

Will Terrorist Abimael Guzmán Wind Up Ruling Peru?

by Luis Vásquez Medina

During the 1990s, Peru became a model for the world on how to carry out a successful war against drugs and narco-terrorism. As confirmed in the reports of the U.S. government itself, Peru, under the leadership of President Alberto Fujimori and the Peruvian Armed Forces, succeeded in reducing the area under coca cultivation by 70%, while defeating the bloody Shining Path and its psychotic leader Abimael Guzmán, as well as the narco-terrorist Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA).

But all this is now changed. The new Peruvian government, imposed in November 2000 by the U.S. State Department and the Organization of American States (OAS), supposedly to “restore democracy to Peru,” has, in a little more than 100 days, succeeded in returning the country to the hands of Shining Path, the Túpac Amaru, and the international drug trade. This is being carried out through “mob democracy,” where political and judicial persecution is being used to silence all dissident voices, and in particular to dismantle the national Armed Forces.

Late last November, in a political statement released to the media a few days after the fall of the Fujimori government, this author, in his capacity as the head of the Ibero-American Solidarity Movement (MSIA) in Peru, forecast that the new, interim government of President Javier Paniagua, which he labelled the “narco-democracy of the 1%,” would unleash the “Colombianization” of Peru. Today, painful as it is to admit, everything the MSIA forecast has come true, at a more rapid rate than even had been imagined.

This “government by the 1%”—the percentage of the popular vote that Paniagua’s party garnered in the last Presidential election—is using compromising videos, taped surreptitiously by Fujimori’s powerful security adviser Vladimiro Montesinos, of various of the country’s political and military figures, to launch a purported “war against corruption,” through which these fundamental changes are being brought about. For the population, the broadcasting of what have been dubbed the “Vladivideos” has become an exercise in mass brainwashing, which has allowed public opinion to accept without protest, and in many cases without even realizing what was going on, deep changes that affect the national

security of Peru, the Andean region, and the entire Western Hemisphere.

Concretely, in just the past few weeks, Peru has seen

- the release of hundreds of jailed narco-terrorists and drug traffickers;
- the surrender of Peru’s leading high-security prisons into the hands of still-imprisoned narco-terrorists;
- a revision of judicial processes that led to the conviction and imprisonment of MRTA and Shining Path terrorists;
- the dismantling of the national intelligence system;
- the beginning of the dismantling of the Armed Forces; and
- the irresponsible opening of the country’s security files.

To some independent observers, the security situation has deteriorated to the point that Peru today will soon return to the situation which reigned before Fujimori’s so-called “self-coup” of April 5, 1992, which launched the war against narco-terrorism in the country.

The primary architects of these newest “achievements” are Diego García Sayán and Walter Ledesma, ministers of Justice and Defense, respectively.

García Sayán: Narco-Legalizer

The Paniagua government took great pains to include in its Cabinet, notorious promoters of drug legalization: its Prime Minister, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and Justice Minister García Sayán. In 1998, both signed an open letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, joining hundreds of international figures—all organized by the world’s leading drug legalization promoter, speculator George Soros—in demanding an end to the war on drugs. The open letter was published, at the time, as a paid advertisement in the *New York Times*.

Another important drug legalizer is the Ad Hoc Prosecutor, Hugo Ugaz Sánchez Moreno, who is in charge of the investigations of former President Fujimori and Vladimiro Montesinos. Sánchez Moreno, too, signed the open letter to Kofi Annan, along with García Sayán and Pérez de Cuéllar.

The government’s attitude, and especially that of García Sayán, has not only been to favor drug legalization, but, in just the three months in office, it has decreed laws and rulings

openly favorable to the drug trade. For example, appealing to the misleading argument of prison overcrowding, the government has opened the prison doors for more than 100—in reality, no one knows precisely how many—of the country’s most dangerous drug traffickers. The measure, issued at the beginning of the year, permitted the release of those detained for more than 30 months, but not yet sentenced.

