

## People's War Continues

# New Regime— Same Reaction

A WORLD TO WIN 1985/4

Peru's new president, Alan García, took office promising to inaugurate "a nationalist, democratic and popular state for all Peruvians," even as the old state and the new revolutionary political power arising in the countryside confronted each other in battle. García's assumption of office 28 July 1985 took place after a year-long electoral campaign of unprecedented vigor and expense, guided by García's experience with the French Socialist party and by an American advertising agency. Rarely had so much been promised to so many in such an election.

Most importantly, the elections were portrayed as an alternative to violence. Even exposures of massacres committed by the military and the discredit to the outgoing Belaúnde government they brought about were twisted so as to present a general picture of senseless violence on all sides which could be rejected by participating in the elections to peacefully resolve Peru's problems.

García himself entered office with promises blazing, denouncing "the poverty arising from an unjust social system" and Peru's "dependency on foreign powers," and even firing generals and indicting ministers from the former government in a fiery campaign to "remoralise" Peru.

Without such actions, without some improvement in the political climate for reaction which under the Belaúnde government had become a serious problem, not much success in the military efforts against the revolutionary armed struggle based in the countryside could be expected. With the election of an opposition candidate, the reaction hoped to enlist behind the banners of democratic elections even many of those who had become profoundly disgusted with the government.

But immediately this demagoguery ran up against the wall of reality, or "economic crisis and subversion," as García defined the twin challenges faced by his new government. Regarding the first, he

could offer only weak and limited measures, even for those intermediate strata his government hoped to consolidate as a social base for reaction. Regarding "subversion," García's government immediately launched blatantly bloodthirsty attacks against the revolution, including massacres even more politically damaging to the government than those committed under Belaúnde. These massacres confirmed the García government as a faithful successor to Belaúnde in the service of imperialism, the big bourgeoisie, and the feudal landlords.

During this whole electoral conjuncture, the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) had been conducting a series of military and political actions aimed at countering the reaction's election offensive. These campaigns were a component part of the Party's more overall plan in this period to carry through a "Great Leap" in the construction of revolutionary base areas in the countryside, by linking up village-level People's Committees (organs of the

new, emerging revolutionary state power primarily based on poor peasants, as well as other classes in the countryside, under the Party's leadership). The PCP's first campaign in relation to the elections was to "win political space" by force of arms, bringing to the fore the contradiction between the old state power and the new, revolutionary state power arising in the countryside on the basis of the people's war there, putting forward a clear alternative to the ruling classes' electoral circus. The armed struggle became the central issue in the country's political life and all parties had to define themselves in relationship to it. In January 1985 the Party called for a boycott of the elections and began striking military blows against the electoral apparatus. García's new government, in turn, also became the target of revolutionary attacks.

In this way, both the reaction and the revolution, each in their own way, have posed to the masses of people two opposite roads for Peru's future.

### Electoral Campaigns and Armed Struggle

During the first part of this year leading up to García's inauguration, the People's Guerrilla Army led by the PCP carried out several thousand actions, including direct confrontations between superior guerrilla forces and smaller armed forces units, guerrilla ambushes of larger armed forces units, other guerrilla actions, executions of local tyrants and heads of the armed forces-led *mesnada* reactionary bands, the shooting of the head of the National Elections Board, etc.

During this period, the reaction increased its armed forces fighting the guerrillas from 29,000 to 45,000 and began carrying out operations even crueler than before in order to escalate the policy of forcibly grouping peasants in the areas convulsed by the revolution into "strategic hamlets" under military control. The aim of these operations has been to smash the People's Committees established under Party leadership and re-establish reactionary political power.

