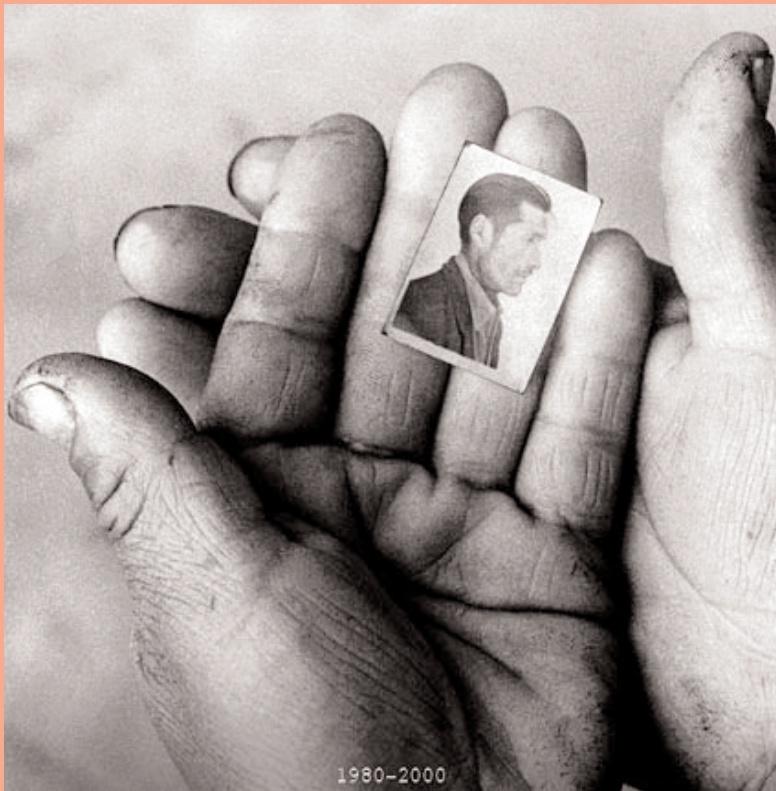


Truth and Reconciliation

The Findings of Peru's Truth and
Reconciliation Commission



Peru Support Group
www.perusupportgroup.org.uk



The Peru Support Group (PSG) was set up in 1983 as an independent organisation without any party or political affiliation. It aims to support the people of Peru and particularly the poorest sectors.

The PSG is committed to

- Increasing public awareness of Peru in the UK
- Promoting solidarity with the people of Peru especially in the area of human rights
- Fostering links between grass roots groups in Peru and the UK

The main publication of the PSG is the bi-monthly 'Peru Update'. This includes the latest information on political, social and economic events in Peru, and also news of activities in the UK. The PSG produces extra editions of the 'Peru Update' on issues of key concern such as Trade, the TRC and Mining, as well as special publications like this booklet and 'Women's Rights as Human Rights in Peru' 2002.

The Peru Support Group has resources available to help with educational work on Peru, including two photographic exhibitions. The PSG also co-ordinates conferences, meetings and workshops on issues such as human rights, debt forgiveness and democracy. For information about membership see the inside back cover.

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Preface

Formed in June 2001, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was mandated to investigate the violence that took place in Peru between 1980 and 2000 and make proposals to the government for ways to overcome this bitter chapter in the life of our country. Its mission, therefore, was to discover the truth and to turn it into an element of justice in its widest sense, as this is the only way to heal wounds and to promote social regeneration.

The tasks it undertook were complex and multiple; indeed, it could not have been otherwise since the reality it sought to clarify was itself complex and multiple.

It is difficult to interpret the history of 20 years of violence from a single viewpoint in a country as heterogenous as Peru. Many different types of violence emerged over these two decades and they cannot simply be reduced to being defined as the clash of two subversive organisations (the PCP-Sendero Luminoso and the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru) with the forces of order of the Peruvian state. As well as these, there were many other actors who, directly or indirectly, played a role in the drama lived out by thousands of Peruvians.

In order to make a really significant contribution to improving Peruvian society, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had to carry out a detailed examination of the last 20 years. But not only did it have to establish the truth with respect to the past, but also to focus on the present and the future, to promote both the recognition of those whose rights were trampled underfoot and, and the due application of law in punishing those who violated human rights.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission thus understood that its task was not just to recount the facts of what had taken place, but also to interpret them in order to disclose their true significance for the history of our country. A moral lesson lies hidden in the mass of facts and in those that still have to be revealed: a narrative that speaks of resentment and contempt, of confusion and ignorance, of arrogance and humiliation, a narrative of profound social exclusion. Without this narrative, the history of contemporary Peru - and perhaps that of Latin America - is incomplete.

We were convinced that knowing the facts and their context is only part of something more fundamental. Restoring the health of Peruvian society also requires the victims to receive justice for their suffering through some sort of

compensation or reparation, as well as encouraging a process of reconciliation throughout society that would constitute at once a point of arrival and of departure for Peru.

Our work is complete. But the task of building justice and reconciliation has only just begun.

As Peruvians we now face the arduous task of building democracy both as a system of government and as the key to an inclusive society in which all are considered citizens. A particularly moving episode of the Commission's work was when an indigenous man, recounting his own personal tragedy, said that the only thing he hoped for was that one day he would be considered as a Peruvian and not as an alien in his own land. This is precisely the ethical imperative that now faces us.

At the same time, international cooperation is essential to complement our own efforts at home. We trust that international solidarity will act upon and be itself deepened by the Truth Commission's report. I believe that the report sets out a course from which different cooperation agencies or organisations can usefully develop a dialogue both with the authorities and civil society in Peru, so that projects can be developed jointly which lead towards building a country that is more inclusive and more at peace with itself.

This Peru Support Group publication forms part of the task of raising international solidarity, of building commitment, of transmitting a strong message to all Peruvians (but especially to the victims) that they are not alone. For that, we are very grateful.

*Salomon Lerner Febres,
Past-president of the TRC,
Lima, February 2004.*

Key findings of the TRC: Profile of the victims of violence

In the twenty years under investigation, it is believed that 69,280 people lost their lives.

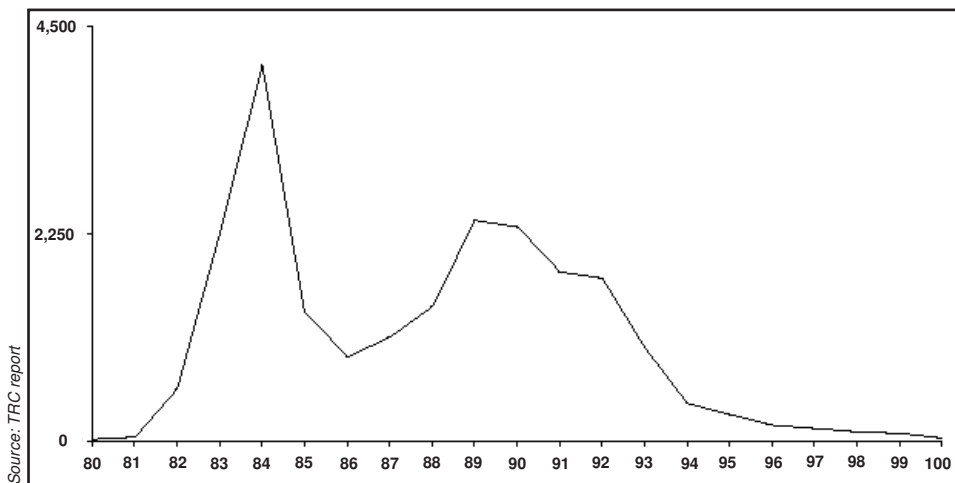
This is about twice the number of the people killed in Chile and Argentina in the killings that followed the 1970s coups in those two countries. The TRC's estimate of the total deaths is more than double any previous estimate. How could some 35,000 people simply disappear from the scene without anyone realising it?

The number of deaths actually reported to the TRC was 28,000, and the difference arises from taking the estimates of various other organisations but cross checking them so as to avoid counting the same victims twice or more. Under pressure of time and money, the TRC was forced to concentrate its efforts in specific parts of the country. The TRC says that the 69,280 figure is subject to a 5% margin of error either way (ie between 61,007 and 77,552).

The death toll

Number of deaths and disappearances reported to the TRC by year

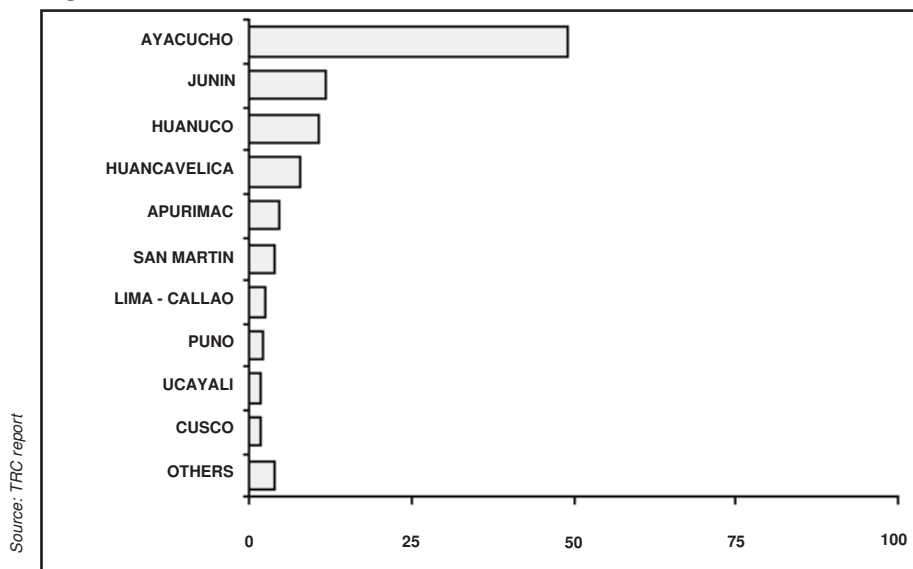
TOTAL



The geography of killing

Percentage of total deaths and disappearances by department

TOTAL



Of the total number of deaths reported to the Commission, more than 40% took place in Ayacucho.

