



# REVOLUTIONARY WORKER

Voice of the  
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

No. 675

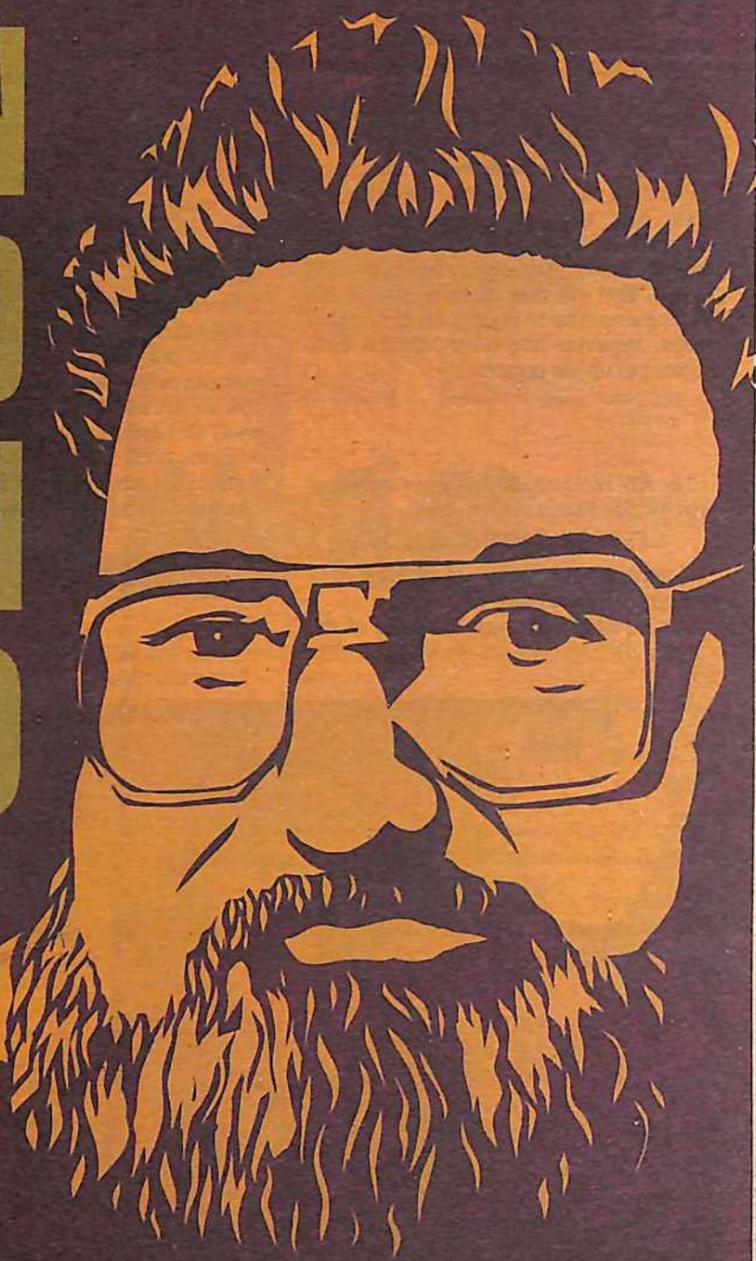
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## WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND CHAIRMAN GONZALO



Chairman Gonzalo,  
Chairman of the Communist Party of Peru.

### SPECIAL SECTION



**Something New  
in the New World:**

**A Report on the  
People's War in Peru**

# Messages for Chairman Gonzalo from the Barrios

The following report came from the S.F. Bay Area:

Shortly after the arrest of Chairman Gonzalo in Peru, revolutionaries in the San Francisco Bay Area xeroxed up bright colored posters of Gonzalo raising a fist from behind bars with the slogan: "Free Chairman Gonzalo!" They took these to the Mission District, San Francisco's Latino neighborhood, and went to talk to store-owners in the area. Mostly immigrants—Arabs, Latinos, Indians and Asians—the shopkeepers in the area said that they had been following the news of Gonzalo's arrest. People united with the struggle to free Chairman Gonzalo because of strong anti-imperialist sentiments and because, as many said, they understand that the oppressed people need revolutionary leaders. Some Asian merchants were especially glad to find out that Maoism is alive and leading a revolution in Peru. In all, about 42 shops, taquerias and other Mission businesses put up the posters. □

The RW received the following statement from the San Francisco Bay Area:

## FREE CHAIRMAN GONZALO!

Statement from a group of Bay Area Immigrant Proletarians  
The arrest of Chairman Gonzalo of the

Communist Party of Peru is supposed to stop our struggle. But we will show what it is to follow the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism of Gonzalo with the masses. This will not stop our struggle. Instead it will push our struggle ahead on the only road forward which is revolution!

I was surprised by a show of unity of the masses. When I went to work a fellow worker asked me, "What are we going to do about the arrest of Chairman Gonzalo?" I had no idea this fellow worker was with our ideology. I was surprised and not able to respond at first. But now I answer, we will do "The Impossible" so that they won't be able to harm him in any way. Among us masses we demand his freedom!

Chairman Gonzalo is the leader of the People's War in Peru which relies on the people in Peru and the masses of people of the world who follow this and have confidence in the ideology he has taught. He knows that the masses struggle for a better life and only by struggle will we win. Our purpose is to win victory and we are firm that we are not going to allow them to take away this great leader. We, like the people in Peru, need to unite and show that we support the revolution in Peru and will do our part here to aid the revolution all over the world.

**"UNTIL COMMUNISM SHINES AND ILLUMINATES THE WHOLE WORLD!"**

In the Pico Union area of Los Angeles—a concentration of working people from Central America and an area known for revolutionary politics—when supporters of the RCP heard the news of Chairman Gonzalo's arrest, they issued this call:

## FREE CHAIRMAN GONZALO! VICTORY TO THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU!

## LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF PERU!

To the proletariat, the oppressed and all who aspire to liberation:

THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT, LOYAL SERVANT OF IMPERIALISM, says they have in their clutches Abimael Guzmán, "Chairman Gonzalo" of the Communist Party of Peru. If this is true, we should raise our voices and demand: FREE CHAIRMAN GONZALO!

For more than 12 years, the PCP, led by Gonzalo, has been waging a relentless people's war. While phony communists in other countries are giving in (for example, South Africa and El Salvador), Chairman Gonzalo has been leading a people's war which is advancing towards communism, building base areas where the new power is arising, preparing the nationwide seizure of power and thus contributing to the world revolution.

Such a leader is worth more than gold. We must defend him! Fujimori has vented

his hatred and is scared, he says that Gonzalo is a "degenerate, terrorist, the devil." Since Fujimori's and his master's "god" is the dollar, the world could use more "devils" like GONZALO.

Fujimori has proclaimed September 24 a "holiday" to "celebrate" the capture of Gonzalo, and called on people all over the world to raise the Peruvian flag. With that "holiday" they hope to lay the basis for killing Gonzalo. The oppressors are debating in their international press if a military tribunal should execute him or if he should commit "suicide."

It's time to get to work! Let's build our own international movement, and demand, FREE CHAIRMAN GONZALO! as part of our revolutionary preparation right here in the belly of the beast. These are your tasks:

- 1. Get this leaflet out broadly in your neighborhood, your job, and your hang-outs, to lead and organize others.
- 2. Call radio stations and express these views to a large audience and to mobilize masses.
- 3. Raise the RED FLAG on September 24 in the oppressed people's zones, on walls, trees, poles and doors, under the noses of the police, the INS and other guardians of the oppressors!

Supporters of the  
Revolutionary Communist Party, USA,  
Pico-Union, L.A.



Los Angeles, April 1992.

## Three Main Points

by Bob Avakian  
Chairman of the RCP, USA

What do we in the Revolutionary Communist Party want people to learn from all that is exposed and revealed in this newspaper? Mainly, three things:

1) The whole system we now live under is based on exploitation—here and all over the world. It is completely worthless and no basic change for the better can come about until this system is overthrown.

2) Many different groups will protest and rebel against things this system does, and these protests and rebellions should be supported and strengthened. Yet it is only those with nothing to lose but their chains who can be the backbone of a struggle to actually overthrow this system and create a new system that will put an end to exploitation and help pave the way to a whole new world.

3) Such a revolutionary struggle is possible. There is a political Party that can lead such a struggle, a political Party that speaks and acts for those with nothing to lose but their chains: The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

This Party has the vision, the program, the leadership, and the organizational principles to unite those who must be united and enable them to do what must be done. There is a challenge for all those who would like to see such a revolution, those with a burning desire to see a drastic change for the better, all those who dare to dream and to act to bring about a completely new and better world: Support this Party, join this Party, spread its message and its organized strength, and prepare the ground for a revolutionary rising that has a solid basis and a real chance of winning.



Graffiti in a Peruvian shantytown reads: "Long Live Chairman Gonzalo."

## Worldwide Campaign to Defend Chairman Gonzalo

# Not a Minute To Lose

As soon as word spread that Chairman Gonzalo (also known as Dr. Abimael Guzmán) was in the clutches of the Peruvian state, people across the globe rallied to defend his life. The following are reports that have reached us as we go to press.

### Press Conference in London

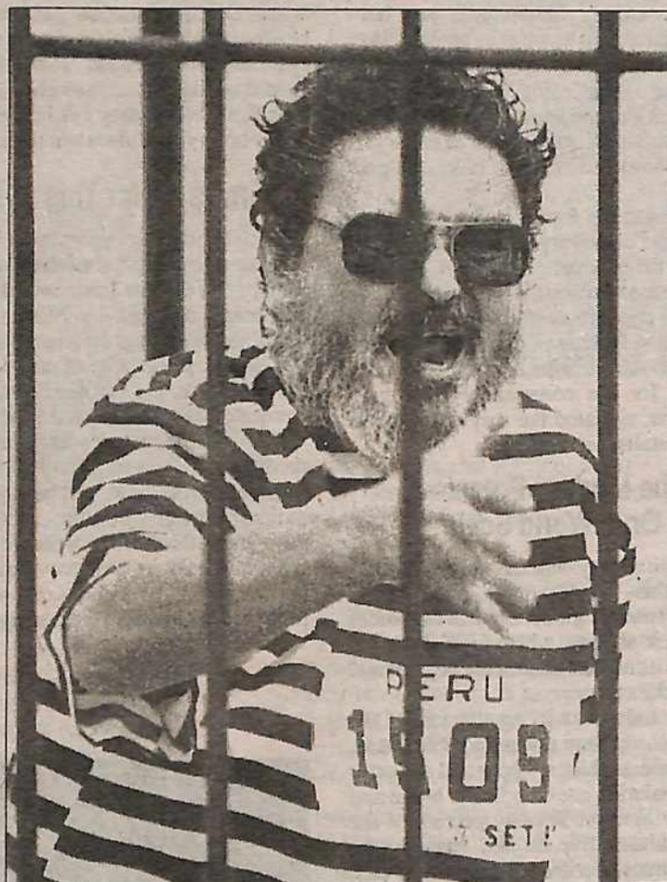
On Thursday, September 24, the newly formed International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán (IEC) held a press conference in London to publicize their activities and demands. The press conference featured the La Torres, the parents-in-law of Dr. Guzmán. In his statement, Mr. La Torre said:

"All the infamies that Fujimori is heaping on Dr. Guzmán have the very precise criminal objective of creating public opinion to legalize the assassination of Dr. Guzmán. It is not only as family members that we are raising these denunciations here today before the international press. We are also here as Peruvian citizens, as part of the Peruvian people and the peoples of the world. We cannot, we must not permit this sinister murder plot to be realized against a man of such historical stature for Peru and the world. We protest with all our strength against imposing a military tribunal and war council on Dr. Guzmán. We demand that the government of Peru respect the legitimate rights of Dr. Guzmán that are expressed in the Peruvian constitution and by the international treaties that Peru has ratified. In short, we demand that the government of Peru respect the health, the physical integrity, the judicial rights and above all, the life of Dr. Guzmán. We are calling upon international public opinion, upon the world press, upon the international Red Cross and similar institutions, upon democratic intellectuals, progressives and revolutionaries the world over to develop an intense and urgent campaign in defense of the life of Dr. Abimael Guzmán."