In the central emergency zone (the

departments of Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica), this has resulted in a situation where the new revolutionary political power exists in the form of People's Committees sprinkled across the area which have been able to resist the reactionary armed forces' incursions and are preparing for even greater battles. At the same time the revolutionary forces are stepping up efforts to open new zones of guerrilla operations and establish new People's Committees in an area stretching down the mountain backbone of the country from Cajamarca in the north to Puno in the south. Such an extension of the people's war would make it increasingly difficult for the reaction to concentrate its forces as it has so far been able to do to some extent. This concentration of the reactionary armed forces in the departments of Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurímac where the revolution had been able to make rapid gains since the beginning of the armed struggle now leaves the reaction all the more vulnerable to such an expansion.

At the same time, the PCP has also striven to raise the quality of its actions in the cities, which it considers an important complement to its strategy of surrounding the cities from the countryside.

Several especially spectacular blackouts and bombings were carried out in June and at the time of García's inauguration at the end of July. Lima was blacked out for four days, by far the longest yet. The Presidential Palace, the Armed Forces Joint Command and the Prefecture of Police were all hit by car bomb explosions. García's inauguration was so tense that the entire downtown Lima area was closed off to unauthorised civilians that day, while 20,000 armed men stood guard. It was, literally, an inaugural ceremony which completely excluded the masses of people.

The reaction had tried to raise the banner of the elections against the banner of the Party in a deceitful way, in order to make the dividing line a question of violent or non-violent change, rather than a question of revolution or counterrevolution, so as to rally even sections of the masses who had become deeply

disgusted with the government. The PCP took up the challenge presented by the elections and worked to throw it back in the enemy's face. In conjunction with its military actions, it widely circulated illegal leaflets and pamphlets to expose the elections so as to win broader sections of the masses to repudiate the old order. The figures which have come out on the voting show that the reaction's efforts were not successful by any objective standard. Further, because of the PCP's strength in many areas of the countryside, especially in the central emergency zone, the government was not able to carry out elections in some districts (the local level), but instead found it possible to put up their armed forces-protected voting stations only in towns the size of provincial capitals.

On April 14th, election day, 150,000 troops and police were mobilised, close to every man and woman under arms available to the government. Still in many places the elections had to be postponed until the following day. There are reports of vote fraud on a massive scale. For instance, the tall tales of guerrillas cutting off people's index fingers so that they could not be fingerprinted to vote turned out to be an excuse to not require voters to place a fingerprint on the voters' records to show that they voted. This meant one person could cast innumerable ballots or that innumerable ballots could be cast without anyone voting.

Even with all these relatively petty tricks, the government was not able to pull off its electoral process without even more naked violations of its own constitution, leaving even more exposed the real state of affairs the elections were meant to cover up, the state's character as a class dictatorship in which elections may serve this or that political necessity but never decide anything important.

### Analysis of Elections

An examination of the elections themselves shows quite a bit about Peru's "constitutional order" as well as the advances of the people's war that is increasingly shaking it to its foundations. This analysis shows that about half of those eligible to

vote either didn't vote or cast a blank or spoiled ballot (for instance, writing revolutionary slogans on the ballot instead of marking a candidate).

It must be kept in mind that voting is mandatory in Peru. All adults receive a voter's book when they register, which is in turn validated when they actually vote. Without this book, which serves as standard identification, it is impossible to cash checks, receive government benefits, and so on; worse, not having voted can be considered an indication of "terrorist" sympathies, with possible consequences.

Even so only 8,292,846 people were reported to have registered to vote. Since there were almost ten million eligible voters in 1981 according to that year's census, and since that electoral population probably surpassed 11.2 million by 1985 (this was the estimate of the reactionary Lima weekly *Caretas*) therefore only about three-quarters of those legally required to register to vote actually did so. This was despite the fact that the period for registration was prolonged an extra month when the low turnout became apparent.

According to *Caretas*, in five departments of the country, namely Cajamarca, Apurimac, Ayacucho, Piura and Amazonas, only a third of those required to register did so; in Huancavelica and another four departments less than a quarter registered; and in three departments less than a fifth registered.