Ayacucho, Junín, Huánuco, Huancavelica and Apurímac together account for 85% of the deaths reported. These are among the poorest departments of Peru.

Of the total deaths, 79% were inhabitants of rural areas, and 56% were peasants. Three quarters came from families whose mother tongue was Quechua (or some other indigenous language)

As a proportion of the total population, the 1993 census reveals that only 16% fall into this category. The huge majority were people living in poverty or extreme poverty, as officially defined.

Of those killed, 68% had no secondary education, a much higher figure than the national average.

Some 54% of the killings reported to the TRC were carried out by Sendero Luminoso, 1.5% by the MRTA.

The remainder were perpetrated by the police, army, navy or peasant militias.

The worst period of killing was in 1983 and 1984, during the Belaunde government (1980-85).

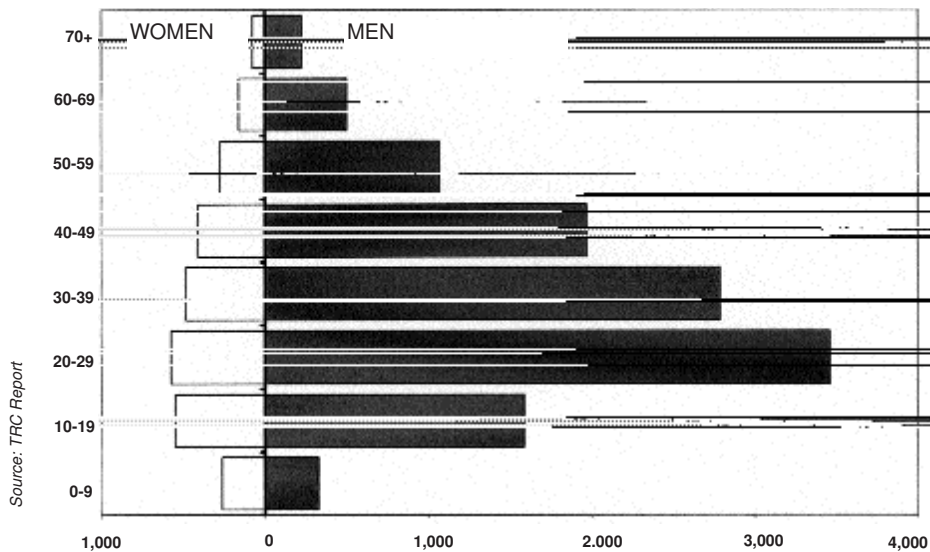
Following something of a lull in 1985 and 1986, the numbers increased again in the period 1987-90. During the 1990s, and especially after the capture of Abimael Guzmán in 1992, the death toll tailed off notably.

Of those killed 80% were men. 59% of the victims were married with families. Thousands of children were left as orphans.

4,000 burial sites were identified by the TRC.

Age and gender profile

Deaths and disappearances reported to the TRC by age group and sex



Political map of Peru



Courtesy of The General Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin

The Story of the Commission

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission came about in very special circumstances. The presidential decree that created an inter-institutional working group to establish the Commission was among the first measures undertaken by the interim government of Valentín Paniagua when it took office in November 2000. Paniagua replaced Alberto Fujimori, President from 1990 - 2000, who had fled the country. The Commission would not have happened but for the fall of the authoritarian Fujimori regime, and it was born out of the spirit of restoring and deepening democracy and adherence to the rule of law.

"We have to admit, following a sober consideration of the historical facts, that a society cannot learn to live with itself in peace and justice if it is unable to recognise its wounds and grief, if it cannot turn back to its past in the search for lessons." ¹

For much of the previous 20 years, successive governments had sought to hide the true dimensions of the massive violation of human rights, obfuscating and restricting any independent investigation into such matters. The armed forces, in particular, used their political

influence to thwart judicial remedies for those affected, let alone a comprehensive enquiry into what had happened. Indeed, they had pushed for and won a wide-ranging amnesty for those officers and troops involved.

Not only was the public mood at the end of 2000 one of hope for the future of Peruvian democracy; it was also a time when senior commanders of the armed forces were put under arrest for their complicity in the corrupt dealings of the Fujimori regime. Never before had army generals found themselves behind bars. Their authority undermined, the armed forces were no longer in a position to block a thorough investigation. The country's political parties - who might also take much of the blame and therefore would have been reluctant to see the Commission go ahead - were also debilitated by ten years of *fujimorismo*. For a short period at least, civil society appeared to be in the ascendant.

¹ This and subsequent indented quotes are taken from the English summary of the full report.

Aims and Objectives

The decree that established the Commission (065-PCM-2001, Art 2) set out five overriding aims (our translation):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. To analyse the political, social and cultural conditions and patterns of behaviour that, from society and the institutions of the state, contributed to the tragic situation of violence experienced in Peru.</p> <p>2. To help in the clarification by the competent judicial institutions of the crimes and human rights violations perpetrated by terrorist organisations or agents of the state, seeking to determine the whereabouts and situation of the victims and identifying to the degree possible those presumed responsible.</p> | <p>3. To produce proposals for making reparation and restoring dignity to the victims and their families.</p> <p>4. To recommend institutional, legal, educational and other reforms as guarantees that such events would never be repeated, these being considered and implemented through legislation and other political and administrative actions.</p> <p>5. To establish mechanisms for the implementation of the Commission's recommendations.</p> |
|---|--|

Thus the duties of the Commission were to find out what had happened and to make recommendations with respect to justice, reparations and future policy. The TRC was given operational and financial autonomy (under the prime minister's office), subject to overall supervision of its use of resources by the UN Development Programme (UNDP). It eventually consisted of twelve members and one observer, five members being added after Alejandro Toledo took over as president in July 2001. The chairman of the TRC was Salomón Lerner Febres, the rector of the Catholic University (PUCP). Its final nine-volume report was officially handed to Toledo, barely two years after it began its work, at a ceremony held in Lima on August 28, 2003.

Members of the Commission

Salomón Lerner Febres (president), philosopher and rector of the Catholic University

Enrique Bernales, jurist, constitutional lawyer and former senator

Carlos Iván Degregori, author and anthropologist

Gastón Garatea, Roman Catholic priest and president of the Anti-poverty Policy Forum.

Alberto Morote, engineer and expert on Ayacucho

Carlos Tapia, Political researcher and analyst, expert on Sendero Luminoso

Beatriz Alva Hart, practising lawyer, former congresswoman

Sofia Macher, former executive secretary of the Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos

Santiago Antúnez de Mayolo, Roman Catholic priest, ex apostolic administrator of the Ayacucho Archdiocese.

Humberto Lay, leader of the National Evangelical Council

Rolando Ames, sociologist, political scientist and former senator

Luis Arias Graziani, retired air-force general and advisor to Alejandro Toledo.



The logo for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Logistical and other difficulties

Embarking on the work of the Commission was a leap into the unknown, in view of the scope and the lack of previous large scale research quantifying human rights abuses. It began by bringing together the mass of written evidence from an array of different sources: press reports, parliamentary commissions of enquiry, judicial documentation, other official documents from a range of government agencies, the archives of the various human rights organisations, etc. Part of what the TRC was called upon to do was to write the history of those twenty years, bringing together all the evidence available, to analyse it, and to write it up in such a way as to be accessible to as many people as possible.

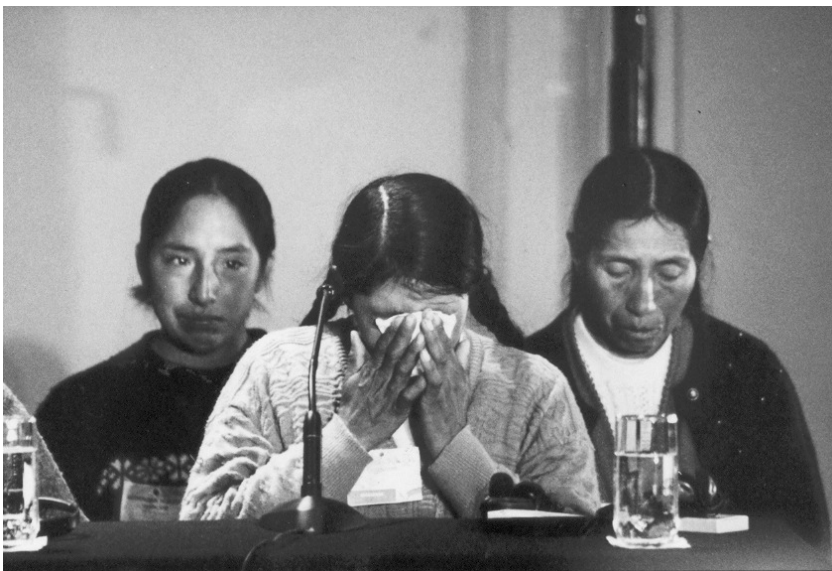
The bulk of the TRC's work, however, was to gather in first-hand oral testimony from as many sources as possible. Initially, the TRC estimated it would receive around 12,000 personal testimonies; in the end it received nearly 17,000. Such were the numbers of people wanting to give evidence, especially after initial fears had dissipated, that it was impossible to process all of them within the time available.