Other participants in the press conference included: John Gerassi, author of *The Great Fear in Latin America* and former organizer of the Vietnam War Crimes Tribunal with Jean-Paul Sartre; Hugh Stephens, director of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal; A. Shivanand, editor of London publication *Race and Class*; N. Sanmugathasan, Gen-

eral Secretary, Ceylon Communist Party and renowned political activist in Sri Lanka since the 1940s; Luis Arce Borja, former editor of the revolutionary Peruvian publication *El Diario*. In 1988 Arce conducted the only interview with Chairman Gonzalo ever published. This 200 page interview remains the most complete exposition of Chairman Gonzalo's political viewpoint.

In one of its Emergency Bulletins, the IEC announced, "Many prominent individuals and diverse political forces have expressed support for our goal and offered their help." In the U.S. initiators of the IEC include radical attorney William Kunstler; Father Lawrence Lucas, author of *Black Priest, White Church*; John Gerassi; Heriberto Ocasio; and Jeff Paterson, the first Marine resister to the Gulf War. The third



Lima, September 24, 1992—Imprisoned Chairman Gonzalo speaks at a press conference.

IEC Emergency Bulletin reports delegations have formed to go to Peru to defend Chairman Gonzalo's life. It says, "Some delegations are already in transit for Peru. Their names will be released upon arrival." The IEC has issued an urgent call for funds and has called for a worldwide campaign for ONE DAY'S WAGES TO DEFEND THE LIFE OF DR. ABIMAEEL GUZMÁN. And the IEC has called for an INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TO DEFEND THE LIFE OF DR. ABIMAEEL GUZMÁN, October 7.

On September 24, delegations went to Peruvian embassies in a number of countries, including the United States, Germany, France, United Kingdom, and Nepal to press the demands of the IEC.

The U.S. Committee to Support the

Revolution in Peru (CSRP) reports considerable success in gathering a delegation of lawyers, journalists, activists and others to go to Peru. As we go to press, the RW was told this delegation was making final preparations for departure, and that the names of delegates would be released after they arrived in Lima.

The IEC reports a response from countries around the world including India, South Africa, and Turkey. Delegations to Peru are planned from New Delhi, India and Katmandu, Nepal. On September 24 mass rallies were held in Katmandu and New Delhi, organized by the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) to protest the arrest of Gonzalo and the conspiracy to execute him. A delegation presented a protest note to the Peruvian embassy in New Delhi and sent a copy to Peru. On September 25 another mass demonstration of 5,000 was held in New Delhi. Fifteen organizations have formed a united front to save the life of Dr. Guzmán. Eighty-one members of the Parliament of Nepal issued a statement demanding the immediate and unconditional release of Dr. Guzmán.

Bani-Sadr, former president of Iran, sent a telegram to the Peruvian Embassy in Paris (where he lives in exile), denouncing the treatment of Dr. Guzmán. A statement from the Movimiento Popular Peru in France expressed outrage that "the vile forces of the reactionary Peruvian state have snatched our beloved and Chairman Gonzalo," and pointed out, "Chairman Gonzalo has taught us: 'Look ahead: the leadership could be destroyed, in part, not all, but the leaders that remain must and can follow the plans, the struggle, the peoples war.'" Three organizations from the Dominican Republic—Fuerza Para Resistencia y Liberación Popular (FRLP), Partido de los Trabajadores Dominicanos (PTD), and the Movimiento Popular Dominicano (MPD M-L) issued a joint statement expressing their solidarity with the Peruvian revolution and its Chairman Gonzalo.

### Report on Chairman Gonzalo

By September 23, the IEC reports that Alfredo Crespo, attorney for Dr. Guzmán, had been able to visit Dr. Guzmán five times. He reported that Chairman Gonzalo

Continued on page 6

## Revolution Challenges the Columbus Legacy

# The Parable of Potosí's Silver Mountain

Fifty years after Columbus landed in the Bahamas, a prospector found a 2,000-foot mountain of almost solid silver in San Luis Potosí (pronounced Po-to-SEE) in what is now Bolivia.

By then the Spaniards had plundered the Inca empire for 25 years. A complex system of farming terraces and highways was the basis for a class society among the Incas—with a state and a ruling class that dominated nine million people along the western spine of South America. The Spaniards destroyed all of this, the Inca society collapsed, and the native peoples

in the Nazi rubber plant at the Auschwitz death camp during World War 2. The Andean miners of today claim that eight million human beings died in Potosí over the last five centuries.

Potosí became the largest city in the Americas and the crown jewel of the Spanish empire. The invaders had created a flesh-eating social machine that sucked millions of the Inca people into the mines of Potosí and spit out silver. A Spaniard, Domingo de Santo Tomás, called this mine "a mouth of hell."

This "mouth of hell" is a good example of the New World the Columbus Invasion produced. The same relations were created over and over again in a world of new empires: slavery, feudal land ownership, and merchant capitalism combined to produce for an exploding world market. A river of wealth flowed east across the oceans, enriching the bankers of northern Europe and finally financing the rise of modern capitalist industry.

The violent domination of rich over poor was at the heart of these relations: Indians and Africans were worked to death at the point of a gun—while in Europe peasants were increasingly herded into new-born capitalist factories to work as proletarians.

At one extreme of this new world were a handful of rising capitalist nations, concentrated in Europe and on the eastern coast of North America. At the other extreme was the vast plundered world of colonial "possessions."

Karl Marx, the founder of communism, wrote: "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation [killing], enslavement and entombment in the mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren [hunting preserve] for the commercial hunting of black skins, signaled the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production."

### The Modern Potosí—On a World Scale

The capitalist system has refined and expanded this world order, reproducing Potosí across the globe. Look at the Andes today. Look at Peru, where official society mobilizes its armies against the peasant and working class poor.

In Peru today, the living standard of the masses is lower than it was under the Incas. Most people are bitterly poor and a quarter of the population are completely broke and constantly hungry. Seventy percent of the children under five in the shantytowns around Lima suffer from malnutrition. Last year nearly 20,000 children in Peru died from easily preventable diarrhea diseases.

There are still mines in Potosí and countless other sites dotting the Andes. There, the descendants of the Incas work for about \$2 a day and still die from malnutrition, poisoning, and the bullets of soldiers. The modern descendants of the original Indian peoples form the vast majority in Peru, but are despised and brutalized by the capitalists and landowners who descended mainly from European conquerors. When the dictates of international capital cause a drop in world prices, thousands of workers instantly lose their jobs, peasant farmers can't make ends meet—and often starve.

Peru is wealthy in resources. The people there have labored non-stop for centuries. Why are they so bitterly poor? Because the modern structure of world relations is founded on the systematic oppression of billions of people. It is a world sharply divided



Bolivian miners enter a tin mine.

starved.

Still craving wealth to pay the debts of feudal Spain, the European conquerors developed a new system of production. Africans were brought as slaves to the plantations on the Pacific Coast. And Native peoples from the entire region were forced onto death marches that led to Potosí. Most never returned.

The Indian miners were dropped down shafts bored hundreds of feet into the mountain. They chipped silver from the rock faces for weeks without seeing the sun. And they died, from falling rocks, beatings, starvation and the poisonous vapors of arsenic and mercury. Historian David Shannon estimates the life expectancy of Indian slaves was not more than three or four months—the same as for prisoners



San Luis Potosí, Bolivia. Inset: 16th-century Spanish silver coin from the Potosí mine.

between a handful of wealthy countries and many impoverished countries of the Third World. In the 1980s, foreign debt of Third World countries grew from \$288 billion to \$423 billion. In those same 1980s, \$200 billion more left the oppressed countries in profits than came in from loans and investments.

The roots of the modern world order can be traced to the Columbus Invasion of 1492. A river of wealth still flows from the poor to the rich, from south to north, from the proletarian laborer to the capitalist banker. We communists call this modern system IMPERIALISM. And it is this system the ruling classes are glorifying when they celebrate the 500th anniversary of Columbus invasion.

### Time's Up for This System!

Such continuing oppression is hardly the only story coming out of the Andes today! In Peru, the modern inheritors of Columbus are being defeated by Maoist guerrillas based deep among the masses of people. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru, the revolution has risen up, flesh and blood, armed and visionary!

The communist leader Mao Tsetung predicted: "The next 50 to 100 years or so, beginning from now, will be a great era of radical change in the social system throughout the world, an earth-shaking era without equal in any previous historical period. Living in such an era, we must be prepared to engage in great struggles which

will have many features different in form from those of the past."

In Peru, the Maoist revolutionaries say that earlier communal forms of Indian societies provide "living seeds that will serve future socialist development." But they also point out that the world revolution of the 20th and 21st centuries won't be a mystical return to early communalisms.

Over 500 years, human society has been increasingly transformed by modern capitalist production and its world-embracing market. Capitalism created its own gravedigger, the class of propertyless workers—the proletariat. Only the proletarian revolution can truly shatter the international order built on the oppression of whole peoples and stop the genocide that capitalist governments, missionaries and industry wage against indigenous peoples.

No matter how many times the ruling classes brag that they have killed revolution forever, communism springs from the very workings of their society. The people's war shaking Peru is the latest outbreak.

As the imperialists celebrate Columbus and the "rosy dawn of capitalism," they claim the future is theirs. No, it isn't.

There is a new red glow from the high Andes. It shows that we are seeing the rosy dawn of world communism. In the face of the shameful Columbus celebrations, people need to step up support everywhere for the people's war in Peru. The future belongs to the oppressed people—if we dare to seize it. □



Guerrilla fighters led by the Communist Party of Peru.

# INFORMATION AS WEAPONRY: LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT THE REVOLUTION IN PERU



Guerrilla fighters led by the Communist Party of Peru.

## Interview with Chairman Gonzalo

In this unprecedented interview, the leader of the Communist Party of Peru, Chairman Gonzalo, speaks on a wide range of questions facing the Peruvian revolution, including: ideology, the party, the people's war, military strategy, the national political situation, international policy, as well as his own personal development as a revolutionary. Available in Spanish and in a new English translation by the CSRP. \$6 plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling.

**El Diario Internacional.** Special international edition of the revolutionary Peruvian newspaper *El Diario*, which continues to report the truth about developments in Peru in the face of vicious repression by the Peruvian government. Published by Luis Arce Borja and distributed in the U.S. by the CSRP. Available in Spanish and English editions. \$20 for 13 issues.

**Revolution in Peru—video documentary.** This exciting video brings to life the history, aims and achievements of the People's War led by the Communist Party of Peru, from its humble beginnings in 1980 to its most recent advances in establishing revolutionary base areas in the countryside. Combines inspiring news footage, photographs, revolutionary artwork and Andean music. 40-minutes long, with narration. Available in Spanish and English versions. Produced by the Committee To Support the Revolution in Peru. \$15.

**Our Red Flag Is Flying in Peru.** This article describes the recent advances

by the People's War and the revolutionary political power being won by the oppressed masses in the countryside today. It exposes the extent of U.S. intervention against the revolution already and its plans to greatly step up that intervention. Published in issue #16 of *A World To Win*. Distributed in pamphlet form by the CSRP in English and Spanish. \$1.50.

**Stop U.S. Intervention in Peru! Break Through the Lies! Support the Revolution in Peru!** An informative 6-page pamphlet complete with "What You Can Do." In English (soon in Spanish). CSRP. 25 cents.