Of those registered, according to *Caretas*, 15% didn't vote, and another 20% cast a blank or spoiled ballot. In other words, the total number of valid votes recorded, 5,637,775, represents only about half of the more than 11 million eligible voters.

In the three departments of the central emergency zone, where the revolution has been strongest, the results are even more striking. In Ayacucho, according to the departmental election board's official results published in the newspaper *Expreso*, of the 187,000 people who actually registered, 30.1% didn't vote; of the ballots cast, 37.6% were blank or spoiled, and García's APRA party got 31.8%. Never-

theless, when the National Elections Board later published its results, it claimed that in Ayacucho 61.8% had voted for APRA, 29% had cast blank or spoiled ballots, and only 1.4% had failed to vote. In Apurimac, according to *Expreso*, departmental records show 25.1% having not voted and 36.6% casting blank or spoiled ballots, with less than 27% of the eligible voters casting ballots for APRA. Nevertheless, the National Elections Board later claimed that APRA had got over 50% in Apurimac. In Huancavelica, according to the official departmental records published in *Comercio*, 39.8% of the voters cast blank or spoiled ballots, 29.5% didn't vote, with 22% voting for the United Left and slightly less for APRA. Nevertheless, the National Elections Board listed the United Left as having received 43% in Huancavelica, with APRA just somewhat under that.

#### **Constitutional Gyration**

Since the Peruvian constitution requires that the president be elected by 50% of the electors plus one, this popular rejection of the elections caused a little problem. Even with all the juggling and support from the armed forces, García only got 45.74%. The constitution requires another run-off election within 30 days of the first if no candidate wins a majority, but such a prolongation of the already crumbling process didn't suit the ruling classes. By illegally discounting its own figures for blank and spoiled ballots, the National Elections Board was able to declare that García at least had got a majority of the valid votes. The United Left parliamentary opposition, an essential part of this circus, had benefited from the fraud and in general shared the goals of the ruling classes regarding the necessity of using this election to draw a dividing line between "democracy" and the armed struggle. It ensured that the boat wouldn't rock. Its candidate, Lima Mayor Alfonso Barrantes, the runner-up, withdrew from the race, so there simply was nobody for García to run against in a run-off. The show was over.

#### **APRA's Programme**

García's APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance) is Peru's

most developed bourgeois party, in terms of its links with various parts of the country and sections of the population, a party whose fifty years in opposition has left its reputation unsullied by ever having had to fulfill its populist promises. When García took office July 28th, he announced he would "take the country in hand in all spheres, while preserving human life and easing the people's misery." In contrast to what he described as a climate of "fear and death" brought about by so-called "dogmatic totalitarians" (i.e. the PCP, which insists on the necessity for violent revolution), García promised a peaceful revolution: the "remoralisation" of a government where bribery and personal interest-seeking had run rampant; "economic development" in the countryside through government loans and credit; and the defense of Peru's "economic sovereignty." Above all, he promised "a return to the principle of authority."

The content of his inaugural declaration that his government would bring about a "nationalist, democratic and popular state, a state for all Peruvians" is worth analysing. He explained that the state would no longer represent "the 30% of the population which is privileged against the 70% which has been marginalised." Here it should be noted that he is not just making a general claim that his government, unlike the previous one — and every other government in history — will represent oppressed and oppressor alike. García is also, when he refers to the "privileged" 30%, lumping the working class and the urban petit bourgeoisie in with the ruling class themselves.