The Commission held public hearings on both regional and thematic experiences. This was the first time that such an approach had

been adopted in Latin America. They were hugely important in publicising the scale of the atrocities, and raising awareness especially among those in Lima who had been unaware of such human rights violations. The hearings also gave the relatives and victims a sense of dignity in saying what had happened in their own words, being heard and being believed.

Between September 2001 and 2003, the TRC visited 530 districts in 137 provinces in every department of Peru. As well as a central office in Lima, it established regional offices in Ayacucho, Huancayo, Huánuco and Sicuani. There were also local offices in eight other locations. However, much of its attention was necessarily focused on Ayacucho and surrounding provinces, where at least half of the killings are reckoned to have taken place. The Commissioners admit that they were unable to cover the whole country in the relatively short period allotted to them, and choices had to be made on where to concentrate efforts and resources. For instance, there were some parts of the Amazon jungle that remained completely inaccessible. Many more testimonies could have been collected, but the TRC finally ran out of time.

The central challenge, say some Commissioners, was not only the



Public hearings in Ayacucho

scale of the problem, but the relative inexperience of the Commission itself. It included a number of recognised experts on Sendero and the politics of insurgency/counter-insurgency, but the commissioners did not fit at all with the profile of most of those they had to deal with. Ten of the twelve were men, and eleven were residents of Lima. Only two could speak Quechua with any degree of fluency, and one of the first discoveries made was the complete absence of fluent Spanish/Quechua translators in a country that officially defines itself as 'multi-cultural and pluri-national'.

The TRC was also composed by people of widely differing

backgrounds. "*Fortunately, we did not fall out with each other*" says Carlos Ivan Degregori, one of the commissioners and a leading world expert on Sendero. The Commission lacked expertise in critical areas. Little could be done, for instance, to exhume bodies from the 4,000 burial pits reported to the Commission up and down the country. It is for this reason that the TRC recommends setting up a team of anthropologists and forensic scientists to continue the work of identifying skeletal remains.

The commissioners conducted lengthy interviews with politicians, military personnel and militants of both Sendero and the MRTA. In

fact, many of these were much more prepared to talk than had been expected. Alan García, president from 1985-90, met the Commission several times. Retired Military officers procrastinated, but eventually were willing to speak on an 'off-the-record' basis. Abimael Guzmán, the founder of Sendero Luminoso, talked to the TRC on no fewer than 17 occasions. *"They all accepted our call to take part"*, Degregori says. In the end, only Alberto Fujimori, Vladimiro Montesinos and some members of the 'Colina' death squad formally rejected interviews.

Financial problems affected the work of the Commission, and at times it had to slow down to a snail's pace

because of cash shortages. However, such difficulties appear to have been less the result of bad faith on the part of the Toledo government than unforeseen interruptions in payments. In many cases, the TRC team kept on working regardless of pay. Again, according to Degregori, *"this was not just an ordinary job of work for them (...) they felt a large degree of personal commitment"*. The TRC was funded by both the Peruvian government and foreign donors.



Public hearings in Huancavelica

The Story of Political Violence in Peru

As well as making important recommendations about on how to heal the wounds of the past and achieve lasting reconciliation, the TRC's report is in itself a monumental contribution to the writing of Peruvian history. It assembles the evidence in an area where otherwise there would have been little archival documentation and which historians have long tended to ignore. Not only does it seek to elucidate human rights violations over the twenty-year period in areas that are often extremely remote, but it aims to convey the political, social and economic context in which these events took place. It is a harrowing tale which the Peru Support Group seeks to summarise in the following pages.

Sendero and its origins

Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), or El Partido Comunista por el Sendero Luminoso de José Carlos Mariátegui to use its full name, was born from the sequence of divisions in the Communist movement that took place in the years that followed the Sino-Soviet split of 1964. It emerged in 1970 as a splinter group of Bandera Roja, itself an offshoot from the Maoist Communist Party. Sendero's founder, Abimael Guzmán, was a philosophy teacher in the University of Huamanga, Ayacucho, and its early leaders were a small, tight-knit group of intellectuals who exerted strong influence over student affairs. Sendero berated military reformism, and it clashed with most other left-wing parties which supported the transition to democracy (1978-80). Isolated from the rest of the left, Sendero developed as a hermetic organisation, bound together by

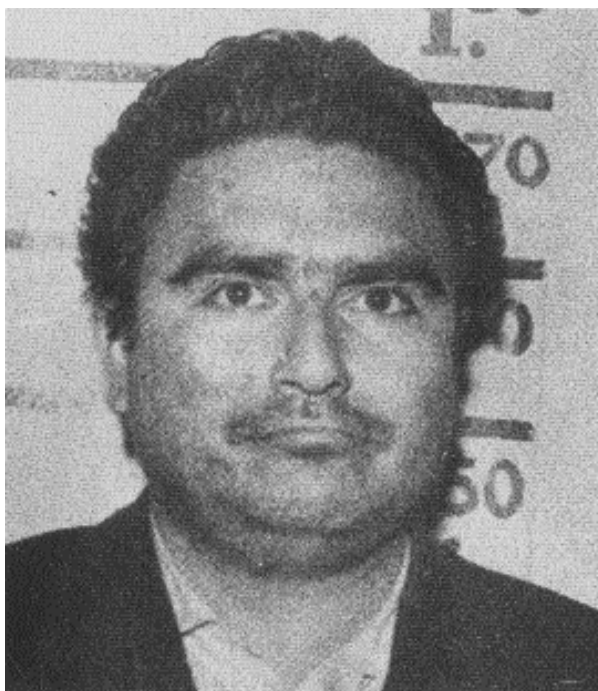
bonds of ideological and doctrinal conviction. Its dogmatism is evident in its writings, in which it lambasted the revisionism of the Chinese leadership after the death of Mao. It adopted the Maoist critique of 'semi-feudalism' in Peru and the need for a 'protracted people's war' to smash the bourgeois state. Its revolutionary strategy was modelled on classic Maoist lines, highlighting a rural insurgency that would surround and finally subdue urban areas. It mapped out a sequence of phases during which the revolution would be carried out. Unlike previous guerrilla actions in Peru, the aim was not to distribute land but to force peasants into subsistence and thereby cut food supplies to the cities.

The launch of the 'people's war' on the eve of elections in 1980 (with an attack on voting installations in Chuschi, Ayacucho) had been

preceded by the building of the party in rural areas. During 1980 and 1981, its attacks were concentrated on Ayacucho and surrounding areas. Because of the lack of strong rural organisation there, it met with little opposition. Elsewhere in the highlands, the agrarian reform had contributed to the building of rural institutions. The highlands of Ayacucho were also geographically well-suited to guerrilla warfare. In the city of Ayacucho, the insensitivity of the paramilitary police to basic civil and human rights did much to alienate public opinion. The thousands who turned out to the

funeral of a young Senderista, Edith Lagos, in 1982 were as much protesting their rejection of police methods as their sympathy for Sendero.

Source: Caretas



Abimael Guzman leader of Sendero Luminoso, when he was detained by police in 1979

Testimony

Sendero attacks indigenous communities



Janet Flores Chimanga

"We were attacked by the Shining Path. We were scared and we climbed up to the hills and we saw how they burned down our homes, how they stole our clothes, our chickens... We were afraid to stay in the house or to go to the fields to work.

Since my father was the head of the community he was part of the community defence. He said that he had dreamt of horrible things that night . . . Then the terrorists came and they opened fire. They grabbed my father and began to hit him, and when he struggled they shot him. He was last seen alive by the river and before dying he called out "tell my children that I will never see them again..."

We lived with our grandmother because my mother left us after that... Then my grandmother died and we separated. We moved around from place to place. I live with a relative that treats us badly. In spite of everything I have finished my studies."

Janet Flores lived in the Mashiguenga indigenous community of San Antonio de Sonomoro. Her father was chief of the community. In 1994, he was murdered by Shining Path guerrillas, along with other members of the community defence forces who were patrolling the area.

The political context

The appearance of Sendero on the political scene coincided with the restoration of civilian government after twelve years of military rule. The 1980 elections were won by Fernando Belaunde and his centre-right Acción Popular (AP) party. He ruled in a coalition with the smaller, right-wing Partido Popular Cristiano (PPC), a pro-business party. In the elections, Belaunde managed to beat off the challenge from the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA) as well as a coalition of left-wing parties (Izquierda Unida). Established in the 1920s, APRA was Peru's oldest mass-based party; AP first gained prominence in the 1950s. Peru's party system had never been strong. Despite short periods of democratic rule since the 1930s, the country had been dominated by authoritarian, if not outright military governments. The 1980 elections therefore ushered in a new period of party-based government.