**Programme of the Communist Party of Peru.** Spanish and English. 10 cents.

**On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and On Gonzalo Thought.** Documents adopted by the First Congress of the Communist Party of Peru in early 1988 (published in *A World to Win* #11, 1988). \$5.

**Guerra Popular en el Peru.** Compilation of important documents

by the Communist Party of Peru, 1968-1988. Edited and with a prologue by Luis Arce Borja. (In Spanish.) 418 pages. \$18.

**Develop the People's War To Serve the World Revolution,** by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Peru. Dated August 1986, this document consists of two parts: "Six Years of People's War" and "One Year of the APRA Government." 84-page pamphlet published by the CSRP. \$5.

**Develop Guerrilla Warfare (1982) and Don't Vote! Instead, Expand the Guerrilla War to Seize Power for the People (1985).** Two important documents by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Peru. 36-page pamphlet published by the CSRP. \$2.50.

**Revolution in Peru.** This pamphlet by the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, published in 1985, goes into the history of the early years of the people's war and explains in a basic way the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line leading the revolution. 47-page pamphlet. CSRP. \$2.50.

**Principles of Unity of the Committee To Support the Revolution in Peru.** English and Spanish. Free.

**T-shirt – "Qatarisun Lliu!"** ("Let Us Rise Together" in Quechua, one of the Indian languages of Peru). Beautiful silkscreen of woman and man guerrilla fighters. CSRP. \$10 (med., large, X-large).

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**The revolutionary internationalist journal *A World to Win*** carries many important articles and documents about the people's war in Peru.

**These publications and other CSRP materials can be ordered directly from the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru at:**

Committee to Support the  
Revolution in Peru  
P.O. Box 1246  
Berkeley, CA 94701.

**Many of these publications are also available at Revolution Books stores and outlets, or order from:**

Liberation Distributors  
P.O. Box 5341  
Chicago, IL 60680.

**For mail orders include postage and handling expenses: \$1.50 for first item and \$.50 for each additional item.**

Messages can be left for the CSRP at (510) 644-4170

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# Worldwide Campaign

Continued from page 3

is under extreme pressure but is not being tortured. Crespo added that Gonzalo is in good health physically. Crespo told Chairman Gonzalo about the international efforts being made to defend his life and says Chairman Gonzalo sent his regards and appreciation.

The IEC repeatedly stresses the extreme urgency and danger facing Gonzalo. IEC reports that Crespo believes the coming military trial will be held in secret and perhaps within the next very few days. In press reports, Peruvian officials say that the military trial of Dr. Guzmán should be finished "before the end of the month."

Massoud Rahimi, provisional coordinator of the IEC, pointed out that President Fujimori has publicly supported a death sentence, even though the Constitution of Peru outlaws it. "The only question for the regime is how to kill Abimael Guzmán," said Rahimi, citing an article in the British imperialist magazine, *Economist* which openly argues for the death penalty for Gonzalo and speculates in a blood-thirsty way on all the pretexts that could be used to cover the assassination of Gonzalo.

Meanwhile Fujimori, President of Peru's military state, said security measures were being severely tightened to prevent any escape before the trial next week. Chairman Gonzalo has reportedly been moved from the headquarters of the National Anti-Terrorist Directorate (DINCOTE) and handed over to the Navy—the same Navy famous for its role in the massacre of 300 prisoners at El Frontón in 1986.

Heriberto Ocasio, of the U.S. Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, told the RW: "Our information is that the govern-



PCP graffiti on a school in a Lima slum.

ment will push ahead with the trial as early as Monday Sept. 28. There is no insurance that the trial will be public or even that its location will be known. It is likely to be a complete kangaroo court with a hooded military judge held in secret somewhere. That's why it is really urgent for the delegations to go down there."

### Turning Armed Forces Day into a Peoples' Victory

A week ago, Fujimori decreed that September 24 should be a day when reactionaries publicly celebrate the capture of Chairman Gonzalo. September 24 is the traditional celebration of the "Virgin of Mercy," the patron saint of the bloody

Peruvian Armed Forces.

On September 24, Fujimori and the military presented Chairman Gonzalo to the press for the first time. They unveiled him in a huge iron cage—the kind used to display captured tigers. The entire surrounding area was packed with heavily armed soldiers and armored vehicles. A crowd of military officials and media hacks gathered to see the leader of the Maoist revolution.

If Fujimori intended to use this display as a propaganda coup against the revolution, he failed completely. Chairman Gonzalo was impressive and unbowed. Thrusting his fist in the air, Chairman Gonzalo spoke defiantly in the face of surrounding enemies. Only the following fragments of

his ten-minute talk were clear in news broadcasts:

"Some think this is a big defeat. They are dreaming. We say, keep on dreaming. It's only a bend in the road, nothing more. Just a bend in the road. The road is long, but we will get there. We will win, you'll see, you'll see. We must carry forward the tasks set forth by the Third Plenum of the Central Committee—glorious Plenum. Let it be known that those agreements are already being carried out, and they will continue to be carried out, and we will carry through with the Fourth Plan of the people's war."

Police tried to drown Chairman Gonzalo out by singing the song of the old Peruvian state; and they were joined by the hack journalists in the audience. Gonzalo answered back with the *Internationale* the anthem of the revolutionary proletariat.

### Powerful Actions Within Peru

As for Fujimori's call for "celebrations" on September 24: as we go to press, we note the lack of press coverage celebrating a mass response to his call for anthems and reactionary flags. But the same cannot be said for the revolutionary struggle: numerous reports on the bourgeois wire services indicate that actions have taken place throughout Peru in support of the revolution and its leader.

After September 24, one headline in the U.S. media read "Strike by Shining Path Nearly Paralyzes Peru." Revolutionary leaflets had appeared in poor neighborhoods and villages of Ayacucho calling for an armed strike on September 24, to defend the life of Chairman Gonzalo. The strike was a complete success in Ayacucho—which has been a revolutionary stronghold since the revolution started there in 1980. Public transportation in the city of Ayacucho and the surrounding areas was completely stopped. Most open air markets and most shops in the region's capital were closed. Four large red PCP flags with hammers and sickles flew from hilltops surrounding the city. There had been loud military threats against the strike, but bourgeois reports said that the soldiers had not dared go beyond the outskirts of the capital city this day.

Press reports noted that graffiti supporting Chairman Gonzalo has appeared in Huaycan, a shantytown outside of Lima. Meanwhile, in Lima itself, bourgeois reports said guerrillas detonated a string of bombs and blocked two major highways with barricades.

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To send money, volunteer your help or request information, contact:

International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán  
c/o CSRP  
415-252-5786  
FAX: 415-252-7414  
P.O. Box 1246  
Berkeley, CA 94701

International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán  
FAX/Telephone 011-44-71-482.0853

mail address:  
BCM International Emergency Committee  
27 Old Gloucester St.  
London, WC1M 3XX  
United Kingdom

## Available now! New video release!

# Shantytowns and Prisons in Peru: The Revolution Advances



Summer 1991—Residents of Raucana defend against police attack with Molotovs and rocks.

Produced by the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru

Part one of this video is footage of heroic street fighting by shantytown dwellers in Lima who, led by the Communist Party of Peru, wage a determined battle against government attempts to evict them.

The second part of the video has scenes from inside Canto Grande Prison, the target of the May 1992 prison massacre carried out by Fujimori's military government. This remarkable footage shows how the revolutionary prisoners transformed their sections of the prison into bastions of resistance. It shows the prisoners in daily activities: political study, producing their own clothing, preparing their food, growing herbal medicine and resisting all attempts to force them to submit to prison authorities.

Spanish narration with English subtitles

Send \$10 plus \$3 for mailing costs to: CSRP • P.O. Box 1246 • Berkeley, CA 94701

## Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru

# Interview with Heriberto Ocasio

Following the arrest of Chairman Gonzalo, the RW spoke with Heriberto Ocasio, spokesperson for the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru.

**RW:** What is the significance of the arrest of Chairman Gonzalo?

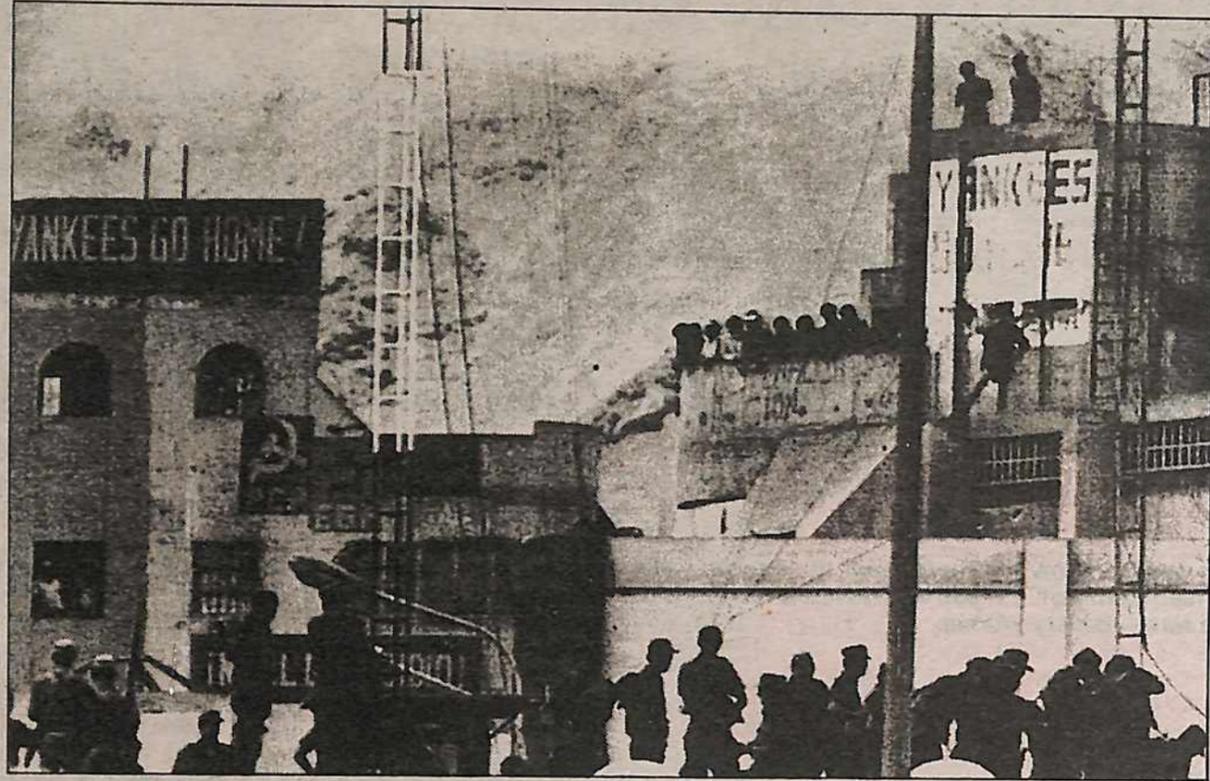
**Heriberto Ocasio:** The capture of Gonzalo is a blow to the revolution. At the same time it represents a challenge, not just to people in Peru but to people around the whole world, to take up the defense of the life of Abimael Guzmán, because the imperialists and the Peruvian government want to kill him. There is no question about that.

What they see in Gonzalo is not just the revolution in Peru but all that it represents. They see in him the symbol that revolution is not dead in the world. They see in him that communism is not dead in the world, and they want to wipe that out.