It is estimated that in the past two months, more than 100 people accused or sentenced for drug trafficking, have obtained their freedom. Among these are the big fish of the international drug trade, who were otherwise facing life imprisonment, or at least 25-year sentences, as in the case of Víctor Salazar Sánchez, who tried to send 350 kilos of drugs to Colombia, in a shipment of fishmeal of the Hayduk company. Justice Minister García Sayán, the person ultimately responsible for these measures, has preferred thus far to remain silent in the face of the scandal that these measures have unleashed.

In addition, all eradication efforts against illegal coca crops continue to be suspended. The suspension was ordered in September of last year, by the OAS-run Dialogue Committee which orchestrated the overthrow of the Fujimori government. On the pretext of encouraging “dialogue” with the coca growers, eradication was suspended, a decision which has been upheld by the new government to this day.

García Sayán is also freeing an undetermined, but significant number of Shining Path and MRTA narco-terrorists, using the pretext of a review of their trials and their supposed “repentance.” Today, because of the degree to which it has been dismantled, not even military intelligence knows precisely who is being released from the jails. Former Armed Forces Commander Gen. Walter Chacón, today a prisoner in the San Jorge prison for common criminals, charged at the end of February that more than 100 terrorists from the high-security Yanamayo prison had been transferred to the San Jorge jail, clearly posing a serious risk to the lives of the military officers held there. Justice Minister García Sayán, speaking from Washington, could not deny the charge, but he insisted that these were “repentant terrorists” who were being transferred.

The situation within the prisons, which fall ultimately under the jurisdiction of Diego García Sayán’s Justice Ministry, has now likewise returned to that which was hegemonic before Fujimori’s “self-coup” of April 5, 1992: Not only have they become like sieves, but also the principal high-security prisons, such as Yanamayo, which largely hold the top leaders of the MRTA and Shining Path, are back under the control of those terrorists who still remain imprisoned. The police now limit themselves to guarding the prisons’ perimeter, and providing food and provisions for the prisoners, according to charges just made by the former head of the prison system on national television. García Sayán has not denied the report; he has only “explained” that this is due to the dismal material conditions of the jail, and that he agrees that this maximum-

security jail, located at an altitude of more than 4,500 meters in the Andean highlands, should be closed, because it “is a heavy punishment” for the narco-terrorist prisoners.

Thanks to the lack of control of the prisons, the Shining Path and the MRTA have achieved a new level of organization and combativeness. Through the introduction of cellular telephones into the prisons, they have reestablished a communications system, which has permitted them to carry out various coordinated protests, involving at least five prisons simultaneously. Shining Path, in particular, has organized strikes and riots in several prisons, with slogans demanding that its leader Abimael Guzmán be transferred from the Navy prison where he is currently held, to a regular prison. Together with the MRTA, Shining Path demands that the Navy prison be shut down, to which García Sayán has responded that, while necessary for the moment, such a military prison is “illegal and unconstitutional.”

Fascism with a Democratic Face

García Sayán is using the public appearance of *certain* very carefully selected “Vladivideos” to sow terror and to silence any political opposition. For example, backers of the current government have physically threatened this author, in an effort to squelch what he and other *EIR* writers have published. García Sayán is said to be particularly bothered by *EIR*’s published documentation in mid-2000 of his ties to the narco-legalizers, when he was still working as an international adviser to Presidential candidate Alejandro Toledo and not yet a Cabinet minister. A similar uproar was provoked by *EIR*’s May 2000 charge that the “democratic” coup plotters intended to release the terrorists from jail, and put high-ranking military officers into those empty cells in their place. At the time, many thought *EIR*’s statements to be “exaggerated”; today, reality has proven *EIR* right.

The new judicial system has also launched a witch-hunt against those military officers who fought narco-terrorism. Based on the circulation of select “Vladivideos” which allegedly incriminate the enemies of narco-terrorism, and on statements by some civilians linked to Montesinos, the judiciary has ordered the arrest and trial of several generals supposedly in league with Montesinos. The case of Gen. José Villanueva Ruestas, former Commander General of the Armed Forces, is a particularly orchestrated one, intended undeniably to demoralize the Armed Forces. General Villanueva is accused of “helping Vladimiro Montesinos flee to Panama,” a ridiculous charge, since Montesinos’s trip was authorized by President Fujimori himself, and backed by several Ibero-American governments and by the U.S. State Department directly.