This deliberate distortion has two purposes. The first is to set up the urban working class and some sections of the petit bourgeoisie for more attacks through government "austerity measures" in the face of Peru's foreign debt and make them bear more of the burden. Already, initial measures implemented by the García government have hit hard at small savers who had sought some protection from Peru's horrendous inflation by putting their money into U.S. dollars. (Their dollar-denominated savings accounts were

**¡PROLETARIOS DE TODOS LOS PAÍSES, UNIDOS!**



**PARTIDO COMUNISTA DEL PERU**  
1980  
MAYO

*"Proletarians of all countries, unite! Five years of People's War! 1980 - 1985 Communist Party of Peru" Depicted in the foreground of this recent Party poster is PCP Chairman Comrade Gonzalo.*

frozen and later made payable only when converted to Peruvian currency at a low rate of exchange, amounting to a confiscation of part of their savings, while the big financial concerns were left free of restrictions.) A widely heralded increase in the minimum wage (from \$25 to \$39 a week at the current rate of exchange) has been carried out at the expense of cutbacks in retirement and severance pay, while the dramatic price freezes which were supposed to give this minimum wage boost some meaning have been ignored in most cases and in others have led to the disappearance of many items from the market.

García's second purpose with this "30%-70%" formulation is to politically isolate those urban sections of the people who do not live quite as badly as most of the peasants and shanty-town dwellers from the agrarian revolution being carried out under the leadership of the proletarian party which is striv-

ing to win the active participation of these sectors in the revolution alongside the poorest masses who have flocked to the revolution since the beginning.

The García government's new agrarian policy is a similar combination of demagoguery and stopgap measures designed to deal in an immediate, if not long-term way with the twin and related dangers of "economic crisis and subversion." Like the urban policies, the aims of this programme are not to solve the underlying contradictions which grip Peru, which García cannot and does not intend to deal with, but rather to gain the government some more political room, especially by winning over and/or consolidating some relatively better-off strata.

In the mountain countryside, García's APRA party proposes to carry out "a revolution in the revolution," as one of his advisers, the well-known Trotskyite Hector Bejar has called it, to reactive the

agrarian economy which has fallen into increasing crisis despite the Velasco "land reform" (or "revolution") carried out after the 1968 armed forces coup. The Velasco junta turned some large feudal estates in the mountains into state-linked cooperatives which are often run by feudal elements; in the PCP's analysis, they have mainly benefited some better-off peasants, leaving vast numbers of peasant families with little or no land and failing to uproot feudal relations and oppression.

This proposed "revolution in the revolution" would mean increased government loans and credits to those who benefited from the Velasco measures while guaranteeing that there would be no further changes in land ownership. The political purpose is to strengthen the better-off rural strata who along with the landlords themselves have been a key part of the government's efforts to use *mesnada* vigilante bands under military leadership as an important complement to the armed forces operations in the war against the guerrillas. The government's plan is to use the polarization of the different classes and strata in the countryside, including among the peasants themselves, to its own political and military advantage.

The PCP, responding to this effort as well as to the overall situation, has issued a very significant call for peasant movements to seize land from the cooperatives and landlords by force of arms. Until now, the Party has had a policy of encouraging collective sowing and harvesting by the peasants on land the peasants invade, but has not judged conditions ripe for the implementation of its slogan "Land to the Tiller," which it considers basic to the New Democrático revolution. Armed mass movements to seize land would make it all the more clear that the Peruvian state exists to defend certain property relations and the social relations based on them, and certainly spur on the people's war to overthrow that state.

A certain thrust to García's proposals has become clear, despite the deliberately ambiguous stance on many major issues that was a hallmark of García's campaign and

## "Shining Trench of Combat"

Former Peruvian President Belaúnde moved many hundreds of captured revolutionary fighters to three main prisons in Lima in 1982 after a successful PCP military operation freed hundreds who had been held in the local Ayacucho prison. With this he tried to put an end to the PCP's "jailbreak line" which had seen many fighters break out and return to the front lines. However, the PCP's policy is that revolutionaries should turn wherever they find themselves into a front line of combat. The prisoners refer to these dungeons as "Shining Trench of Combat at Lurigancho" (or Callao or Fronton). These are places where the red flag is quite literally flying. The following typical daily schedule of the prisoners at Fronton shows what they mean:

Two hours of physical fitness exercises, starting at 6 a.m.

