism, offers severe sanctions. Naturally, some absurd voices will surface about prosecution of ideas, but we are obliged to preserve the health of our children."

President Fujimori told the press Sept. 16 that Guzmán's trial would be a case of "exemplary justice, to demonstrate that the Peruvian state is a guarantor of law, morality, order, and authority." It will begin Sept. 28, with sentencing scheduled for Oct. 7. An appeal would require a final ruling within 20 days.

The President's ability to take these and other wartime measures is made possible by the support of the Peruvian people. In the days following Guzmán's arrest, Peruvians massed in the streets of Lima and other cities to sing the national anthem. Flags hang from every window, and anyone in uniform—even traffic cops—is hugged and congratulated by citizens who suddenly realize that it is possible to defeat the cancer of narco-terrorism.

There is a widespread demand for executing Guzmán, whose murderous hordes have taken a reported 25,000 lives and caused billions of dollars in damage. Although the Peruvian Constitution sets a maximum penalty of life imprisonment without parole in times of peace, there are provisions for applying the death penalty for treason in time of *war*—a condition which certainly prevails in Peru today. In fact, President Fujimori told the press, "Speaking personally and not as President, I would naturally be in favor of the death penalty." He added, "The maximum penalty is a life term, but obviously we must listen to the people." The option of capital punishment "would have to be studied."

### On the international front

A list of Shining Path front-groups and the names of 50 of the group's "ambassadors" operating in nine countries

abroad, including in the United States, has also been published by the government, and Peru's justice and interior ministers are now in Europe to demand that these terrorists be extradited to Peru. Fujimori's international offensive is especially critical, in view of the repeated refusal of nations across Europe and the Americas to help Peru prosecute its war against narco-terrorism.

Exemplary is the case of the British government, which continues to defend Shining Path even after Guzmán's arrest. British Foreign Secretary Kenneth Clarke, in Lima at the time of the raids, told the press that Shining Path sympathizers in England would not be allowed to take "active steps" in favor of terrorism in England, but insisted that the terrorist exiles could be neither arrested *nor* deported as long as they limited their activities to expressing "opinions," however distasteful.

A British Foreign Office spokesman responsible for Peru even admitted to an inquirer that Shining Path spokesman in London Adolfo Olaechea had received "exceptional leave" several years ago to remain in London, but would not reveal the reason for the "leave."

As Fujimori declared in a nationally televised address following Guzmán's capture, "It has taken the international community 12 years to realize that we were dealing with a war criminal, with a genocidalist who could be the envy of the fascist war criminals of World War II. For 12 years, the malevolent genius of 'Comrade Gonzalo' [Guzmán] was able to sow death and destruction under the mantle of protective silence of the human rights organizations. And Peru had to count its dead, bury its dead and remain impotent. The human rights of a terrorist and genocidal band were more important than those of 22 million persons. Let the world know that this has been the cost we Peruvians have had to pay."

Fujimori's determination to wage his war on the international as well as domestic front is beginning to pay off. Sweden deported 19 Peruvian sympathizers of Shining Path in the second week of September, and has refused entrance to another 500. The German and Dutch immigration authorities have refused entry to about 40 Peruvians who fled their country after the Guzmán arrest. They have been returned to Lima.

### A 'no' to the Bush strategy

To the panic of the western "democracies," which have ostracized Peru diplomatically and financially ever since April 5, the coherence between Fujimori's courageous decision then to shut down the corrupt Peruvian congress and judiciary which had made common cause with the enemy, and his successes against Shining Path today, was never more apparent.

Indeed, Fujimori's approach is offering a sovereign alternative to the Anglo-American strategy for the Andes of humiliating and stripping down the region's armed forces, allowing the spread of narco-terrorism by encouraging government negotiations with the narco-terrorists, and then

readying U.S. rapid deployment forces for regional intervention.

The Fujimori alternative has, in fact, already inspired patriotic forces inside neighboring Colombia to demand that that country's government follow the Peruvian model. The opposition daily *El Espectador* editorialized on the Shining Path arrests Sept. 15: "What the people need is the will to impose respect for the law. That is, to govern. To govern is to rule, not make deals. To govern is to decide, not negotiate. To govern is to force [terrorists] to submit, not to submit oneself. . . . The Peruvian terrorists got just what they deserved. . . . We can't help but think that the only country in the world where the authorities are impotent against assassins of every stripe is Colombia."

It is no wonder, then, that the nervous Anglo-Americans are insisting they will accept nothing less than a "restoration of democracy," i.e., a return to the status quo of Shining Path blackmail, in Peru. In a public statement following Guzmán's arrest, U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher insisted that the arrest "doesn't lessen the need for a restoration of democracy." Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson claimed to welcome Guzmán's capture but, according to the *New York Times*, said it was "too early to tell" whether it would help restore a sense of legitimacy to the Fujimori government or help mend relations between Lima and Washington. London's *The Guardian* even warned that "Mr. Fujimori may feel strengthened by this success to persist further with dictatorship."

U.S. Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.), Fujimori's greatest foe in the U.S. Congress and the man who has promoted the Bush administration's campaign to demilitarize Ibero-America, told the *New York Times* Sept. 14: "I say this with great reservation, but this [arrest of Guzmán] represents somewhat of a vindication for Fujimori's actions." Torricelli added that it was "certainly possible" that U.S. intelligence had helped the Peruvians in Guzmán's capture.

Fujimori shot back, "There was no help of any kind, from any country or international organization. I can say this unequivocally, since there have been no advisers since April 5. Rather, we could be the ones to advise other countries in the anti-subversion fight."

Perhaps the most outrageous of all is the Venezuelan government, whose Foreign Minister Fernando Ochoa Antich told the media that the Guzmán arrest "does not confer legitimacy" on the Fujimori government. "The [April 5] action of President Fujimori is to be condemned, even though it has brought the results asked for by the population, because it violated principles. . . . Although the [Fujimori] government has had some success in the anti-guerrilla fight, it has the problem of a lack of political consensus." It's a wonder that Ochoa, said to be helping Venezuela's corrupt President Carlos Andrés Pérez ready a mercenary army to keep the population from trying to overthrow him again, could pronounce the words "political consensus" without choking.