The capture of Chairman Gonzalo is a heavy blow, but the Communist Party of Peru has been steeled and tempered and gone through tremendous tests. In 1983 and 1984, in the countryside, where they were beginning to establish revolutionary base areas, the military wiped out whole villages and killed about 10,000 people—that level of genocide—over the course of several years. But the PCP was able to rebound from that and then push further into new areas of the country, because of the strength of their ideology and because of their reliance on the masses. Likewise, they had another test with the prison massacre of 1986. So they've gone through very difficult times and been able to rebound and come back stronger. To a large degree this is because of the leadership of Gonzalo.

**RW:** Tell us about the campaign to FREE CHAIRMAN GONZALO.

**Heriberto:** The point right now is to prevent harm to Gonzalo at the hands of the reactionary Fujimori regime by bringing an international spotlight on him. Gonzalo is the leader of a revolutionary party and army. He is the foremost political prisoner in the world today. That is what people have to uphold first and foremost, and if pressure is brought to bear now we will be able to defend his life. The advance of the revolution is most fundamentally what is going to free him. The most immediate danger is the death threats that the government has made, threatening to bring back execution (which has been outlawed in the Peruvian constitution). And they are also saying that "he wants to become a martyr



April 1992—Soldiers surround Canto Grande prison prior to massacre of revolutionary prisoners.

and therefore might kill himself"—similar to what happened to Stephen Biko in South Africa when he was murdered. We can't let them get away with things like this. People need to step forward from different political beliefs, and many are stepping forward to take up the defense of his life.

The CSRP has joined the efforts of the International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán—and we've gotten a good response from people who had not before been involved in supporting the revolution in Peru but now are saying to us, "If the governments are going after him in this way, this man really means something, he represents something very significant."

**RW:** What is the concrete work of the CSRP at this time?

**Heriberto:** This major battle to defend Gonzalo's life is linked with uniting many more to take a firm stand of support for the revolution and to dispel the myths that are being promoted by the U.S. State Department—who try to paint the revolutionaries as terrorists or drug traffickers. We are taking up the immediate battle of organiz-

ing people to join this International Emergency Committee. We want to do this especially on the campuses, develop new chapters of the CSRP on college campuses around the country. We want to involve students and youth in the work of the CSRP. The battle to free Chairman Gonzalo is something we will take out to the youth and college campuses because the revolution is very inspiring. Those who are looking forward, not backward—and have a world to win—are the youth, and they are the ones who are most courageous in going up against the government's policies and intervention. They want to see people in the world free themselves and win this kind of struggle. We need students to organize in their schools and take up this battle.

**RW:** What can people here do to oppose the U.S. and its puppet Fujimori at this juncture?

**Heriberto:** One of the things that is happening this year is that people are celebrating 500 years of resistance on the continent of the Americas, and that resistance is nowhere more powerful than in Peru today. It is on a qualitatively higher scale and

people are looking for this genuine resistance.

Now the intelligence assault the Peruvian government carried out with U.S. help to capture Gonzalo is putting even more world attention to this revolution. It puts even more of a challenge to us to go out to the masses, arm them with the liberating truth of what this revolution is fighting for, why it has prospects for winning in spite of this rocky and difficult time that it is going through right now. The revolution needs Chairman Gonzalo. This is the battle of the hour.

**RW:** It was reported in the RW that the CSRP has received harassment, phone threats, car break-ins, etc., in the last year. Lately there have been FBI visits that are focused on you. What is your response and attitude to this?

**Heriberto:** Well, they came knocking at my door at my house, at Revolution Books in Berkeley. They are snooping around and trying to create an atmosphere of intimidation. We call on people to not talk to them and not fall into the traps of intimidation of the political police, who are known for their dirty tricks against revolutions and revolutionaries. But the CSRP looks at these attacks as a badge of honor and a credit to the work we are doing. Many of the people who we have told about these incidents have said to us: "Well, you must be doing something right; you must be having an impact or they wouldn't be trying to harass you and intimidate you." But we must say that if their attempt is to harass and intimidate, they are going to fail because we understand the task before us, and we are determined to continue and intensify our work in this important period and we are going to rely on the people to do that. We are going to expose these attacks.

This is a government who wants to carry out their dirty work in Peru, wants to help Fujimori clamp down on the people and the revolution, wants to send in their troops and weapons of mass destruction and have silence here at home—but they won't. They're not going to have it. It makes us even more determined to go to the masses and expose what the government is doing in Peru and the need for people to develop militant struggle. So that is our basic stand. And the CSRP is sending me, along with others, on a delegation to Lima—to demand that the Fujimori government does not harm Gonzalo in any fashion and that they accord him all the rights of a political prisoner and a prisoner of war. □



Guerrilla fighters led by the Communist Party of Peru.



## INFORMATION AS WEAPONRY!

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**Something New  
in the New World:**

# **A Report on the People's War in Peru**



*Communist Party of Peru graffiti in a Lima slum.*

On September 12 the world press announced: "Most Dangerous Man of the Decade Captured." Abimael Guzmán, leader of the Communist Party of Peru—known by his war name Chairman Gonzalo—was taken prisoner by the anti-subversive police of the Fujimori regime.

For years, all that people heard in the U.S. media about Guzmán and the Communist Party of Peru, usually called the Sendero Luminoso or Shining Path in the press, were hostile accusations. But with the arrest of Gonzalo—out from under the distortions of the media—a different picture has begun to emerge.

The major attention turned to the arrest shows that Chairman Gonzalo is a revolutionary of worldwide stature with a widespread following in Peru. Revelations about CIA involvement in the search for Guzmán showed that the U.S. government

considered the revolution he leads a real threat to its interests in Latin America. "Counter-insurgency experts" cautioned against predictions of a quick defeat of the "Senderos" and warned that the basket-case economy in Peru will continue to drive people toward the PCP. News pictures showed a dignified Guzmán, unbowed in the face of police intimidation, and the women PCP leaders arrested with him—including a former prima ballerina—defiantly raising their fists.

For people whose hearts are with the oppressed around the world, these intriguing glimpses of the Peruvian revolutionaries surely raise more questions. Just who are these Maoists and what are they fighting for? How have they managed to go up against a well-armed U.S.-backed military? What kind of support do they have among the people?

Imagine... a society where homelessness, unemployment, police brutality, men dominating women and other problems have become things of the past. Material goods are not plentiful, but everyone is guaranteed a means to earn a living and collective work is organized. Those who are too sick or elderly to work are looked after by all. No special class of privileged and powerful lord it over the people. Respected leaders chosen by the people provide direction, and decisions are made collectively—women and men, old and young participating equally in solving problems and deciding their common affairs.

Is this some impractical fantasy—a kind of just society that many people dream about but think could never come about in today's world where greed and heartless competition are the rule?

No. This is for real. It's happening now in revolutionary base areas that are being built in large parts of Peru through a just war of liberation. The oppressed people in Peru are beginning to rule for themselves and change the world around them.

The process of bringing about these liberating changes is not orderly and peaceful. They are being won by an armed people through hard-fought battles with the troops of the old Peruvian state backed up by the U.S.—or the Yankee imperialists, as the Peruvian masses say. The base areas and the People's Committees through which the masses exercise their rule are the results of the Maoist people's war, led by the Communist Party of Peru.

The people's war still needs to achieve final victory over the old state in order for revolutionary power to be established over all of Peru. But in the base areas, people already talk about the old society in the *past tense*. In the documentary *The People of the Shining Path* which recently aired on British TV, Francisco, a member of one People's Committee, said: "The old society was unjust. There were landlords who oppressed and exploited the people. We have learned a lot from the Party. In the people's war we have swept away the landlords using a broom of steel as we were taught by Chairman Gonzalo."

The people's war began in May 1980 with a few armed detachments. Today the People's Guerrilla Army is a potent fighting force—fighting and winning against the government's Armed Forces. Over a third of Peru now is

under the control of People's Committees.

Even a high-level U.S. "think tank" has to admit that the Maoist guerrillas present a formidable challenge. A 1992 report by RAND pointed out the PCP's strength over a wide region of the key central mountain departments (states): "The Shining Path's level of control in and around these four departments has by now become sufficiently strong and self-reinforcing that it appears that the army will not be in a position to reverse this process in the foreseeable future. While it is impossible to make a precise estimate of the local population that has been directly or indirectly overtaken by these events, the number is certainly in the hundreds of thousands, providing the organization with a large pool of potential recruits and an even larger support base with which to continue to underwrite its general strategic plan for the region."

A historic clash is taking place in Peru. On one side is the old order—a setup so rotten that *people in Peru today eat more poorly than those who lived in this region 500 years ago before Columbus and the Spanish invasion*. On the other side, something new is rising in the New World, and it is sending shockwaves to all the continents.



Guerrilla fighters led by the Communist Party of Peru.

**ECONOMIC SHOCK AND THE REVOLUTIONARY ALTERNATIVE**

"Look at the poverty here—you can feel it. This used to be a prosperous area. They used to raise cattle here and other animals like rabbits and guinea pigs. Today, there's nothing. Why? Because of the old state's policies. The policies of economic shock have created misery for the people. The people have to sell all they have in order to survive."

Commander Luis of the PGA, interviewed in the documentary *The People of the Shining Path*

Peru is three times the size of California and has a population of about 21 million. The country is rich in natural resources. But the economic and political system in effect today means that immense wealth is taken out of Peru to profit the big banks and corporations in the U.S., Europe and Japan, while the people starve and live in misery.

The Andes sierra runs the length of the country like a spine. These arid mountains are where most of the country's people live and where Quechua and other Indian languages are spoken instead of Spanish. For centuries, the rich landlords and the elite in the cities have looked down on the peasants as *Indios* (Indians) and *cholos* ("half-breeds"). Semi-feudalism is a crushing weight on the peasants. Most of the land is still concentrated in a few hands—the traditional big landlords as well as the new state-linked "agrarian enterprises" often run by the sons of the landlords.

The eastern sierra slopes down to fertile river valleys and then to the sparsely-populated Amazon lowlands. To the west is the Pacific coast and Lima, the bloated capital city with about a third of Peru's total people. This is where the industries, the banks, the ruling political bodies and the media are all concentrated. Sharp contrasts exist *within* Lima as well. Office buildings and the wealthy neighborhoods are in one part. On the outskirts millions of poor live in the vast and growing shantytowns.

In the late 1980s "hyper-inflation" devalued the Peruvian currency by a *million* percent, devastating the lives of the people. The Fujimori government has carried out drastic "austerity" and "shock" measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund. These steps only made poor people's lives even more desperate and also squeezed many in the middle classes.

In 1990, 76,000 children in Peru died before their first birthday because of the effects of poverty. Meanwhile, the Peruvian fishing industry sent most of its catch to the U.S. in the form of pet food. The percentage of Peruvians on the brink of starvation doubled over the past three years to over half the population. Almost three-quarters of the people live below the official poverty level. Last year thousands of Peruvians died from an epidemic of cholera, a disease practically wiped out in richer countries.

The old state in Peru cannot provide for even the most basic needs of the people. The regime is so decrepit that it survives on drug money—the government changed the laws so that international drug traffickers can more easily put their profits into Peruvian banks.

This situation is compelling the broad masses of Peruvian people to search for solutions. The people's war and the base areas are giving real-life proof that there is a vastly better alternative to the old society, and this is drawing more and more people to the side of the PCP and the revolution. In the words of Commander Luis, "The Party brings solutions, not promises. Wherever the Party arrives, it transforms.... The duty of the Party is to offer an alternative, a solution. And the people are supporting us."

**CHILDREN OF THE STORM**

"We lay ambushes against the mercenaries, assassins of the people / we are guerrilla fighters, children of the storm / tempered in years of struggle...."

A huayno (traditional Andean tune) sung by PGA fighters

The armed struggle led by the PCP is mainly a peasant war based in the rural areas and following the basic military strategy of surrounding the cities from the countryside. This is the strategy of "protracted people's war" pioneered by



Lima, Peru 1990—Laundry, bathing and drinking water comes from street drain.