Breakfast (cooked by a team of prisoners of a rotating basis)

Morning production work (by team, with jobs rotating — clothes washing, ironing, cooking, cleaning, and the biggest team, which does production of revolutionary pain-

tings, weaving, etc.)

Lunch

Afternoon study — basic political education for all, including military line (for instance, Mao's *Six Military Essays*), as well as advanced study for those interested in raising their level.

Free time (including reading newspaper clippings sent in and watching the news on a TV contributed by relatives)

Bed Time

These comrades are clearly making very fruitful use of their time in captivity. Lest the other aspect of their situation be forgotten, although at least so far they have been able to organise daily life in their sections of the prisons, these prisoners face poisonings, beatings, tear gas and shooting fairly frequently, as well as constant harassment such as having their water cut off for weeks at a time, and extremely dismal living conditions. Between 1982 and García's inauguration, 18 were murdered by the authorities in prison — not including García's inaugural Lurigancho massacre. □



his failure to present any official programme. A number of the measures proposed would carry forward efforts initiated by the Velasco junta.

The García government has enlisted a number of well-known figures from the Velasco government who have called for the creation of Velasco-style mass organisations which would be under government and ruling class hegemony — for instance, provincial assemblies of all the local population which would effectively be run by the landlords, priests and local officials. These are measures that the PCP has analysed as corporatist (fascist) and linked to the further development of bureaucrat

capitalism.

Velasco's projects stalled and were abruptly called off by another junta in the mid-1970s, in the face of the worldwide economic crisis making itself particularly sharply felt in Peru as well as mounting opposition from among the lower classes and contention within the upper classes themselves.

In formulating their proposals, García's advisors have had to bow deeply to the changed conditions since the 1960s. For instance, where Velasco proclaimed that Peru's "economic sovereignty" would be won through emphasising state investment in heavy industry, today, now that large-scale loans to gather the capital for such projects are no

longer available in the current world economic situation, García proposes to end Peru's "dependency on foreign powers" through the development of light industry, especially the food industry.

However, Peru's dependency on what García does not want to call imperialism does not primarily result from "unequal exchange" between Peru's products and those it imports, as he claims, but from the country's submission to the domination of what is profitable for imperialist capital as well as the political rule of Peruvian capital tied to imperialism and the landlords. The development of food-related industries in itself, which might play an important role in the country's emancipation in a revolutionary context, in this context could only serve to develop reaction. (For instance, Argentina, which has a highly developed food industry, is no less dependent on imperialism than Peru.)

The extent to which these proposals will be implemented is not yet clear, both because of García's own penchant for promising everything to everybody and also because some of these proposals have been strongly opposed from within different sections of the ruling classes. A significant change that would come about if García's proposals are fully implemented, however, is a strengthening of the section of the bourgeoisie linked to state enterprises, a section which developed especially rapidly under Velasco.

Increasingly bitter disputes have erupted among the ruling classes, which have fueled and been fueled by the constantly reemerging political exposures of the government arising from its prosecution of the counterrevolutionary war. What García has called the "remoralisation of Peru," for example the firing or indictment of a whole series of generals and figures from the previous government for being involved in the cocaine industry, serves this intra-bourgeois contention. (García has popularised the term "narcopopulism," referring to ex-president Belaúnde's Popular Action Party. It is funny to see the same Belaúnde bigshots who once talked about "narcoterrorism" to

discredit the PCP now being implicated as kingpins of drug trafficking. Most prominent among them is Luis Percovitch, who was at various times Prime Minister, Interior Minister and Foreign Minister under the previous Belaúnde government.)

