
Peru's Ashaninkas

Shining Path butchers thousands of Indians

According to eyewitness accounts printed in the Peruvian media in September and October 1994, the British-backed Shining Path narco-terrorists carried out genocide against Peru's Ashaninka Indians during 1988-93. The Maoist Shining Path guerrillas had enslaved up to 5,000 Ashaninkas in a region inside and adjacent to the 1.7 million hectare Apurimac Reserved Zone in central Peru. Those who wouldn't cooperate were murdered outright—over 1,200 bodies were found in 300 mass graves, according to eyewitness accounts. Tribal leaders were isolated for torture and sophisticated brainwashing; those who couldn't be “reeducated” were eliminated. The infirm, orphans, and widows were also exterminated. In short, the “flock” was “culled.”

London has been the international logistical and propaganda base for Shining Path since at least 1983, when the Revolutionary International Movement was founded there. RIM, a terrorist international which includes Shining Path, is committed to aiding “all indigenous people's struggles.” In August 1992, the British Home Office, operating through its Independent Broadcasting Authority, produced and broadcast a “documentary” glorifying Shining Path, which it then handed over to the narco-terrorists for international use in fundraising and propaganda. To produce the report, two IBA reporters had accompanied Shining Path on their bloody rampages.

The genocide against the Ashaninkas occurred in Shining Path camps (with names like Progress, New Aurora, and New Development), located in the protected area of the Apurimac Reserve, whose western border is the Ené River. The basin between the Ené and Tampo rivers was chosen by Shining Path strategists as the spearhead for what they called a “people's republic of new democracy.” This highly fertile valley was chosen for producing the clothing, weapons, and food required for all the regional committees of the narco-terrorist organization. They had even completed 90% of a mini-hydroelectric plant when the Peruvian Army moved into the area in 1993 and freed the enslaved Ashaninkas from their concentration camps.

According to the Lima daily *Expreso*, there were once 12,000 Indians in the valley, of a total 50,000 Ashaninkas in the Amazon region. It is believed that Shining Path captured 10,000 Ashaninkas in 1984-93, and that the Peruvian Army only saved 5,000. Of the remaining 5,000, it is estimated that at least 1,200 were assassinated; no one knows what happened to the others.

Tales of atrocities

Lima dailies reported what happened. *Expreso* said on Oct. 23: “Shining Path used ‘persuasive’ methods like those employed by the Red Chinese against U.S. prisoners of war during the Korean War (1951-54), to enroll nearly 1,000 Ashaninkas in their terrorist ranks. . . .

“According to information gathered from survivors of these concentration camps, Shining Path captured entire Indian villages and subjected the Ashaninka leaders to interrogations. If they showed the slightest resistance, they were considered suspect and separated from the rest of the population.

“Once isolated, they were put in deep holes dug by the victims themselves. Their friends and parents, out of fear, avoided all contact. . . . During the first period of isolation, which generally lasted weeks, the Ashaninka chiefs were only freed for nighttime interrogations, accompanied by torture sessions, humiliation, and deprivation of all sorts. Sometimes they were deprived of sleep, sometimes their wives and children were tortured in their presence and eventually killed by machete.

“During the interrogations, the Ashaninka leaders were urged to join Shining Path and to serve as guides for the invasion of new lands. If they refused, they were tortured and assassinated after ‘people's trials’ during which they were forced to confess to crimes they never committed. . . . Those who yielded to ‘persuasion’ and collaborated . . . were taken out of their holes and locked in huts for their ‘political reeducation.’ . . .

“Should they make the mistake of admitting to a desire to escape, they were denounced and assassinated by arrows. Their relatives were also executed.

“Shining Path also used outright genocide whenever it encountered resistance. . . . In January 1989, for example, Shining Path attacked the community of Alto Sanibeni, in San Martín de Pangoa, Salipo. There, 36 people were murdered, among them women and children. They took advantage of the fact that the men were away, working in the mountains. Pregnant women had their wombs slashed open by machete, and the fetuses hung from their huts. The school was burned down, and a priest burned alive.”

Expreso on Sept. 11 reported on the story of one freed Ashaninka, named Moises: “The Ashaninkas were murdered if they were found sick, or had contracted an illness like measles, chicken pox, or tetanus. Sick Indians represented a burden and as they had no medicine to cure them, they decided to kill them, because the leaders said they had just become human parasites.”

El Comercio on Sept. 20 published the story of another eyewitness, Magno García Bardales: “The terrorists mercilessly killed orphan children under eight years of age. They said they did it to prevent their suffering without a mother and father, since they had no one to take care of them and feed them. They said only those strong and healthy enough to work should live.”