However, successive governments betrayed the confidence placed in them. The AP-PPC coalition saw its popularity rapidly eroded. Its record in government marred by the debt crisis of 1982, the impact of El Niño (an adverse weather phenomenon that periodically affects parts of Latin America) during the following years, and the inability to contain Sendero Luminoso's expansion from

Ayacucho to much of the rest of the country. Belaunde was seen as abdicating responsibility in the conduct of counter-insurgency to the armed forces, whose brutality alienated opinion. His party, AP, won 52% of the vote in 1980, but only 6% in 1985. The victory of APRA and Alan García in 1985 gave way to a brief revival in public faith in government, but this proved equally short-lived. The economic crisis of the late 1980s brought unprecedented hardship, shattering the confidence that had been generated in 1985. Left-wing parties, too, were largely discredited for their failure to produce coherent alternatives. It was in a situation of deep disillusion with party politics that Peruvians turned to a hitherto largely unknown 'anti-party' figure, Alberto Fujimori, to resolve the country's problems. By this time, Sendero posed a real threat to political stability.



Photo: Caretas

Fernando Belaunde, President of Peru 1980-1985, The highest number of deaths and disappearances per year happened during this period.



Alan Garcia and Alberto Fujimori, both presidents of Peru during the period under investigation by the TRC

The tradition of neglect

Although Sendero Luminoso eventually extended the range of its attacks throughout Peru, it was born in and around the city of Ayacucho, and for the first few years of its 'war' against the Peruvian state, this was its principal theatre of operations. Why was Ayacucho such fertile

"The TRC has found, sadly, that the civilian governments were not alone in bowing to the indiscriminate use of force as a means for combating subversion. On the contrary, the proclivity of these governments for a military solution without civilian controls resonated with a considerable sector of Peruvian society, principally in the moderately educated urban sector that benefited from State services and resided far from the epicentre of the conflict."

ground for the emergence of a group that was remarkably dogmatic in its ideology, violent in its methods and apparently disinterested in the immediate problems facing the people it sought to attract? The departments of Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurímac are among the poorest and most deprived in Peru. They are also those where the presence of the state was traditionally weakest, both in terms of social provision and political control. At least to start with, Sendero chose to operate in the most remote areas where state institutions were virtually non-existent and where its advance faced few obstacles. It also chose to work in an area where the traditional rural system of land holding had remained largely unaltered despite the agrarian reforms of the 1960s and 1970s.

Ayacucho was also an area that had been bypassed by economic development, concentrated on Lima and the coast. It lacked a strong elite that was capable of resisting Sendero. Ayacucho was also largely ignored by the social and economic reforms of the military government of General Juan Velasco (1968-75). Since the promises of reform were more rhetorical than real, they fed rather than allayed regional frustration. Although Velasco proclaimed a more equal Peru, in fact regional disparities increased as a result of

his presidency. The industrialisation that took place at this time did not affect the interior of the country.

The expansion of Sendero

The expansion of Sendero's presence in Ayacucho and adjacent areas in the early 1980s was not based on an attempt to win the sympathies of highland peasants. They were given no choice as to whether to support Sendero. Those that did not do so suffered the consequences, usually death. Sendero's advance among the highest and more remote communities was rapid. However, the arms at Sendero's disposal were rudimentary, typically sticks of

and forcing them to stop selling their products in urban markets. While peasant communities had little alternative but to obey its demands, Sendero was able to make use of the unpopularity of local state officials such as police officers and teachers.

There were signs by 1983, however, that even in some of the remotest corners of rural Ayacucho, some communities were beginning to resist Sendero's inroads. It was in these circumstances that eight journalists were killed in the community of Uchuruccay, as they sought to investigate rumours of armed resistance to Sendero in the region.

"The TRC has been able to discern that the process of violence, combined with socio-economic gaps, highlighted the seriousness of ethno-cultural inequalities that still prevail in the country. According to the analysis of the testimonies received, 75% of the victims who died in the internal armed conflict spoke Quechua or other native languages as their mother tongue."

dynamite and rifles stolen from police stations. The extreme violence of its methods did not endear them to those they sought to control, nor its insistence on reverting to subsistence agriculture

By 1983 and 1984, Sendero had expanded far from its original heartland. In the north, there were armed attacks in the hinterland of La Libertad, where Sendero allied itself with another small group known as Puka Lljajta (Red Homeland). It had also moved northwards into the departments of Junín and Pasco in the centre of the country, and into the drug-producing Upper Huallaga Valley. To the south, Sendero also made inroads into the department of Puno, although it met considerable resistance from peasant communities there. Commanding the highest mountain routes and with a network of supporters in urban areas, Sendero was able to move with relative ease from one

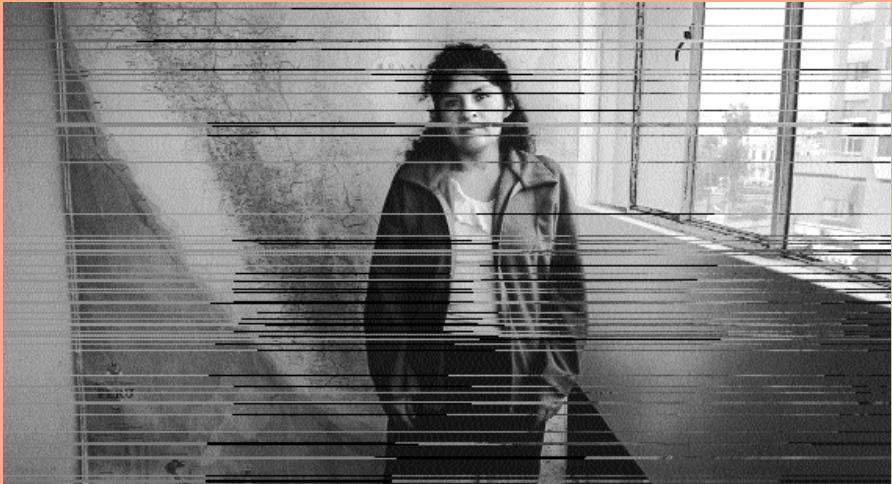
area to another. It was able to create widespread economic disruption by blowing up electricity pylons linking the highlands and the coast. Guzmán, who had gone underground in 1979, became an almost mythological leader. A major strategic shift came in 1985 and 1986, when Sendero took the decision to initiate armed actions in urban as well as rural areas. It began infiltrating industrial trade unions and urban communities, developing at the same time a more communicative style of politics. *El Diario*, a daily newspaper available on the streets of Lima, became the party's mouthpiece.

"The TRC finds that the members of the leadership system of the PCP-SL hold the gravest responsibility for the conflict that bled Peruvian society, based on the following elements:

- *for having initiated the violence in opposition to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the population*
- *for having formulated their fight against Peruvian democracy with a bloody strategy*
- *for the violent practices of occupation and control of rural territories and peasant communities, with a high cost in lives and human suffering*
- *for their genocidal policy that involved acts to provoke the State*
- *for their decision to proclaim the so-called strategic equilibrium that stressed the terrorist character of their actions."*

Testimony

Sendero recruits through violence



Rofelia Vivanco

"I came to Lima in 1983, when I was 17, because in school the terrorists were recruiting. They said if we didn't collaborate we would die. "We are going to cut off your ears, we will take out your tongue"... They told us that if we escape from the town they would blow us up with explosives, and you wouldn't even be able to pick up the pieces. We were afraid because there was no one to defend us, not the authorities or anyone else.

One day a group chosen by the terrorists had to go with them, I was one of those chosen, but my mother woke up early and took me away. She brought me to Huancapi...

I returned to my community after one year, but nothing was the same. People spent the night in caves... my father could not return either, because the people were all being hounded. We left everything, our homes and our animals..."

Rofelia Vivanco left her town of Huamanquiquia, Ayacucho, at the age of 15, due to constant incursions of Shining Path guerrillas. She currently lives in Puente de Piedra, in the suburbs of Lima. She is a member of the organization of displaced people from Huamanquiquia, and of the national displaced people's organization, CONDECOREP.

The 'other' guerrillas, the MRTA

Inspired by Sendero's apparent success, another guerrilla organisation appeared on the scene in 1984. But the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA) had different antecedents and horizons to those of Sendero. It was the result of the fusion of two tendencies. The first was a faction of the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria, itself a splinter group from the political party APRA. The second was an offshoot from the Velasquista Partido Socialista Revolucionario (PSR).

"Unlike Shining Path, and like other armed Latin American organisations with which it maintained ties, the MRTA claimed responsibility for its actions, its members used uniforms or other identifiers to differentiate themselves from the civilian population, it abstained from attacking the unarmed population and at various times showed itself being open to peace negotiations. Nevertheless, MRTA also engaged in criminal acts; it resorted to assassinations..., the taking of hostages, and the systematic practice of kidnapping ..."

The MRTA's ideological point of reference was the Cuban, not the Chinese revolution. Like other such movements elsewhere in Latin America, its activities involved kidnappings (as a source of funding) and 'armed propaganda' through attacks on targets that symbolised US imperialism. One of its main areas of popular support was in the department of San Martín. Although it did not eschew violence, its methods were less gratuitously violent than those of Sendero. Also, unlike Sendero, it was more discriminating in its politics. For instance (perhaps because of its initial links to APRA) it declared a cease-fire during the first few months of the García government so as to enable the new administration to make gestures of goodwill.