#### Rendering Unto the IMF

Much has been made, especially abroad, of García's denunciations of the International Monetary Fund and his proposal that the country limit its payments of its foreign debt to 10% of its export earnings. The importance of this proposal is in inverse proportion to the amount of newspaper space devoted to it. The essential point is that during a period in which Fidel Castro has won a hearing in certain Latin American circles with his proposal that the Latin American countries declare a

moratorium on all debt payments, García has come to serve as Castro's foil, insisting, for all his fiery rhetoric, that the question of debt payments be treated as an economic and not political question. This position has won García the open admiration even of U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz. García paints it as the last word in nationalism when he proposes to reinvest a portion of Peru's export earnings in the reactivation of its domestic economy instead of just paying it all to foreign finance capital, but this has come to be accepted by the U.S. government itself as the most prudent course in the service of U.S. political and economic interests in the nations it oppresses.

The best example of the reactionary content of all sides in this debate between García and Castro

came when the U.S. government temporarily cut off a loan programme to Peru because of the Peruvian government's failure to pay the interest on that particular loan for over a year. Castro melodramatically denounced it before an international conference on Latin America's debt being held at that moment in Havana as U.S. interference in Peruvian affairs. The United Left leaders present readily seconded this proclamation. García leapt to the occasion as well, declaring "we will not live on our knees for a handful of dollars." It turns out that the content of the loan programme in question was U.S. aid to the Peruvian military. At any rate, after a hurried meeting with the U.S. ambassador, García paid the interest on the specific loan involved, though whether he kneeled or not is not

## Worldwide Peru Campaign

"The advance of the struggle in Peru today is of great importance in the context of today's situation in the international communist movement and the revolutionary movement in general....

"The Second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organisations calls on all the participants in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, on all genuine communist forces, to actively take up support for the New Democratic Revolution in Peru under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru and its Chairman Comrade Gonzalo. The Marxist-Leninist forces of every country must mobilise the class conscious workers and revolutionary masses to support this struggle through propaganda, sympathy and material aid."

**Message of the Second International Conference to the Communist Party of Peru.**

In our last issue we reprinted a call by the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement for an international campaign to support the Peruvian revolution. This call has been taken up by participating parties and organisations of the RIM as well as other progressive and revolutionary forces, who are involved in organising programmes, meetings, demonstrations and many other activities in cities and rural areas around the world. An important part of this campaign is an international speaking tour on the theme "Summing Up Five Years of People's War in Peru." Following is the text of a leaflet prepared by the Worldwide Campaign to Support the People's War in Peru in connection with these programmes.

#### **SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU!**

In Peru today, poor peasants and others who have been the wretched of the earth for centuries are waging a war that is a beacon for the working class and revolutionary masses the world over. While many countries of the globe are embroiled in conflicts which pit the masses of people against their oppressors, it is only in Peru where a real People's War is raging, with the clear goal of defeating reaction and imperialism in all its forms, East and West, and doing so as part of the world-wide struggle to create a world free of class distinctions and oppression.

This war, which began five years ago, is being led by the Communist Party of Peru, often referred to by the press as "Sendero Luminoso." Today, ten years after Mao's legacy was overthrown in China and his teachings declared dead by China's new reactionary rulers and all kinds of revisionists and opportunist hand in hand with the authorities of the old order everywhere, the Communist Party of Peru has become especially troublesome to all these dogs because of its firm defense and application of what it calls Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, Guiding Thought (Guiding Thought means the application of this ideology of the international proletariat to Peru's specific conditions). Having analysed that the Peruvian people's sufferings are rooted in semi-feudalism (because the peasants are

known publicly. The payment was only \$123,000, a handful of dollars with far-reaching political significance. The U.S. has since announced that it has no intention of cutting off its loans and aid programmes with which it props up the government and helps keep Peru subjugated.

### García's Actions

Through the elections, the authorities have tried to focus the masses' attention on majorities and minorities in order to hide the class nature of the state — and even at that, a majority had to be invented. García has claimed his authority has arisen from the ballot box and universal suffrage, but subsequent events have clearly exposed the direct and brutal armed force upon which this state rests.