Food line in Lima.

# Communique from the Central Committee of the RCP, USA: Free Chairman Gonzalo!

On September 12 Chairman Gonzalo (Abimael Guzmán) of the Communist Party of Peru was grabbed by the forces of the old state there. These barking dogs of the old order are in a frenzy, racing ahead with their attempt to railroad and even murder this powerful revolutionary leader. Their fear of him is revealed in their own headlines: "Most Dangerous Man of the Decade Captured." Their fear is well-founded, because what he represents is the rise of the poor—those with nothing to lose, who are in fact beginning to win in Peru through revolution and people's war.

This criminal kidnapping was perpetrated by a criminal regime—one that dares speak of crimes while it presides over the yearly death of 60,000 Peruvian children from malnutrition and a poverty-driven epidemic of cholera. A lying regime that pretended in a phony election to oppose the other candidate's "economic shock" program and then implemented that very program once in power. A regime that cries "terror and murder," while its army carries out genocide. One which dares speak of its concern for the people, when it robs and starves them daily on behalf of the rich of Peru and to fatten the bank accounts of the U.S. and other great powers.

And who stands behind this? Who tries in vain to hide behind a puppet government as it pulls the strings? None other than the U.S. imperialist ruling class and its various discredited, murdering agencies of repression. Do these U.S. godfathers think that they fool anyone by hiding behind their own puppet? No one is fooled. People all over the world hold them fully responsible.

This is a time in the world when many people ask, where are the real leaders? Here is such a leader. Comrade Gonzalo is a leader who cast his lot with the poor. He cast it with the poor of Peru—the workers and peasants—and with the poor the world over. And his vision and daring has changed things. The poor are on the stage now in Peru, because of this leadership, forged through the Communist Party of Peru. With this kind of leadership, the masses of poor have totally redefined politics in Peru, fighting for and winning base areas of new power. All of a sudden the ruling class world media "noticed" the poor in Peru—because they've become a giant problem for them and their system. Change has begun—and is continuing at this very moment. The masses of poor are not about to give up now. They have tasted power and liberation and will not stop.

The battle in Peru is our battle. For the poor and all oppressed in the U.S., this is our struggle in Peru. It has been a growing source of worldwide hope and inspiration since the masses of Peru and their people's war burst on the scene and began delivering hard blows to our common enemy.

Now there is wishful thinking among the reactionaries and the media that the kidnapping of Comrade Gonzalo means defeat for the revolution in Peru. They hope that some more "reasonable" leadership can arise, someone who can preach to the poor that their interests can be reconciled with those who exploit and murder them. *Anything* but the poor taking up arms, creating new state power and becoming masters

of their fate. In short, they hope that the revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party of Peru can be destroyed. But as Comrade Gonzalo has said, "They are dreaming."

Under Chairman Gonzalo's leadership, the Communist Party of Peru has strong collective leadership, strong ideological roots, and a path forged through a dozen years experience of people's war. This true path has taken deep root in the Party and among the masses of poor, of peasants, of workers, of women—from the countryside to the shantytowns and cities of Peru. And it will be persevered in, despite this kidnapping. The Communist Party and the masses of Peru have shown their heroism and revolutionary determination under fire before, and they will show it again, through all twists and turns of the revolutionary struggle. Armed with Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the practice of a dozen years of people's war, they can and will fight to defend the life of Comrade Gonzalo and unite to defend and apply his revolutionary communist line. They will take the struggle to new victories. And the revolutionaries of the world stand right with them.

Comrade Gonzalo is a precious and front-rank leader of the oppressed, not only in Peru, but around the world. Our Party joins with the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and all forces worldwide who say we cannot and will not accept this railroad. We have special responsibility in this struggle because our own rulers and oppressors, the U.S. imperialists, have engineered this whole operation, as a key part of their intensifying attempt to suppress the revolution of the Peruvian people. We say "Free Chairman Gonzalo" and join with progressive forces from all corners in the urgent struggle to defend his life. We need our comrade beside us.

Our Party has learned a lot from Comrade Gonzalo. He has made valuable contributions to the continuing development of our revolutionary understanding and to strengthening the forces of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism worldwide. We look forward to more contributions by him in the future.

This is a call to bend every effort to defend the life of Comrade Gonzalo. We call upon our proletarian sisters and brothers to go all out and bust our heart if need be in support of our sisters and brothers, in support of our revolution in Peru. The comrades in Peru have been doing a magnificent job at the forefront of the world revolution this past decade and we must step up the revolutionary struggle *everywhere*. We call on proletarians in the U.S. to join with our Party in this battle and contribute everything we can to the common revolutionary cause we share with our comrades in Peru.

**Free Chairman Gonzalo!**  
**Victory to the People's War in Peru!**  
**Long Live the Communist Party of Peru!**  
**Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Is Invincible!**

Central Committee, Revolutionary Communist Party, USA  
September 25, 1992



A political education session conducted by guerrilla fighters under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru.

Mao Tsetung in China.

In April of this year Fujimori and the military pulled off a coup to gear up the counterrevolution. New curfew regulations and emergency laws greatly tightened the repression in Lima. But much of the countryside has already been under a fascist state of emergency for years.

As Amnesty International and others have documented, tens of thousands of guerrillas and peasants have been killed or "disappeared" by the Armed Forces since 1980. Under the military's doctrine of "collective responsibility," entire villages accused of helping the guerrillas are attacked. For example, in June 1989 helicopter gunships bombed villages near a highway in the Upper Huallaga Valley where an Armed Forces convoy had been ambushed. At least 80 peasants were killed.

The brutal counterrevolution is being carried out under U.S. direction. The U.S. government has sent millions of

dollars in military aid as well as Green Berets and other military personnel to train and lead the Peruvian police and army. In February 1990 a U.S.-built counterinsurgency base opened at Santa Lucía in the heart of the Upper Huallaga Valley in the eastern sierra foothills, one of the regions where the PCP is strong. It reminded one *New York Times* reporter of heavily fortified U.S. firebases in Vietnam.

What has enabled the People's Guerrilla Army to withstand such assaults and go forward? The key to their success is the PCP's application of Mao's central principle for waging people's war: "Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor, it is people, not things, that are decisive."

PGA guerrillas are not only trained in military skills and tactics but intensively educated in the Party's line and policies, so that they are fighting with a clear sense of the overall goals and strategies of the revolution. The guerrillas

*The capture of Comrade Gonzalo is a bitter blow to the revolutionary people the world over, and the danger to our comrade's life is extreme. This attack is also a challenge, a call for us to stand up and successfully prevent the reactionaries from taking the life of Chairman Gonzalo and, through struggle, hand his captors a big defeat. Defending the life of Comrade Gonzalo means defending the right of the slaves to rebel, it means defending the revolution and communism.*

*We will not allow them to take the life of this precious and uncompromising revolutionary communist leader.*

**MOVE HEAVEN AND EARTH  
TO DEFEND THE LIFE OF  
CHAIRMAN GONZALO!**

From a statement by the Committee of the  
Revolutionary Internationalist Movement,  
September 15, 1992

rely on the masses to provide food, shelter and intelligence on the enemy, and in turn take part in production to help the people. PGA military actions are combined with mass political mobilization of peasants. As for weapons, PCP Chairman Gonzalo says that the PGA follows Mao's principle—"the enemy has them and so the problem is to seize them from him."

A journalist described the PGA as "a youth movement supported by their parents," since so many of the fighters are in their teens. But all types of people become PGA fighters. Reporters from the revolutionary Peruvian newspaper *El Diario* wrote after a visit to a base area: "Among the soldiers of the PGA, neither physical traits nor skin color count. There are mestizos, whites, blacks, Asians, men and women of all ages: the elderly, adults, youth, and children. Everybody looks after one another. They walk, talk, eat and live together." The recruits come

## REPORT ON THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU

mainly from the peasants, but there are also workers, students and others.

Women play an active role in the PGA at all levels, from the top command to the fighting forces. From the early days of the movement in Ayacucho, women's liberation has been a focus of the PCP. Sociologist Carol Andreas explained why the PGA draws so many women, especially from among the Indians: "They know they will not be raped by a Shining Path soldier; they will not be humiliated and degraded for being poor, for being Indian, or for being female. Lack of formal education will not be held against them, and their interests will not be compromised for personal gain."

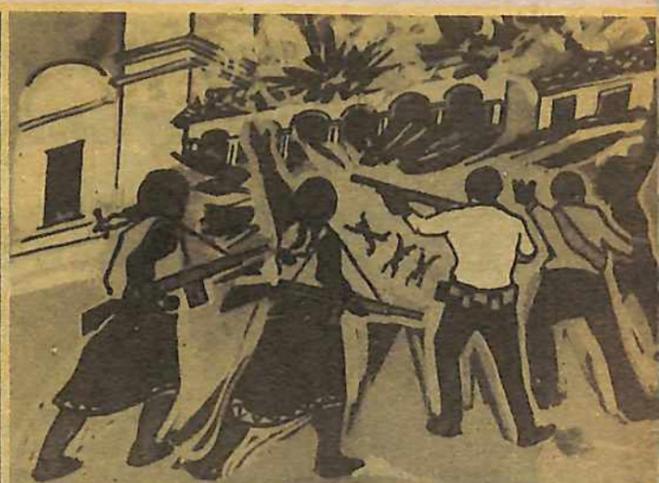
In one of the first actions of the people's war in 1980, the guerrillas led a mass meeting in Ayabamba in the department of Ayacucho where peasants aired their grievances. Hundreds of peasants were mobilized to burn down the house of a particularly hated and greedy landlord, and the crops and livestock were divided among the people. When the police came to restore the feudal order and terrorize the villagers, the guerrillas took the struggle a step further and burned down the police outpost.

Since then the military actions by the PGA have grown much larger in scope and size. In August 1988 the PGA carried out a successful "armed shutdown" in wide areas of the Huanuco department. Reporters from *El Diario* described how the guerrillas and peasants blocked the main road in the region and crippled the mobility of the Armed Forces: "At the edge of the district around Aucayacu, a town located on the last asphalted section of the roadway, a veritable army of villagers had already begun work in the darkness to completely block the road. About 5,000 people appeared before our eyes, working like ants. Peasant axes felled giant coconut trees across the roadway. Cries of 'Timber!' rang out constantly amidst the thick dust. At dawn, when the villagers completed their prodigious efforts, trunks, whole trees and tons of stones completely cut off 300 kilometers [185 miles].... All this took place under the watchful eyes of a strong guerrilla unit, who stood ready to fight in case of an attack."

It is mainly through the PGA that the Communist Party of Peru carries out mass work—organizing the new political power in the countryside and developing all kinds of mass organizations. Political education is a major part of the work of the PGA. Special attention is given to popular forms to reach illiterate masses with the revolutionary ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Party's overall line, campaigns and calls.

The 1992 RAND report had to recognize the importance of such political groundwork to the success of the people's war: "Sendero has rarely showed its hand before it is ready to strike. It is a movement, as suggested elsewhere, that clearly understands the value of political work. Armed actions, as a general rule, succeed rather than precede the establishment of a secure political base. What we do not see of Sendero, therefore, has proved to be as important as, if not more important than, what we do see."

PCP Chairman Gonzalo said that the guerrillas carried the new political power in their knapsacks from the beginning of the people's war. The PGA is winning this new power piece by piece, in the form of People's Committees set up at the village level. Until 1989, the Committees were underground because the revolution was not yet strong enough. But now there are many *Open* People's Committees ruling by the light of day. A group of Committees in a given area form a revolutionary base area. In his 1988 interview with *El Diario*, Gonzalo said that base areas are the "essence of people's war" and revealed, "Today we can say that we have hundreds of People's Committees and numerous Base Areas."