The MRTA's links to other semi-legal political organisations opened it up to infiltration by the authorities. Owing to the emphasis it placed on mass politics, it was a less clandestine structure than Sendero. Also divisions among its leadership made it less monolithic. In 1986, the MRTA began armed operations in San Martín department which brought it into direct conflict with Sendero. The two clashed in the Huallaga towns of Uchiza and Tocache, a confrontation from which the MRTA emerged the loser. Conflict between them also broke

out a year later when the MRTA began armed operations in the central highlands. During the early 1990s, the MRTA ceased to be an active protagonist, many of its leaders being captured. Its last and most daring political stunt was its attack on the Japanese ambassador's residence in December 1996 and the taking

hostage of scores of eminent diplomats and other figures. A three-month siege ended in an armed assault in which several of its remaining leaders were killed.

Testimony

MRTA recruited from dissident leftists



Nila Rincón

"I ask myself with deep pain how could my son have chosen the most difficult path, already having a secure life, with a future, a family...? He went because of the suffering of others and of his people."

Nila Rincon is the mother of Miguel Rincón Rincón. Miguel was condemned to life in prison as a leader of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) guerrillas, and is currently detained at the Naval Base in Callao.

Counter-insurgency

The Belaunde government's initial response to the insurgency in Ayacucho was to send in paramilitary police, known as the 'Sinchis'. The abusive behaviour of the Sinchis did little to endear them to local opinion, and possibly contributed to support for Sendero. The worsening situation during 1982 led to the militarisation of Ayacucho and the declaration of the department and neighbouring provinces as an 'emergency zone' in December of that year. It was from that point on that the human rights situation deteriorated seriously (see chart on page 4).

Under the first military commander of the Emergency Zone, Gen. Clemente Noel y Moral, the enemy was defined as 'communism', of which Sendero was but one variety. Little attempt was made to distinguish between these 'communists', Senderistas on the one hand and supporters of the legal left (Izquierda Unida) on the other, or between 'communists' and anyone else who got in the way. One of the main problems of counter-insurgency at this stage was the lack of adequate military intelligence. The whole indigenous population of Ayacucho came to be perceived as the 'enemy'.

The death toll rose even higher under General Adrián Huamán who

took over from Noel y Moral in 1984. Huamán set about building paramilitary peasant defence militias, while also building Vietnam-style 'strategic hamlets', relocating peasant communities from high altitudes to the valleys. He sought to increase military control over development funds.

Peasant communities thus found themselves often caught in the cross-fire, attacked both by Sendero and the armed forces. In 1984-1985 there were several massacres involving whole villages. While Senderistas would tend to kill indiscriminately, the army would take prisoners for questioning who would never be seen again. Military barracks like Los Cabitos in Ayacucho and the marines headquarters in Huanta became notorious for their use of torture and the 'disappearance' of prisoners.

The Belaunde government effectively washed its hands of the suffering inflicted by the military in Ayacucho and elsewhere. The net effect of this blunt response was to expand Sendero's radius of action into other parts of the country.

The counter-insurgency strategy shifted somewhat when Alan García became president in 1985. The Belaunde administration's human rights record had been criticised

Testimony

Indiscriminate use of torture by the Army



Doris Caqui de Capcha

"I am the mother of four children. My husband's name was Teófilo Rímac Capcha. He was a great union leader, and a teacher. On 23 June, 1986, the military raided my house and grabbed my husband. They took him to the military base, I never saw him again.

At that point, I began to search, to ask for help to find out where my husband was, I feared for his life. On 27 June I received news that my husband had been killed...

The Secretary General of Centromin, asked me to call at his house and told me: "They have killed your husband and you must seek justice. They brutally tortured him, they put him in a sack and kicked him around like a football, his jaw and his ribs were broken, they shoved the machine gun in his mouth and the broom through his rectum, and he couldn't bear it all, but despite this, before he died he gave me a message for you. He said tell Doris, my wife, to take care of my children, to make Ivan into a great man. They are killing me and I have done nothing wrong..."

Teofilo Rimac Capcha, was a leader of a workers' political party, FOCEP. On June 23rd, 1986, army troops raided his house and took him, submitting him to torture in the hope he would incriminate himself. He died from the torture. The whereabouts of his remains is unknown.

"The TRC has found that the armed forces applied a strategy that, during an initial period, was one of indiscriminate repression against the population suspected of belonging to the PCP-SL. Later this strategy became more selective, although it continued to make it possible for numerous human rights violations to be committed. The TRC affirms that, at some places and moments in the conflict, the behaviour of members of the armed forces not only involved some individual excesses by officers or soldiers, but also entailed generalised and/or systematic practices of human rights violations that constitute crimes against humanity as well as transgressions of the norms of international humanitarian law. The TRC concludes that, in this framework, the political-military commands, designated the highest authority in the emergency zones, may bear primary responsibility for these crimes."

both at home and abroad. García sought to bring the military under tighter control, whilst emphasising the importance of development as a more positive response to insurgency. A Peace Commission was established in 1985 and in response to a massacre at Accomarca in August of that year, García sacked three of the highest-ranking military officers.

The synchronised protest by Sendero inmates in three Lima jails in 1986 and the subsequent killing of 250 of them punctured García's image as a defender of human rights. By 1987, the armed forces had recovered some of their operational autonomy, taking advantage of the president's weakened position as the economy deteriorated. As Sendero entrenched itself in the coca-producing Huallaga, its offensive

capability became much greater. By 1989, 56 provinces had been declared Emergency Zones where civil rights, to varying degrees, were in abeyance. Extra-judicial killings continued apace, both in Ayacucho and in other parts of Peru, with full-scale massacres - like that in Cayara in May 1988 - not uncommon events.

At around this time there was also a clear shift in counter-insurgency policy, notably with the proliferation of peasant-based militia patrols in many parts of the highlands. The authorities were able to take advantage of the fact that communities bitterly resented the demands made on them by Sendero and were increasingly willing to assume their own defence with support and overall direction from the armed forces. The so-called *rondas campesinas* (modelled on

community action in Cajamarca to prevent cattle theft) proved highly effective in containing Sendero's activities in rural areas, although at times they provoked violence between communities. For the armed forces, they had the advantage of fighting Sendero at one remove. At the same time, institutional reforms introduced under García - notably the creation of a single ministry of defence, the unification of the three separate police forces and the introduction of a single intelligence system - made the authorities better prepared for confronting Sendero.

These policies bore fruit after 1990 under Fujimori. It was improved intelligence and police capacities that led to the most decisive moment of all: the capture of Guzmán in a middle-class Lima neighbourhood in September 1992. Of course, it was also the case that

under Fujimori, the threat of subversion was the pretext for the further dismantling of the system of judicial guarantees, the imprisonment of large numbers of innocent people on the basis of hear-say evidence, and the growth of the Servicio Inteligencia Nacional (SIN) into an organisation that under Vladimiro Montesinos effectively ran the government. The draconian new laws introduced after the 1992 palace coup (*autogolpe*) helped subvert the rule of law.

"The TRC notes that the abdication of democratic authority extended to the administration of justice. The judicial system failed to adequately fulfil its mission. Whether in connection with legal penalties for the actions of subversive groups, protecting the rights of detained persons, or putting an end to the impunity of State agents who committed grave human rights violations.

The TRC believes that the dictatorship of Alberto Fujimori spuriously attempted to legalise impunity for human rights violations by State agents by getting the Democratic Constitutional Congress provide majority approval for two amnesty laws and that violated constitutional provisions and international agreements ratified under Peru's sovereign power"

Testimony

Indiscriminate arrests and detentions



Zonia Luz Rosas

"One night the Police arrived... and took away my partner. I stayed at home, but they came to arrest me. At the anti-terrorist headquarters they told me that various people had accused me of participating in meetings and terrorist attacks..."

Later the so-called interrogations began. I held out through the punches and the near drowning. They wanted me to accept all their accusations..."

... At the end of 1989 I was found innocent of all charges by a court, and I was then acquitted of any crime. When I got out of prison I had to find a way to support myself and my daughter, but I could not find work. I had no choice but to sell sweets on the streets... On 16 June 1994, as I was selling sweets, I was arrested again. They held me on the same charges of which I had been acquitted.

The judges at the military court sentenced me to 25 years, saying that I was in guilty of collecting funds for the Shining Path in Lima, when I was not even making enough to eat.

That is how I spent 12 years of my youth, unjustly detained as an innocent woman... No one can give me back those lost years..."

Detained in 1983, Ms. Rosas was acquitted after 6 years in jail. She was freed in 1989, but in 1994 she was detained on the same charges, condemned this time to 25 years by the military court. She spent 12 years in prison, where she was tortured.

The displaced

If the number of people killed verged on 70,000, the number of people forced to leave their communities were hundreds of thousands. Faced with the threat of attacks by both Sendero and the security forces, many people in rural areas were forced to flee to places of relative safety. These were usually regional urban centres, though large numbers eventually sought refuge in the slums of Lima. The suffering caused by displacement is hard to

calculate. Villagers who moved to the towns found themselves usually at the bottom of the social pile, discriminated against because of their ethnicity, lack of education and (often) lack of Spanish. The depopulation of rural Ayacucho during the 1980s was dramatic, with large movements in population to the main towns. The population of Ayacucho city nearly doubled between 1981 and 2001.