At the same time, Ad Hoc Prosecutor Sánchez Moreno has begun an investigation into drug-trafficking ties of several high-level military officers, including Gen. Nicolás Hermoza Ríos, based, incredibly, on statements of two drug traffickers, Demetrio Chávez Peña Herrera and Jorge López

Paredes, arrested and tried by the previous government! Currently, General Hermoza Ríos, the man who defeated Shining Path in 1991-94, is about to be arrested, charged with drug-trafficking. In fact, on March 7, Judge Pedro González Estebán, of the coca-growing zone of Satipa, issued an arrest warrant, accusing the general of collaborating with the national and international cocaine trade. That very day, police unsuccessfully tried to locate General Hermoza at his home.

García Sayán and Co. are also acting to put security forces on trial for the human rights violations they allegedly committed in over 20 years of anti-subversive war. They have reopened cases of officers who were amnestied by the previous government, and Peru has again accepted the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Human Rights Court of the OAS, which specializes in placing international law above any national sovereignty. This means accepting all the rulings of that pro-terrorist court, and thereby allowing prosecution of those officers who fought narco-terrorism, such as Gen. Enrique Oliveros and other officers whom the Inter-American Court "found guilty" for alleged human rights abuses. Moreover, it throws into question the military trials which put the terrorists in jail. Under these conditions, it is quite probable that Abimael Guzmán himself would be granted a new trial in civilian court.

Worse, Prosecutor Flor de María Alba has just opened an unbelievable investigation of the military heroes who rescued the hostages at the Japanese Ambassador's residence in 1997, on charges of "presumed extralegal executions"! Alba has accepted the denunciations of the family of MRTA member Rolli Rojas, killed in the rescue action, based on the ungrateful statements of a former hostage, Hidetka Ogura, who was at the time the First Secretary at the Japanese Embassy in Lima, and whose life was saved by the military commandos. Ogura said that he had seen two MRTA members surrender alive, insinuating that they were subsequently executed by the military.

Ledesma and 'The Spirit of Williamsburg'

The other Cabinet member in league with García Sayán is Defense Minister Gen. Walter Ledesma. He is trying to discredit and dismantle the Armed Forces, among other ways through brutal budget cuts, this year totalling 400 million soles, almost 35% of its total budget. The government and the national Congress had already done away with obligatory military service for all citizens, arguing that a modern army only needs professional soldiers. Troop reduction has been so drastic, that there are now great difficulties in trying to protect border areas with Ecuador and Colombia, which narco-guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have either already entered, or are about to enter.

It would appear that the demoralization of the Peruvian Army is a key objective of the current government and Congress. These have issued a pardon for Lt. Col. Ollanta Humala, who not only led an uprising, but kidnapped an active-duty

general. The Army has had to accept the humiliation of seeing Humala reinstated to active duty, with all that this implies for morale.

All this confirms General Ledesma's reputation as a demilitarizer, earned through several articles and statements. For some time, he has served as a key piece in the plot to annihilate the national Armed Forces. After a rather undecorous demotion, he joined Pérez de Cuéllar's political party and began to publicize what is known as the "spirit of Williamsburg," referring to the thesis presented by the U.S. delegation at the 1995 conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas, in Williamsburg, Virginia. This thinking, which has become official U.S. policy, says that with the end of the Cold War, and with neo-liberal free-market economic policies supposedly bringing peace and prosperity to the continent (!), Ibero-America's armed forces should be restructured to become mere police forces, based on the "model" of Panama or Costa Rica. At the same time, proposals were floated to create a military branch of the OAS, as a supranational force able to neutralize any future regional conflicts.

Between the destruction of the Peruvian Armed Forces this implies, and the release of the worst narco-terrorists of the 1990s, the new Peru is a national security threat for *all* the Americas, both North and South.

For previews and
information on
LaRouche publications:

Visit EIR's Internet Website!

- Highlights of current issues of EIR
- Pieces by Lyndon LaRouche
- Every week: transcript and audio of the latest **EIR Talks** radio interview.

<http://www.larouchepub.com>

e-mail: larouche@larouchepub.com