Paintings by prisoners in Lurigancho prison depict town of Vilcashuaman, where guerrillas attacked police barracks and held a mass meeting to establish one of the first People's Committees.

### NEW LIFE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY BASE AREAS

*"If you have a broken shoe, what do you do? You change it. And what do you do with the old one? You throw it away. That is how we are. This society is utterly corrupt. We have to destroy it and plant something new."*

PGA Commander Luis, in the video *The People of the Shining Path*

A recent AP wire report said: "The guerrillas destroy railroad lines, bridges, power pylons, agricultural research stations—any target that signifies progress." But what little infrastructure that has been built up in the countryside has not fundamentally changed the conditions of the people there. Under the present economic system, these modernizations are a means for the ruling class to suck profits out and for the Armed Forces to keep the people down. That's why they become targets of PGA actions.

It is in the revolutionary base areas that *real* progress is taking place. This is where a completely new society is being built.

The new political power is destroying the material basis of semi-feudal oppression by confiscating land from the big landlords and distributing it to the poor and middle peasants. The rich peasants are generally allowed to keep their land—as long as they work it themselves. No subleasing or inheritance of land is allowed.

At the same time, collective planting and harvest are organized so that the peasants can work together and help each other. This also builds the basis for the future socialist society. If there are leftover crops, part of the harvest or

seeds are given to peasants who need it most. There is also communal raising of chickens, ducks and guinea pigs and collective work on irrigation projects.

A seed exchange is set up to promote scientific seed selection and planting a variety of crops. Small and medium merchants are allowed to continue their businesses—the new power liberates them also. But a ceiling is set on profit rates. For example, the profit on fertilizers is limited to 30 percent. It used to be as high as 300 percent, forcing the peasants to go deep into debt.

The organization of new relations of production is spurring improvements in the quality and amount of harvests. There are even the beginnings of manufacture of products like clothes and tools to help the base areas become more self-sufficient and meet the needs of the people. The PCP considers the question of self-sufficiency to be extremely important. It is key to advancing the people's war, allowing the revolutionary army to rely on the people for food and supplies as they engage the enemy in warfare. And building self-sufficiency today is preparation for the future when an independent Peru can hold out against imperialist encirclement and aid other revolutionary and liberation movements.

In the base areas in the "coca zones" of the Upper Huallaga Valley, the peasants are encouraged to cut their dependence on the export of coca and receive help in growing other crops. Under the old economic system, 200,000 peasant households have been driven to grow coca to survive, because it has not been possible to live by growing food crops for the domestic market. The Western press has been filled with stories that the PCP is involved in drug trafficking. But in reality, the revolution offers the only hope to end this dependency on the coca crop. Even the reactionary Peruvian magazine *Sí* was forced to admit that "Sendero has accomplished in a few years what the government has not done for many decades: changing the cultivation habits among the peasants, as a beginning to doing away with drug trafficking."

The People's Committees are at the hub of these radical changes. The Committees are an expression of the united front under PCP leadership—the workers and peasants, along with the progressive forces from among the middle classes. The weak and vacillating national bourgeoisie—whose interests are opposed to those of the big capitalists tied to foreign imperialism—does not participate in the united front today, but they may in the future.

A People's Committee is made up of five members called commissioners. They are chosen by representatives of the village mass organizations of poor peasants, women and youth. A key principle is that the People's Committee stands for political power for the masses, not for personal power. Any commissioner who abuses his or her position is removed, put before people's trials or otherwise punished.

In a speech in New York City in February 1992, a Peruvian revolutionary described one aspect of how a People's Committee operates:

"The community affairs commissioner is in charge of administering justice and oversees the 'damages commission' formed on a rotating basis, which metes out fines—for example, when a peasant's cow damages someone else's crops. This commissioner also organizes education, through basic schools which teach four subjects: Spanish, math, natural science—on the basis of dialectical materialism—and social science—on the basis of historical



Hammer and sickle, the PCP symbol, carved into the Highway Marginal during an armed strike, 1989.

materialism. Education links theory and practice and trains the masses in Gonzalo Thought. This commissioner also organizes herbal medicine and the people's dispensary stocked with medicines confiscated from the enemy, officiates over marriages, resolves family disputes through criticism and self-criticism, registers births, sees to the people's recreation and so on."

Liberation of women is a very important part of the social transformation. Land is distributed to individual peasants—rather than the "head of the household"—so that women have a means to make a living for themselves. Divorce is granted immediately and unconditionally at the request of either partner. Women are free to join the PGA, even if their parents or husbands are opposed.

As the base areas in various regions of Peru grow in strength and size, beginning links between them are developing through economic exchange and coordinated military campaigns. These developments are the early steps of a whole new revolutionary state that will replace the old oppressive order. The PCP considers the base areas taken together as the "New Democratic People's Republic in formation."

## OVERTHROWING THE THREE MOUNTAINS

In PCP's view, applying the programme of "land to the tiller" to eliminate the old semifeudal relations in the countryside is one of the main aspects of the revolution in Peru.

The PCP also analyzes that Peru is semi-colonial—meaning that the country has an independent government but is in fact subjugated economically by imperialism. A stark example is that despite the deep economic crisis, Fujimori has obediently made good on every payment to the IMF and foreign banks on Peru's huge \$22 billion foreign debt. While half the people are on the edge of starvation, the Peruvian government pays out \$90 million a month in interest alone to the foreign banks!

The domination by imperialism has led to some capitalist development in Peru. But the PCP characterizes this as a distorted kind of capitalism "generated by imperialism in the backward countries." This "bureaucrat capitalism" does not challenge the semi-feudal relations in the countryside, and it serves the interests of foreign capital instead of the country's national development.

Imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capital—these are the "three mountains" that the PCP says oppress Peru and must be overthrown through people's war. This is the concept of the New Democratic Revolution first developed by Mao Tsetung as a path for revolution in the oppressed countries and now being applied to the concrete conditions in Peru by the PCP.

In the PCP vision, the future People's Republic of Peru will be a new state, free from the chains of imperialist domination, and moving to develop a socialist society. The PCP openly declares that all bureaucrat capital—big capital tied to foreign imperialism—will be confiscated and turned into people's property with the victory of the revolution. PCP Chairman Gonzalo emphasized that "this is very important because it gives the New Power an economic foundation from which to direct the economy and lead the



Guerrilla fighters prepare for a meal in a base camp.

way toward socialism."

The liberation of Peru is not an end in itself for the PCP. The PCP has made it clear that the new Peru will serve as a base area for the struggle of proletarians and oppressed people worldwide to get rid of all exploitation and oppression and build communism. One PCP slogan declares that the people's war is being developed "in the service of world revolution."

## NEW STAGE IN PEOPLE'S WAR

*"Throughout the valleys and Andes / guerrilla troops freely go / the best fighters / to the city from the countryside..."*

A PGA marching song

The PGA began by waging mainly guerrilla warfare, wearing down and eliminating enemy forces bit by bit. Now, nurtured by the growing strength of the base areas, the PGA engages the enemy in increasingly large battles sometimes involving hundreds of troops. The PGA is mastering the skill of "mobile warfare"—concentrating their forces to launch more coordinated and effective attacks against enemy troops and strongholds and then dispersing once again. Their troop strength has multiplied, and the commanders are experienced and politically firm. The people's war has extended to practically all parts of Peru, and guerrilla actions and other work are also increasing.

The PGA is becoming better-armed with more modern

weapons *taken from the enemy*—including rocket launchers. Reporters for *SI* magazine were told by a guerrilla commander at one base area, "Here not even helicopters dare fly over. We shoot them down immediately." In April 1990 PGA units attacked the U.S.-built firebase at Santa Lucía, eliminating some enemy forces and destroying military vehicles and aircraft.

The PGA still cannot match the Armed Forces in sheer numbers of troops or firepower. But the Armed Forces have been forced to withdraw from large parts of the countryside into the cities and military bases. The concentration of troops in fortified areas and use of air power give the Armed Forces some strength. But as in Vietnam, this situation also makes clear the strategic weakness of the reactionary forces. Chairman Gonzalo compared the government forces in the countryside to "an elephant stuck in the mud."

Due to these advances by the PGA, the revolutionary base areas are beginning to achieve *relative* stability. The base areas are not static or invulnerable—they are still subject to encirclement and suppression campaigns of the enemy. But the government's Armed Forces are faced with an armed people who have risen up all over Peru and started to exercise political power.

The PCP has announced that the people's war has now advanced from the stage of the strategic defensive to the stage of strategic equilibrium—which means a further development of the people's war and the base areas in preparation for the strategic offensive to take the final strongholds of the enemy and establish the new state.

## REVOLUTION IN THE ENEMY'S FORTRESS

*"Mr. Newspaperman, we want you to know that if necessary we are ready to give our lives because we are defending a just cause."*

Manuel, a leader of the people in the Raucana shantytown, to a TV reporter

Although the countryside is the main arena of people's war until the final showdown, the PCP has also carried out revolutionary work in the cities from the beginning. Because the cities are the centers of the reactionary rulers, the revolutionaries are not able to build new power there through People's Committees. Instead, the PCP has built the Revolutionary People's Defense Movement in order to mobilize the masses to resist the government's repression, raise their struggles to a higher level and prepare for the future insurrection.

In recent years, there have been big leaps in revolutionary activity in Lima and other cities. The Maoists have built ties and influence among students, unions, small businessmen's groups, mass organizations of various kinds and especially the poor in the shantytowns. PCP Chairman Gonzalo described the people in the shantytowns as "a belt of steel that is going to encircle the enemy." Guerrilla attacks are on the rise—a recent action was directed right at the well-guarded U.S. embassy in Lima. "Armed shutdowns" have paralyzed Lima and department capitals with rising frequency. The government and its military have responded with major leaps in repression.

The struggle at Raucana shantytown last year was an example of the escalating confrontation. Raucana was built by homeless people who occupied a vacant strip of land five miles from Lima's center. The families organized collective gardens, dining halls and raising of chickens and rabbits. They took the law into their own hands and eliminated the battering of women, prostitution, stealing and drugs in the neighborhood. People from other shantytowns reportedly came to Raucana for advice on how to deal with their own problems.

In August 1991 a judge ordered the eviction of the



PCP graffiti in a Lima slum.

Raucana squatters. But before the police came, the residents seized the initiative and took over a stretch of Carretera Central, a vital highway linking Lima with the food-producing areas of the central highlands, to mobilize support from others.

The people of Raucana held off the authorities for a month. The international journal *A World To Win* reported, "The daunting terrain of mud and tank-trap trenches dug into the ground between the shantytown and the nearest road made it difficult for the police to stage the kind of massed, sudden attack they favor. Residents on watch-towers set on stilts kept a constant watch, as did their friends throughout the area. Thousands of people remained mobilized. Finally, on September 6, several thousand soldiers came in, with automatic weapons and armored vehicles, backed by a thousand police. The residents resisted with heaps of burning tires, slings and Molotov cocktails, but eventually retreated from a confrontation they could not win."

As part of the repressive measures in Lima after last April's coup, Fujimori ordered troops to surround the Canto Grande maximum security prison where hundreds of PCP prisoners were held. Fujimori was desperate to stamp out the prisoners' resistance. In the face of torture, death threats and other abuses by their captors, the women and men at Canto Grande continued to hold fast to their revolutionary principles and discipline. They declared that the prison was a "Shining Trench of Combat" and organized communal kitchens, collective work, study and political celebrations. This had a broad effect on how people saw the PCP. A worker in Lima interviewed in the documentary *The People of the Shining Path* said, "I have heard rumors from many people that point out the good alternative offered by the Shining Path. For example, those in jail are very disciplined. These may be the people who could lead us to a better life."