Human rights organisations and their role

The deterioration of the human rights situation in the early 1980s turned the spotlight on Peru. Although the country had undergone twelve years of military rule, it had never been a country in which human rights had been violated on a large scale -- unlike Chile, Argentina, Brazil or Uruguay in the 1970s. Abroad, organisations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch monitored the human rights situation with ever-increasing concern, especially from 1983 on. In the United Kingdom, the Peru Support Group was established in that year. Various foreign governments expressed increasing concern, some even sending parliamentary and other delegations to investigate human rights abuse.

Within Peru, a number of human rights defence organisations established themselves in Lima and elsewhere to provide legal support to victims and to help publicise the problem. Within the Catholic Church, the Comisión Episcopal de

"The Commission is convinced that the country owes these human rights organisations a debt of gratitude because, by exercising the democratic right of critically monitoring the security forces, they contributed to controlling some of the most brutal aspects of the conflict and to obtaining extensive international solidarity for the democratic struggle of the Peruvian people."

Acción Social (CEAS) took an active role, whilst other non-Church organisations like the Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos (Aprodeh) campaigned also vigorously on human rights issues, often at considerable personal risk to those involved. In 1985, the Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos (National Human Rights Co-ordinating Body) was set up to co-ordinate efforts of human rights groups at the local and national levels. Meanwhile, DESCO, a social studies think-tank, maintained an on-

going tally of deaths, disappearances, cases of torture and the like. However, there was no comprehensive attempt to quantify the scale of the problem until the TRC began its work in 2001, following the collapse of the Fujimori government.

What remains of Sendero?

The capture of Abimael Guzmán in 1992 led to the rapid dismemberment of Sendero Luminoso. Within a year, most of its more prominent leaders were in jail. The speed at which this happened reflected, in part, the hierarchical nature of the organisation and its dependence on the reputation of its founder and ideologue.

After his arrest, Guzmán called for a cease-fire, but a dissident faction of the organisation kept up the military offensive, albeit on a much reduced scale. The rump of Sendero is still in evidence, more than ten years after Guzmán's arrest, its presence concentrated in the coca-producing valleys of the Huallaga, Ene and Apurímac. In Ayacucho, the main area of Senderista presence is in the

Viscatán, a remote mountain region in the extreme north of the department. In the last two years, Sendero is credited with responsibility for two important attacks: a bomb attack in Lima on the eve of US President Bush's visit to the city in 2002, and an attack on a Camisea gas pipeline construction site in north-eastern Ayacucho. Many other, less noteworthy attacks have also been reported, but not such as to suggest a strategic revival. Nevertheless, the social conditions that help spawn Sendero remain much the same, and Ayacucho and surrounding areas remain one of Peru's poorest and deprived regions.

Testimony

The fate of the displaced



Isabel Suasnabar

"We left to save our lives... Now we are organizing so that they will recognize those of us who have left, those who remained trying to survive and those who are returning without any assistance..."

Isabel Suasnabar left her town in Huancavelica due to constant attacks by Shining Path guerrillas and the army. She currently lives in Huancayo, and is president of the Association of the Displaced (Central Peru), and vice-president of CONDECOREP, the national organization of displaced people.

Children as victims of violence

The years of violence that the Commission reported on had a particularly devastating effect on children whose experiences and witness of violence and horror will affect them for the rest of their lives. A generation of children and young people also had their educational possibilities truncated and future employment possibilities diminished

as a result of the armed conflict.

Both the State's armed forces and Sendero forcibly recruited children in support of their operations. In the case of Sendero, children were targeted, indoctrinated and used as agents of their military campaign from a very early age. Its 'Red Pioneers' were used as vigilantes,

spies and gatherers of food prior to becoming fighters from around 12 years old. Children were constantly threatened and punished when they attempted to escape, such attempts often ending in death. Separation of children from parents and family at an early age was a primary strategy of a group notorious for the number of children and adolescents in its ranks.

In the case of the State security forces, 40% of those forcibly recruited into their ranks were children, mainly between 15 and 17 years old, and from poor and impoverished backgrounds, a policy which constituted a generalised and systematic denial of children's

fundamental rights. Apart from this practice, the report concluded that children were not specifically targeted by the State in a generalized and systematic way though, of course, many became victims of indiscriminate violence against their families and communities.

Of the cases investigated by the Commission, 12.8% involved human rights violations against children. These included torture, detention, extra-judicial killings, disappearances, kidnappings, sexual violations and forced recruitment. A generation grew to adulthood in the shadow of this violence.

The gender dimension

According to Sofía Macher, former head of the *Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos* and one of the two women on the TRC, the full implications of human rights violations on women were inadequately revealed by the data base created. One of the reasons was the lack of any proper previous documentation on the subject. Neither human rights nor feminist groups did enough here, she suggests. The Report documents less than 1,000 cases of rape, but this appears to have been a routine practice both on the part of the military and Sendero. In a television interview, one general went on record

as saying that it was "*inevitable*" that soldiers "*satisfied their instincts*" in this way, and that in any case "*campesinas were used to it*".

While most of those killed were men (80%), women were systematically maltreated. They assumed a disproportionately heavy burden in dealing with the social consequences of the killings and disappearances. They also played a decisive role in denouncing the killings that took place. "*That there was a Truth Commission at all is largely down to the women*" Macher says. "*Their role has not been properly recognised*".

Testimony

The survivors, also victims



Liz Liliana Zúñiga Villar

"There is no comfort for the death of our parents, because we were left abandoned. I had to take on a role of mother and father to my younger sister when I was only 13 years old... People are abusive, and worse, when you are a woman they mistreat you, they exploit you..."

Even though I have suffered through some difficult times, this has not made me dwell on it. I want to improve my lot. I am now studying Engineering. My sister is studying to be a teacher.

Sometimes I think that I have been dreaming and that one day I will wake up and see my parents."

In 1994, army troops entered the towns of Cayubamba Chico and Chaupiyunca. Ms. Zúñiga's parents were murdered along with ten others. The men were tortured, and the women and girls raped.

The main recommendations of the TRC

The recommendations of the TRC are contained in Volume IX of the report. They cover five main areas, namely: the need for reconciliation with justice; institutional reforms; reparations to those affected; the need for a forensic programme to deal properly with exhumations; and the issue of follow-up.

Reconciliation and justice

- **Justice is necessary in order to achieve reconciliation**
- **Impunity is non-democratic and is contrary to the rule of law**
- **Those accused of crimes against humanity should be punished**

Justice, the report argues, is a necessary condition for reconciliation as well as its result, and justice requires impartiality on the part of those who administer it as well as punishment for those who contravene the law. So far as impunity is concerned, the report argues that it is inconsistent with the norms required for democracy and the rule of law. *"Impunity signifies the abandonment of justice"*, it says, quoting the son of the mayor of Primavera in Huánuco (who had been killed by Sendero) *"I reject the idea that these deeds remain unpunished. I think the only way to put an end to violence and abuse is punishing those responsible, so that*

the rest of the population know that such deeds cannot be, that they take place and nothing happens".

The report argues that all who were responsible for human rights crimes should be subject to prosecution. It identified 150 persons (involved in 73 cases). Of these 42 were connected with state agencies and the remainder with Sendero and the MRTA. *"The first step towards reconciliation can only be made if those who perpetrate crimes against humanity -- that is those who use arms in unequal conditions -- assume the responsibility, appearing before the Courts and paying their debt to society"*. The report notes that most of the leaders of Sendero Luminoso (who were responsible for the majority of those killed) are already serving lengthy sentences in prison.

Institutional reforms

The TRC report makes numerous recommendations about the institutional reforms that need to take place to ensure that the sort of civil conflict that characterised the 1980s and 1990s never recurs. They divide into four main groups:

1. Building democratic state authority

Recommendations refer to measures to improve the ties that bind state and society. They include policies to:

- promote collaboration between the police, municipalities and citizens
- institutionalise and regulate *rondas campesinas*
- widen access to the justice system
- create mechanisms to protect human rights at the local level
- encourage state employees to work in remote rural areas
- fully recognise indigenous rights
- promote more effective political representation

- strengthen mechanisms for building consensus at the local level

2. Strengthening democratic institutions vis-à-vis the military

Recommendations include:

- bringing the military under the control of democratic authorities (ministry of defence)
- the introduction of a national pacification strategy
- regulation of states of exception
- civilian control of military intelligence
- a redefinition of the police as a non-military organisation
- the modernisation of the police force
- reform of military and police training methods
- the granting full citizenship rights to the military
- the creation of a military ombudsman to guarantee soldiers' rights.

3. Reforms to the justice system

The report acknowledges the serious defects of the Peruvian justice system. It advocates:

- the strengthening of judicial autonomy (especially over appointments)
- an ending the system of provisional judges (introduced by Fujimori)
- the incorporation of the military justice system under the aegis of the Supreme Court
- the introduction of an independent body to protect witnesses and victims
- the establishment of a specialist branch within the justice system to pursue the cases of human rights violation identified in the report
- the incorporation into the Peruvian justice system of advances in international jurisprudence
- the introduction of programmes to improve the training of judges and lawyers on human rights
- measures to guarantee the permanence of judicial institutions under regimes of exception

- and a series of measures to improve prison conditions and defend prisoners' rights.