On May 6-9, Fujimori's troops burst into Canto Grande with explosives. The prisoners put up heroic resistance, but at least 40 and perhaps as many as 100 were killed. The PCP immediately responded to the massacre with a powerful and sustained military offensive in Lima and other areas of the country. This was not the first mass murder of revolutionary prisoners by the Peruvian government. In 1986 the Garcia regime killed over 300 political prisoners at three jails.

**YANKEE SCHEMES CAN'T STOP PEOPLE'S DREAMS**

The arrest of Chairman Gonzalo is the biggest setback suffered by the PCP in 12 years of people's war. The revolutionaries in Peru now face new and difficult challenges.

Fujimori claims that the PCP has been "decapitated" and that his troops will defeat the people's war in a short time. But more cool-headed assessments by the U.S. media and "counter-insurgency experts" admit that the revolution has sunk deep roots in Peru and will not be dug out easily.

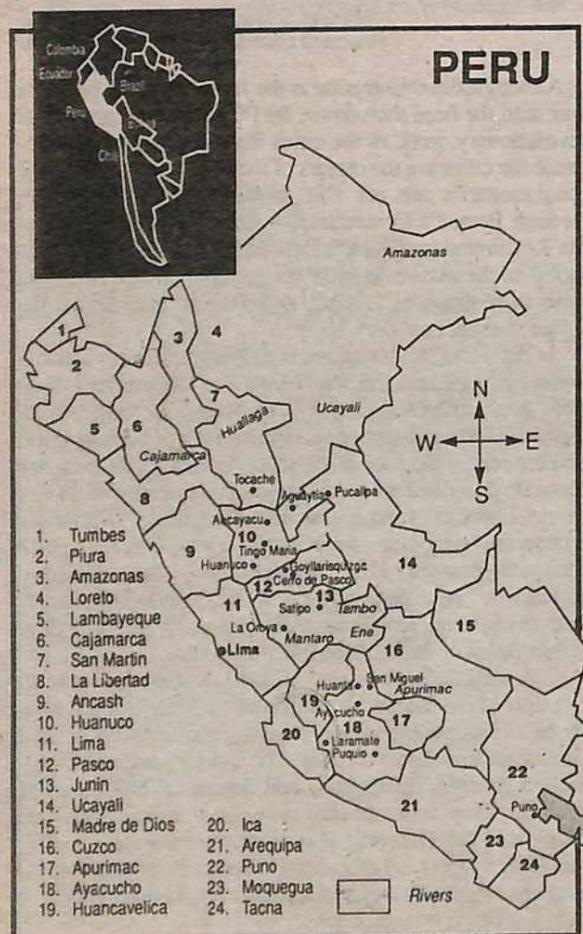
During the 1980s, hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. were part of the movement to support the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and the FMLN guerrillas in El Salvador against U.S. intervention. But by the start of the '90s, the Sandinistas had handed over power to a U.S.-backed regime. And the FMLN has given up armed struggle and is now negotiating with the U.S. client regime for a "share of power." These developments have disoriented and discouraged some people in the U.S. who now wonder if it is really possible for any liberation movement in Latin



Summer 1991—Residents of Raucana defend against police attack with molotovs and rocks.



Raucana residents dig trenches to block police assault.



America to go up against a powerful foe like U.S. imperialism.

But U.S. intervention was not the only factor that led to the defeats in Nicaragua and El Salvador. In fact, the people in Nicaragua and El Salvador showed time and time again that they were willing to sacrifice and fight courageously to defeat the reactionaries and their Yankee masters. The problem is that their leaders were not coming from the starting point of waging an all-the-way revolution to break their countries out of imperialist domination. Gonzalo pointed out that "Nicaragua carried out an incomplete revolution and their problem is that they didn't destroy the power of the whole bourgeoisie.... A democratic revolution must wipe out the three mountains, and in Nicaragua that has not been done."

Instead of relying on the strength and power of the people, the Sandinistas and the FMLN looked to the Soviet Union for so-called "aid." Soviet "aid" was not real internationalist help to liberation movements but a tool in imperialist superpower rivalry with the U.S. And with the collapse of phony communism in the Soviet Union, the Sandinistas and FMLN were left out in the cold. They had to go even more openly down the road of conciliation with the U.S. and reactionary forces.

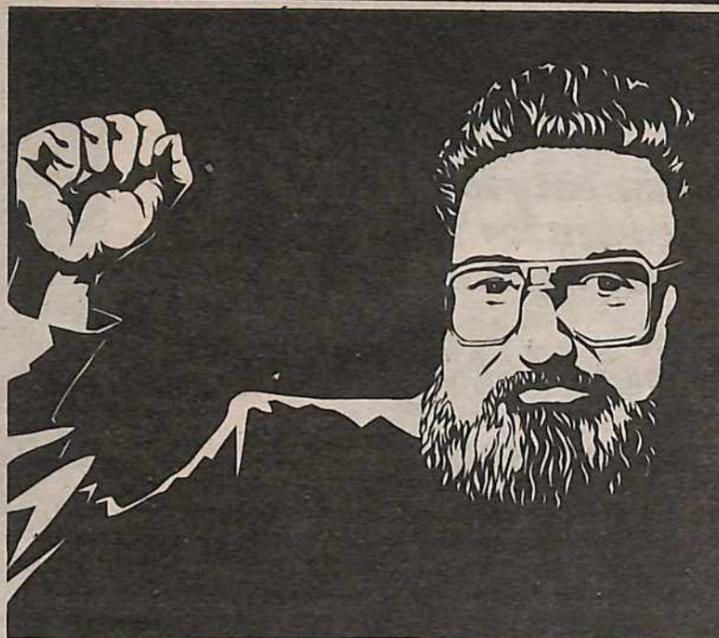
The Maoist revolutionaries in Peru are completely different—even the U.S. has to acknowledge this. Bernard Aronson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, told a Congressional hearing this March: "Sendero Luminoso is unlike any other insurgent or terrorist group

that has ever operated in Latin America. Put out of your mind the FMLN of El Salvador which just signed a peace agreement, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua who allowed themselves to be voted out of office, the M-19 of Colombia and other South American insurgencies that have ended their violent struggle to take advantage of the political space open to the peaceful, democratic left. Sendero Luminoso is in a category by itself."

Seeing the people's war as a serious threat to their interests, the U.S. has geared up its open and covert attacks on the PCP. The arrest of PCP leader Gonzalo is part of these U.S. schemes. But with Chairman Gonzalo's leadership, the PCP has been preparing and steeling their ranks and the masses to resist and advance in the face of this rising U.S. intervention.

In a speech commemorating the 40th anniversary of the 1949 Chinese revolution, Chairman Gonzalo spoke with determination and optimism about the challenges facing the PCP and the revolutionary people of Peru: "Yankee aggression, whether it be direct or indirect by way of puppet governments, is bringing about a war of national liberation, and despite the sacrifice and the efforts this would require, there will be a magnificent opportunity to unite 90 percent of the Peruvian people, at a time when the Party is calling for the countrywide seizure of power, and this will mean more favorable, though more difficult, conditions for the Peruvian revolution. Imperialism is dreaming if it thinks it can snuff out the revolution." □

# Portrait of a Revolutionary Communist Leader



Chairman Gonzalo, Chairman of the PCP.

At night throughout Peru, teams of revolutionary activists go out with paint buckets. By morning, the words "Long Live Chairman Gonzalo!" appear everywhere alongside other Maoist slogans. On burnt-out police stations in peasant villages. On huge water tanks above Lima's shantytowns. Meanwhile, the newspapers that serve the rich and powerful label this same Chairman Gonzalo a "bloodthirsty mastermind of the Shining Path terrorists." Fujimori, head of the old Peruvian state, calls Chairman Gonzalo "a monstrosity."

Who is this man so honored by Peru's revolutionary people and so hated by Peru's ruling class?

## A Child of the Class Struggle

Chairman Gonzalo was born Abimael Guzmán Reynoso on December 3, 1934, in Arequipa in southern Peru. When Abimael Guzmán was a teenager, the peasants rose up. In his 1988 interview, Gonzalo says: "I'd say that what has most influenced me to take up politics has been the struggle of the people. I saw the fighting spirit of the people during the uprising of Arequipa in 1950—how the masses fought with uncontrollable fury in response to the barbarous slaughter of the youth. And I saw how they fought the army, forcing them to retreat to their barracks. And how forces had to be brought in from other places in order to crush the people.... I believe that like every communist, I am the child of the class struggle and of the Party."

Gonzalo became an activist in Catholic high school and a communist while in college studying philosophy and law. On a trip to the poor mountain region of Ayacucho he went deeply among the people. It changed his life. He says, "The masses and the people change us in many ways; Ayacucho helped me discover the peasantry.... There too, I started to understand Chairman Mao Tsetung."

In the early '60s, Gonzalo made Ayacucho his base of operations. He got a job as a philosophy professor in a small local college which attracted many peasant youth. Audiences of peasants and young revolutionaries packed the lecture halls to hear Dr. Guzmán discuss revolutionary

politics. He was able to break down the most complex issues so that ordinary people could clearly see which road would lead them to liberation.

## The Struggle for a Revolutionized Communist Party

From the time he joined the Communist Party, Gonzalo struggled against all kinds of revisionist (phony communist) theories. In the 1950s and early '60s, the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru was rotten. They opposed revolution. They worked to make deals with sections of the ruling classes and the military. These sellouts allied themselves with the phony communist rulers of the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, different strategies fought for influence among young revolutionaries. Some wanted to imitate the so-called "Cuban road." They believed that brave bands of guerrillas could trigger the collapse of the government from isolated mountain strongholds, without mobilizing the masses of people for a thoroughgoing social revolution under the leadership of a vanguard communist party. Others said it was madness to prepare a revolutionary war—they said revolutionaries should just lie low and study.

In the early '60s, Chairman Gonzalo formed the red fraction of Ayacucho. In his *El Diario* interview, he recalls, "The fraction began to pose the problem of how to develop the revolution in Peru, and found these issues dealt with in Chairman Mao Tsetung's works which had by then begun to arrive in our country. What issues did we focus on? We put forward that the revolution in Peru needed a Party with a solid ideological and political foundation, that the peasantry was the main force in our society while the proletariat was the leading class, and that the road we must follow was from the countryside to the city."

From then on, the life story of Chairman Gonzalo merges with the history of the people's war in Peru.

## The Struggle for a Beginning

Chairman Gonzalo led the struggle to reconstitute the Communist Party of Peru

(PCP) on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. And he led this revolutionary vanguard in the difficult struggle to launch the armed revolutionary struggle for power. There were many new problems to solve.

During this period, Chairman Gonzalo traveled twice to China. In those days, China was still a genuine socialist society in the midst of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Mao Tsetung.

Chairman Gonzalo says: "In China, I had the chance which I'd like to see many have, of being in a school where politics was taught, from international questions to Marxist philosophy.... I can remember the teacher who taught us about open and secret work.... Later they taught us about military questions. But here they also began with politics, people's war, then the forging of the armed forces, strategy and tactics. And then the practical part that went with it, like ambushes, attacks, military movements, as well as how to assemble explosive devices." Gonzalo recalls his teachers saying: "Remember what the masses can do, they have inexhaustible ingenuity, what we've taught you the masses will do and will teach you all over again."

In the late seventies, counter-revolutionaries seized power in China after Mao Tsetung's death. Chairman Gonzalo remained true to Mao's teachings, and led the Peruvian communists to understand and oppose the counterrevolutionary coup. When Peruvian Maoists hung dead dogs in front of the Chinese embassy in Lima, it was a political message heard around the world. The PCP later joined with other Maoists, including the RCP, USA, in creating the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement which has gathered together genuine communists around the world.