4. Reforms to the educational system

These aim to improve the quality of education and to enhance respect for democratic values, recognising the centrality of education in building a better society. Recommendations include:

- curricular reforms
- greater respect for ethnic and cultural diversity
- more community participation and oversight of schools
- improved systems of discipline
- literacy campaigns
- provision of incentives for teachers to work in rural areas.

Reparations

The TRC gives great emphasis for the need for reparations to those affected by violence, both individually and collectively. The plan for reparations should aim to ***"compensate for the violation of human rights, the losses and damages incurred, social, moral and material"***. However, reparations should not be seen as a substitute for social policy. ***"The Comprehensive Plan for Reparations (PIR) cannot and should not be considered as just another instrument of social policy (...) It does not seek to resolve problems of poverty, exclusion and inequality (...) Its objective is the reparation and recognition of the victims as human beings whose rights have been violated"***. (Volume IX, p148).

The PIR subdivides into six different types of reparations:

1. Symbolic reparations

Symbolic reparations do not necessarily involve much expense, but should be demonstrative and easily understood. They should include:

- political gestures, such as the president asking for forgiveness and sending letters to the victims and/or their families

- acts of public recognition of those wrongly imprisoned, those who defended the human rights of their communities
- recognition of local authorities that stood up to Sendero
- establishment of special sites for remembrance
- closure of buildings associated in the public mind with human rights violations.

2. Reparations in health

These include:

- programmes to help victims deal with physical and mental health problems arising from the conflict
- training of people to carry out such programmes
- the creation of a special department within the Health Ministry to plan and oversee them.

3. Reparations in education

These would seek to compensate those whose education was interrupted or otherwise affected during the period of violence. It

would include:

- exemption from all payment for education
- the establishment of a system of scholarships
- the provision of programmes for adult education in affected areas.

4. Restoration of citizenship rights

This would seek to:

- regularise the legal status of the disappeared (who are neither officially dead, nor officially alive)
- ensure the rights of those wrongly imprisoned and then pardoned of terrorist offences
- provide identity documentation free of charge to those who either lack it or were deprived of it (either by Sendero or the authorities)

5. Economic reparations to individuals

These involve providing payments to those affected by violence, usually the very poorest. They would include:

- the families of the dead and

disappeared (widows, children under 18)

- pensions for the disabled as a result of violence
- indemnities to those unjustly imprisoned and victims of rape.

6. Collective reparations

The objective here is to compensate those communities that suffered major economic damage from the destruction of social and physical infrastructure, and the decapitalisation of the peasant economy as a result of violence and/or displacement. The amounts awarded would depend on the degree of suffering inflicted and the numbers involved. The use of such funds would be decided upon by the communities themselves, with the emphasis on the rebuilding of communal cohesion. The programme would require national and regional oversight and would last at least six years.

The PIR would be financed by Treasury funds, funds emanating from the restoration to the country of corrupt moneys deposited abroad, along with other illicit banks accounts at home and abroad, and from contributions for this purpose made by the international community.

Development of forensic / anthropological plan for exhumation

The TRC identified more than 4,000 burial sites in the areas it investigated, of which it was only able to conduct very preliminary research on about half. An important area of on-going work is to carry out state-of-the-art forensic work (especially DNA analysis of remains) on these sites as well as uncovering others. To achieve this would mean building up forensic capacities largely absent in Peru today and applying them alongside anthropological ones.

This work is crucial to calculating the numbers of those who were the victims of disappearances and extra-judicial killings, as well as seeking to establish their identity. Clearly, such work involves close collaboration with relatives of the dead and members of rural communities. The TRC proposes the establishment of a National Commission for Disappeared People to supervise this plan, alongside the development of a specialist entity within the State Prosecutor's Office (Ministerio Público).

Follow-up

There should be a technical committee established to wind up the business of the TRC and an inter-institutional working group to produce legislative proposals on the basis of these recommendations, to elaborate a plan for implementation and to ensure widespread dissemination of the report and its conclusions. Among the laws should be the creation of a National Reconciliation Council to oversee longer-term decision-making and implementation.

Reactions to the TRC Commission Report

The official response

On November 21, 2003, President Alejandro Toledo, speaking on behalf of the Peruvian state, formally asked for forgiveness for the human rights crimes perpetrated between 1980 and 2000. He also promised extra spending for Ayacucho and other parts of the Peru that had suffered the brunt of the war with Sendero Luminoso. Toledo was responding to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), whose massive nine-volume report into human rights violations, had been presented to the government three months before.

Not only was this a tardy response, but a partial one. The promised spending of 2.8 billion soles (800 million US dollars) between then and 2006, whilst welcome, did not allude specifically to the TRC's recommendations that there should be reparations, both collective and individual, to those who suffered violations of human rights. Indeed, the TRC emphasised the importance of not confusing reparations with development spending. Toledo promised that the State Prosecutor's Office (Ministerio Público) would

handle cases of those accused of human rights violations. He

admitted that there had been "excesses" perpetrated by the armed forces, but did not say (as the TRC report suggests) that human rights violations had been part of a systematic and persistent response to the problem of insurgency.

It was always bound to be the case that 'naming and blaming' would cause discomfiture for those responsible, and that they in turn would seek to minimise the implementation of the TRC's recommendations. In point of fact, the main responsibility for the slaughter that took place was attributed to Sendero Luminoso, many of whose leaders are already in jail serving life prison sentences. Still, the findings would make for awkward reading for members of the armed forces and paramilitaries that fought Sendero. Similarly, it would cause problems for politicians and government leaders who bore a political (if not a more direct) responsibility for what went on.

This helps explain Toledo's caution towards the TRC's findings. Although the armed forces no longer wield the political power they used to, they remain influential behind the scenes. Similarly, the politicians with most direct responsibility, find

ways to defend themselves and their interests. Lacking any strong presence in society, Toledo's government is both weak and unpopular. It therefore finds it difficult to take bold action. So there is every danger that the recommendations of the TRC will not be fully implemented.

At the same time, there are very real dangers for Peru if the opportunity is

missed. This is not just in ensuring that justice is done, but in building a new relationship between government in Lima and those living in poverty and deprivation in the interior of the country, particularly in the areas most affected by twenty years of civil war.

Public reactions to the report

Not surprisingly, the publication and official hand-over of the report produced considerable controversy in Peru. The tabloid press and the main commercial TV stations, many of which had been used by Fujimori and Montesinos to downplay concerns about human rights and denigrate those concerned for them, used it as an opportunity to berate both the Commission and its findings. Numerous politicians, especially those from the parties criticised in the report, also took the opportunity to undermine it by questioning its suppositions, methods and conclusions.

The main criticisms levelled at the report referred to the methodology used to calculate the number of victims; the tendency of the report to put the armed forces and Sendero on the same standing; the better uses to which the money spent on

the TCR could have been put; the supposed ideological bias of the commissioners; the treating of Sendero as a 'political party'; and the cost of implementing the recommendations. Not surprisingly, the TCR drew criticisms from right-wing politicians such as Rafael Rey and José Barba Caballero. It also drew flak from retired members of the armed forces. According to Gen (ret) Luis Pérez Documet, "*The CVR was made up of reds, by members of the legal left*". According to Gen (ret) Edgardo Fournier, "*the work of the TRC has played into the hands of Sendero Luminoso*".

Others applauded the Commission and its findings. According to a Datum poll released at the time of publication, 54% of those interviewed thought the Commissioners had done a good job, a high proportion given the

criticisms voiced by much of the mass media. The TRC received favourable coverage in some newspapers -- notably *El Comercio* and *La República* -- and cable TV channels like *Canal N*. These had been the only media outlets that had criticised the Fujimori government and its authoritarian demeanour.

The TRC was endorsed by numerous civil society organisations and those linked to human rights campaigning (although such voices were quoted less in much of the media). The Catholic Bishop's Conference, issued a strongly positive statement. Some leading politicians endorsed the TRC, albeit with some qualifications. Lourdes Flores, for instance, a presidential candidate in the 2001

elections, thought that the treatment afforded to Sendero had been good and that the report "*deserved to be studied and supported*". Even Alan García, the Aprista former president whose role was much criticised in the report, welcomed its work and its conclusions. A party pamphlet, published in October 2003, drew particular attention to the large numbers of Apristas killed in the conflict.

For his part, Toledo was conspicuously cautious in his response to the report's publication, limiting himself to an invocation to "political maturity" on the part of citizens and saying that he would respond when he had read the final report. It took him a full three months to do so.

"Our responsibility today consists in making them (the critics) see that this is the way by which Peru can begin to heal its wounds, the only viable route to setting down foundations to ensure that the tragedy experienced between 1980 and 2000 is never repeated. This would be the best homage we could pay to all those who lost their lives or who were scarred by the suffering that they were unjustly forced to bear."

Salomón Lerner, President of the TRC,
August 28, 2003.

The task that lies ahead

Now that the commissioners have completed the work for which they were originally appointed, the responsibility for ensuring that their recommendations are implemented now lies with the Peruvian authorities. The responsibility is both ethical and political: ethical in the sense that the Peruvian state owes more than just lip-service to the hundreds of thousands of citizens whose lives have been affected in one way or another by the violence that took place over 20 years (and almost all of whom lack economic power or political influence); political in the sense that unless the wounds of the past are properly healed, the resentments created will come back sooner or later to plague this or future governments.