During the preparations of the 1970s, the influence of the Communist Party of Peru was built deeply among the people by combining bold mass struggle and secret means. Party cells were formed in high schools and peasant villages. Secret Party schools trained activists as hardened communist cadre. In 1975 Gonzalo went underground to make final preparations for beginning the armed struggle.

## The Daring Beginning of Armed Struggle

Through continuing inner-Party struggles—called the "two-line struggle" by Maoists—Chairman Gonzalo led the party members to commit their lives to the people's war. He founded the Party Military School to train party cadre in the art of war. Finally, on May 17, 1980, the Maoist people's war started with a guerrilla attack on an election headquarters in Ayacucho.

It was Chairman Gonzalo who led the formation of the People's Guerrilla Army in 1983. He led the party through the difficult days of 1983-84, when the army tried to crush the revolution. In the face of an avalanche of mass murder in Ayacucho, Gonzalo developed the strategy that spread the revolution to other parts of Peru. He guided the new People's Committees that have been created in recent years to rule the base areas where the forces of the old state have been driven out.

## Far-sighted Leadership

The revolutionary struggle of the working class molded Abimael Guzmán into an outstanding communist thinker and leader. And in turn, he shapes the revolutionary process in Peru with his thoughts and actions. At every point in Peru's revolutionary process so far, the leadership of Chairman Gonzalo has been decisive.

Revolutionary people in Peru have a saying: "Chairman Gonzalo is the guarantee of victory all the way to communism." Is it any wonder that the oppressors consider him "Public Enemy Number 1"?

Mao Tsetung said that when the enemy paints revolutionaries as utterly evil and without a single virtue, it demonstrates they have achieved a great deal in their work. By this Maoist standard, Chairman Gonzalo has achieved a great deal. But the life work of this communist leader has only just started! Leaders of this vision and ability are rare and precious, and they are not easily replaced. Chairman Gonzalo has much work to do! He is needed at his post to lead through the many twists and turns ahead. □

# International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán

The International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán has put out the call for a worldwide campaign. As the committee's draft call said, "There is every reason to fear for the life of Abimael Guzmán at the hands of one of the world's bloodiest governments. It is urgent that many voices be heard to demand that the Peruvian state respect the international conventions concerning the treatment of prisoners of war and political prisoners; that he not be brought before a military tribunal as threatened; that the life of Abimael Guzmán be saved."

Delegations are being organized and dispatched to Peru. Protests and press conferences are being held around the world. Much more is needed! People should immediately:

- Quickly raise large amounts of money to support local and international efforts. The IEC is proposing that local organizers call on people to donate one day's wages to help finance the campaign. Checks can be sent made out to: International Emergency Committee.
- Organize protests, write statements and leaflets and find other ways to get

the word out. Decorate your neighborhoods!

- Find ways to get coverage of this struggle in the media.
- Send letters and telegrams to the Peruvian authorities: President Alberto Fujimori/ Presidential Palace/Lima, Peru. (Send copies to the IEC)

The International Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán can be reached in the U.S. at:

International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán  
c/o Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru,  
P.O. Box 1246, Berkeley, CA 94701  
(415) 252-5786, FAX: (415) 252-7414, Messages: (510) 644-4170

And in London at:

International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán  
c/o BCM World to Win, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3XX, U.K.  
Phone or FAX: 44-71-482-0853

**Amnesty International  
Covers for Yankee  
Intervention**

**Setting the  
Record  
Straight  
on  
the Shining  
Path**

If you've been trying to learn the truth about the war of liberation led by the Communist Party of Peru, it has been very difficult because of the disinformation campaign being waged by the U.S. government and media. They constantly lie about the PCP, refer to them as "terrorists" and paint them as an isolated group carrying out violent acts against the people. But these are slanders aimed at paving the way for U.S. intervention and military aid. And they are designed to horrify the middle classes in the U.S. and Europe, and justify crimes being carried out in Peru by the U.S. and the Fujimori government.

A major part of this disinformation campaign has been the claim that the PCP traffics drugs. Increasingly, this story has come unraveled as it's come out that the Peruvian government is totally involved in and financially dependent on the drug trade. Articles in the *New York Times* have admitted that the PCP is not involved in drugs. But few newspapers have reported the real truth that the PCP bans drug laboratories and kicks out big-time drug traffickers and that in areas where the revolution has more influence and control, crop substitution is being implemented so that peasants can be free from dependence on export agriculture like coca leaf.

Unfortunately, the most prestigious and respected human rights organization in the world, Amnesty International, has taken up its own campaign against the revolution in Peru. In November 1991 it issued a major report on Peru, which exposes the atrocious human rights record of the Peruvian army and government. But this report, and other AI work around Peru, has also made a point of attacking the revolution in Peru. AI claims the people of Peru, particularly the peasantry, suffer human rights violations from each side, and are "caught between two fires"—i.e., that the government and the revolutionaries are equal oppressors of the people.

The AI report exposes how over 20,000 people have been killed in Peru, mainly by government security forces. It documents: on-the-spot executions, rape and torture by the police; government-sponsored death squads and thousands "disappeared" in the countryside and cities; entire villages massacred by government forces; university students and professors arrested, tortured, disappeared, and executed without trial. The report documents how human rights investigators have been forced out of the emergency zones or killed by the government and how journalists have been killed by death squads for exposing the military. AI reports how in rural areas, "civil defense patrols," *rondas*, controlled and often recruited under threat by the military, have been organized to attack revolutionaries and terrorize villages; and in other instances how the military leaves behind fake notes and PCP literature when it carries out massacres, to try and make it look as if its own mass murders are the work of revolutionaries.

These exposures by AI are important. But in recent Congressional testimony, State Department representative Bernard Aronson said that "the international community and respected human rights organizations must focus the spotlight of world attention on the threat which Sendero poses." And unfortunately, AI has responded to this call. Last fall, at a major international conference in Japan, AI decided to put greater emphasis on criticizing and attacking the revolution in Peru, in the form of "equally" criticizing revolutionaries and the counterinsurgency measures of reactionary states. In practice this has meant mainly criticizing the revolution and in fact standing with the forces of reaction and the whole disinformation campaign.

The Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru has issued a response to Amnesty International: "The Revolution in Peru Is Profoundly Liberating: Yankee Talk of 'Human Rights' Is a Cover for Intervention." The following are excerpts from the CSRP response:



Revolutionary prisoners in Canto Grande, 1991.

There are some key specific "themes" of the U.S.'s propaganda offensive against the people's war, and you can see echoes of these "themes" in the AI report, and in AI's work around Peru. Some of these key points: the charge that the revolution as a matter of policy and basic approach kills everyone "in the middle" who does not thoroughly support the revolution; the charge that the PCP gratuitously kills members of the parties of Peru's legal left, a charge concentrated in the sensational treatment of the killing of the vice mayor of Lima shantytown Villa El Salvador, María

***A Latin American revolution rises powerfully from remote mountain and jungle villages, from immense shantytowns, from occupied universities. It is rooted among indigenous people who have never tasted justice in their entire lives, and who have suffered like this for centuries. The revolution threatens to win. It has stated clearly its aims to expropriate the immense U.S. investments in key sections of the economy, and it threatens to spread to neighboring countries. In response, the U.S. government arms and "advises" the viciously repressive government, which then cancels the constitution. The U.S. State Department shrieks about the "human rights violations" of the rebels, in a calculated attempt to gain public support for U.S. intervention and to justify and cover over atrocities against the peasantry. And the most prestigious and respected human rights organization in the world takes up its own campaign against the rebels, paralleling the themes and even the language of the State Department.***

From a response to Amnesty International by the Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru

Elena Moyano; the charge that the revolution is aiming to militarily destroy religion, represented by the sensational treatment of attacks on some priests.

The most basic answer to the charge that they kill everyone who doesn't thoroughly support the revolution is that it is ludicrous, very much like the charge that they advance by a reign of terror over the masses. The "people in the middle," the ones not in active support of either side, are exactly the people that the revolution has increasingly won over to active support as it has advanced across the country. Why should the PCP kill the people who are future supporters? ...The revolutionary army could not advance and retake its base areas unless it had the active support of large sections of the peasants. The charges that the revolution "attacks those in the middle" have no factual merit. At bottom, what is behind the charge that the peasants are "caught between two fires" is the view that there should not be any revolution at all.

The assassination of María Elena Moyano has recently been one of the key focal points of an effort by the international and Peruvian press to drive wedges between the people's war and sections of the left and of the progressive people around the world. ...The basic picture painted by the mainstream press is that Moyano was a political leader of the shantytowns, a woman who administered "glass of milk" programs which gave milk to children in the shantytown Villa El Salvador. It is said that she incurred the wrath of the PCP because she criticized the revolution for "terrorism" and heroically dared to stand up to their threats. For this, the story goes, she was killed by the PCP.

The truth about Moyano is that she was a member of a political party, the MAS (Movement for Socialist Affirmation), that had positions in Fujimori's cabinet. She was an active defender of the government and actively worked with the police against the revolution. According to letters from the political prisoners massacred by the Peruvian government in May of 1992, Moyano played a role in fingering at least 15 revolutionaries to the police, revolutionaries who were then killed. At the end of her life, she was involved in organizing urban *rondas* with the aim of beginning armed attacks on the revolution....

The PCP considers that someone playing the role that Moyano played was a legitimate target of the revolution, that people who collude with the forces of repression suppress the ability of the masses to make revolution, to be active politically, and to ultimately achieve liberation.

Anyone who sees what happened to her and thereby draws the conclusion that anyone who has differences with the PCP will be killed is falling for the government's propaganda....

Another reactionary campaign waged in the Western press has been designed to make the PCP look like the brutal assassin of the religious aspirations of the people (and in doing so, to drive a wedge between the people's war in Peru and those progressive religious forces in the U.S. who have opposed Yankee aggression in the Third World). Amnesty repeats some of the charges that have been central to this campaign, again doing the propaganda work of the counterinsurgency campaign.

The case of Father Mariano is probably the most widely publicized case of the PCP's supposed atrocities against religion. Father Mariano is an American missionary to Peru, working in the Ene River Valley in the Peruvian jungle. The area is a tribal area, where the largest remaining grouping of Indian people in Peru, the Asháninka, live. The area has been a center of sharp struggle between revolution and the forces of the Peruvian government. Father Mariano is still alive, but he is reportedly under death threat by the revolution for his work.

The range of his activities that have been reported in *Caretas* alone is summed up by *El Diario Internacional*: Father Mariano is an active organizer of the civil defense groups managed by the army in this region. He maintains direct contact with the U.S. embassy in Lima; he moves about the vast jungle in powerful American helicopters. He has the permanent support of the zone's military garrison. He has permanent communication via high-powered radio with the base at Mazamari (training center for the National Police's anti-subversive units). The priest forced the Asháninka to build an airstrip in Cutivireni for the landing of American troops.

From what we have been able to tell, the PCP has targeted a small number of priests like Father Mariano, but this has been done very carefully, and only active counter-revolutionaries have been targeted.

Those who take the stand that AI is taking and who participate in the distortions and vilification of the revolution under the guise of "human rights" are not "neutral"—they are objectively giving active assistance to U.S. preparations for intervention. Members of AI who do not want to be part of that, but want to be part of paving the way for opposition to U.S. intervention in Peru, should work to change the stand of AI on Peru, including to reverse the decision to focus criticism on revolution made in Japan in the fall of 1991.... And anyone with the vision and daring to see beyond the confines of the "New World Order" should support the genuine people's war in Peru.

The pamphlet "The revolution in Peru is profoundly liberating: Yankee talk of 'human rights' is a cover for intervention" is available from The Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, P.O. Box 1246, Berkeley, CA 94701.