While there will be pressure from human rights organisations, the churches and, not least, the victims of violence and intimidation for the government to act on the TRC's recommendations, there will be strong countervailing pressures from vested interests to ensure that they are sidelined or ignored. The Toledo administration has apologised for what took place, but there is a huge difference between saying 'sorry' and taking steps to show that you are. The danger is that Toledo will do little or nothing to ensure that justice is done, repa-

rations made and the necessary reforms carried out.

The international community has a strong moral obligation to help the Peruvian authorities implement the TRC's recommendations, not least because of its professed concern for ensuring that human rights are protected throughout the world. There is much that can and should be done. It does not necessarily involve twisting the arm of the Peruvian authorities (though maybe it should); it can involve providing the financial and logistical help that is required to implement the TRC's recommendations. It will cost money and experience to do so; the international community should offer to help.

The international community (except possibly international human rights organisations) did woefully little to stem the violation of human rights in Peru in this tragic period - especially in the 1980s and 1990s. Peru has an opportunity to make a new start and support for genuine reconciliation is much needed. Now is the time to make amends.

Chronology of Violence

1964

Split in Peruvian Communist Party between pro-Moscow and pro-China factions

1970

Guzmán splits with Bandera Roja to form PCP-Sendero Luminoso

1978

Sendero's Central Committee issues blueprint for the 'People's War'

1979

Guzmán goes under-cover

1980

May

Presidential elections; Sendero's first armed attack at Chuschi, Ayacucho

December

Dead Dogs hung from lamp posts in Central Lima with slogan "Teng Hsiao Ping, son of a bitch"

1981

March

Issue of DL 046 defining terrorism and easing burden of proof

May

Counter-insurgency police (sinchis) deployed to Ayacucho

October

State of Emergency decreed in five of Ayacucho's seven provinces

1982

March

Sendero attacks jail in Ayacucho, freeing 304 inmates

September

Thousands attend the burial of Edith Lagos in Ayacucho

December

President Belaunde orders military into Ayacucho. Creation of military-political command under Gen Clemente Noel y Moral

1983

January

Killing of 8 journalists at Uchuruccay, Ayacucho

April

Sendero kills 69 peasants at Lucanamarca. Guardia Civil kill 32 peasants at Socos, Ayacucho

1984

January

First attack by the MRTA

August

Bodies of 49 persons previously detained in Huanta discovered in Pucayucu

1985

July

Alan García succeeds Belaunde as president; promising development in Ayacucho. Establishment of Peace Commission

August

Massacre at Accomarca prompts García's sacking of three high-level military figures

August

59 people killed by army troops at Umari and Bellavista

1986

June

250 Senderistas killed by troops in three Lima jails

October

Assassination by Sendero of retired Admiral Gerónimo Cafferata, former head of the navy

1987

March

Major reinforcements in Ayacucho. End of 'development' phase

May

Sendero overruns police headquarters in Uchiza in the Alto Huallaga.

August

Sendero assassinates Rodrigo Franco, an APRA leader

1988

February -March

Sendero's First Congress; decision to step up urban attacks

May

Massacre by military at Cayara, followed by parliamentary enquiry

June

Osmán Morote, Guzmán's deputy, acquitted in Court

July

El Diario prints twelve hours of interviews with Guzmán

July

Appearance of Comando Rodrigo Franco, a paramilitary group

1989

February

Capture of Víctor Polay Campos, leader of the MRTA

April

Sendero massacre at Chongos Alta, Junín

December

Alan García hands over arms to Comités de Autodefensa, organised civil defence groups, in Ayacucho

1990

January

Assassination by MRTA of General Enrique López Albújar, former minister of defence

July

Escape from prison via tunnel of Víctor Polay and 46 other MRTA prisoners

July

Alberto Fujimori becomes president

August

'Paquetazo' of economic measures

1991

January

Sendero archives captured after raid on a house in San Borja, Lima

April

Rocket attack on National Palace

August

Sendero assassinates three priests in Ancash

November

Barrios Altos 'massacre' in Lima by

members of the Colina paramilitary group

1992

February

Killing of María Elena Moyano in Villa El Salvador, Lima

April

Fujimori's internal coup d'état

July

Tarata bombing in Miraflores, Lima by Sendero

July

Nine students and one professor from La Cantuta University Lima, are killed by the Colina paramilitary Group

September

Capture of Abimael Guzmán.

1993

May

General Rodolfo Robles accuses the SIN and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Gen. Nicolas Hermoza Ríos of violating human rights

1994

February

Sentencing of some members of the military for involvement in the "La Cantuta" killings

1995

June

Congress approves General Amnesty for all members of armed forces sentenced for human rights offenses

July

Fujimori takes office for second term

1996

December

MRTA attacks Japanese ambassador's residence, initially taking some 500 hostages. This is the beginning of a four-month siege

1997

April

Military operation releases the remaining 72 hostages from Japanese ambassador's residence, killing all 14 members of the MRTA involved

1999

March

Inter-American Human Rights Commission (IACHR) formally denounces the Peruvian state over a number of cases of human rights violations including "La Cantuta"

July

Capture of Oscar Ramírez Durand, Sendero leader, in Huancayo

July

Withdrawal of Peru from the IACHR

2000

November

Resignation of Fujimori as President

November

Interim President Paniagua establishes the Truth Commission

Further information and useful websites

In Spanish:

www.cverdad.org.pe

Comision de Verdad y Reconciliación (CVR)

www.aprodeh.org.pe

Asociacion Pro-Derecho Humanos, APRODEH

www.caretas.com.pe

Caretas weekly peruvian magazine

www.ceas.org.pe

Comision Episcopal de Acción Social, CEAS

www.desco.org.pe

Desco

www.dhperu.org

Co-ordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos, CNDDHH

www.idl.org.pe

Instituto de Defensa Legal - IDEÉLE

www.ombudsman.gob.pe

Defensoria del Pueblo, Peruvian Human Rights Ombudsman

www.pazyesperanza.org

Paz y Esperanza (also in English)

www.pcslatin.org

Project Counselling Service, PCS (also in English)

In English:

www.cverdad.org.pe

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

www.ictj.org

International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)

www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/

National Security Archive

www.interpares.ca

Interpares

www.idea.int

IDEA Institute for Democratic Education and Assistance

www.psf.org.pe

Peru Solidarity Forum

www.amnesty.org

Amnesty International

www.cafod.org

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

www.ciir.org

Catholic Insitute for International Relations

www.christian-aid.org

Christian Aid

www.csw.org.uk

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)

www.hrw.org
Human Rights Watch

www.perusupportgroup.co.uk
Peru Support Group

www.savethechildren.org.uk
Save the Children UK

www.tearfund.org
Tearfund

www.oxfam.org.uk
Oxfam

The Peru Support Group has the following resources on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

- 10 minute video in English on TRC
- Full TRC report in Spanish on CD-Rom
- PSG Update on TRC
- TRC conclusions in English
- TRC report summary in English
- Videos of public hearings in Spanish
- PSG photographic exhibition "Testimonies of Courage and Pain" including testimonies and portraits from this publication.

All of these resources are available on loan from the PSG office.

Join the Peru Support Group

Help the Peru Support Group raise awareness of the situation in Peru by becoming a member. This way you can actively support the people of Peru and be kept up to date on the latest developments.

Members receive the 'Peru Update' six times a year as well as free copies of any addition publications produced by the group.

Membership is currently:

£15.00	Waged
£ 7.00	Unwaged
£20.00	Small Group
£45.00	Organisation

Overseas please add £5.00 extra for postage.

If you would like further information about any of the resources, or to join the Peru Support Group, please contact the co-ordinator at:

**Peru Support Group
Unit 3, Canonbury Yard
190a New North Rd
London N1 7BJ
020 7354 9825 / 020 7288 8655
perusupport@gn.apc.org**

**Cover photo: Vera Lentz
"Women shows a passport photo of a relative
disappeared in Ayacucho, 1984."**

An estimated 70,000 Peruvians lost their lives between 1980 and 2000 as a result of violent conflict between the security forces and two guerrilla organisations, Sendero Luminoso and the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA). Hundreds of thousands were forced to flee their homes in search of refuge. The death toll in Peru in these years overshadows that, for instance, of Chile and Argentina in the 1970s. Most of the victims were innocent people, caught in the crossfire in this most savage struggle for power and control in the central and southern Andes. They were mainly poor Quechua-speaking peasant farmers, whose families suffered immensely and whose communities were often destroyed.

For much of the last 20 years, these were people that the rest of Peru preferred to forget. Until now, the true dimensions of human suffering have not been known. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission - began work in 2001 to piece together the history of human rights violations in the Andes and to recommend policies to help mitigate the suffering - published its nine-volume report in August 2003. It makes grim reading. However, uncovering the truth of what happened is but a first step. As Salomon Lerner, the Commission's president, says in the prologue of this report: "Our work is complete, but the task of building justice and reconciliation has only just begun".

In this short publication, the Peru Support Group seeks to describe the work of the Commission and to present both its main findings and its recommendations for action. By so doing, it seeks to contribute to building international solidarity for Peru. The international community, which did woefully little to stem the violation of human rights in Peru in the 1980s and 1990s, now has the opportunity to support genuine reconciliation. It can do this both by helping persuade the Peruvian authorities to act fully on the Commission's suggestions and by providing some of the money and expertise required for this to happen. Unless justice is done and is seen to be done, the old resentments of the past will - sooner or later - reassert themselves.