Two weeks before the García government took office, when the PCP was launching a campaign of attacks to greet the installation of the new government, revolutionaries held in three Lima prisons had staged simultaneous uprisings to force the authorities to recognise their status as political prisoners and allow them to administer their own affairs while in prison. At Lurigancho, the prisoners seized a guard whom they held hostage. The women at Callao grabbed six prison employees and temporarily took over the whole prison. On the island of Fronton across the bay, the men managed to seize an automatic rifle. The prisoners in all three institutions then dug themselves in behind barricades. After four days, the prison authorities were forced to agree to the prisoners' joint list of demands.

García's response, which came in September, was to fire the head of the prison system who had signed the agreement. García's new appointee pronounced the document invalid because the prisoners had used force to obtain the authorities' signatures. (Apparently the irony of the head gaoler complaining about force escaped him.) Three days before a planned celebration by the prisoners of the October 7th anniversary of the PCP's founding, guards were sent in to the section of Lurigancho where about 300 accused revolutionaries have been confined.

According to the version of events issued by the authorities, the guards were kept out of the area by prisoners using homemade weapons and had no choice but to blow their way into the pavilion with high explosives and automatic weapons fire; they entered only to find that 30 of the prisoners had been burned alive by other prisoners. Lawyers for the prisoners later stated the obvious truth: the authorities had deliberately set fire to the prison and then used automatic fire to keep the prisoners trapped within. Four of the 34 bodies reportedly found had been killed outright by gunshots. Other reports put the total number of murdered revolutionaries much higher. In the wake of this cowardly massacre, about 6000 common prisoners being held elsewhere in Lurigancho rose up and fought prison authorities. The sound of gunfire and thick clouds of smoke emanated from the building for several days after the massacre. There were also reports—as yet unconfirmed—of further revolts at Fronton.

The massacre at Lurigancho was meant as an unmistakable manifesto of how the government intended to deal with the people's war, the most important question facing the new government and the one regarding which García and his party had been most reluctant to present a clear programme. García had promised to set up a "Peace Commission", which among other things would deal with the cases of prisoners awaiting trial who are supporters of the parliamentary opposition and not of the PCP. The massacre at Lurigan-

tied to the landlords and the land), semi-colonialism (because of the country's economic domination by imperialism, especially the U.S.) and a bureaucrat capitalism tied to both these other bastions of the old order, the party has launched and led what is above all an agrarian war, based fundamentally in the poor peasants, whose aim is to surround the cities from the countryside, seize state power and carry through a New Democratic revolution to demolish these bastions and open the way for socialist revolution and communism.

The government has responded with tremendous cruelty. Its military forces, armed and advised by the U.S. and Western Europe as well as the USSR, have tried to wipe out the guerrilla war and the party that leads it and the growing number of people from different classes who have swollen the ranks of the revolution. This repression started with persecution, arrests and torture, and since has grown to include mass murders of whole villages, more than 4000 people "disappeared" in the hands of the armed forces and its followers, and recently the forced concentration of the rural population in "strategic hamlets" under military supervision.

Nevertheless, confounding the authorities of Peru and the world over, the armed struggle has advanced and opened up a whole new page in Peru's history. Its achievements include the building of a People's Guerrilla Army, and People's Committees through which a new regime and a new society are coming into being based on the armed power of the masses of people and their participation in the transformation of society.

An International Campaign to Support the People's War in Peru has been launched to break the wall of silence and lies with which reactionaries the world over have tried to hide the real content and aims of this armed struggle. This campaign was initiated by the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, in which the Communist Party of Peru is a participating party. Throughout the rest of 1985 and the beginning of 1986 there will be major public meetings and other activities to Support the People's War in Peru in dozens of cities on several continents. Come, find out about and stand with the People's War in Peru! □



cho made it clear what kind of treatment could be expected for the rest of the prisoners, and what the government intended to do to those who resisted the Peace Commission's offers of "building bridges"—i.e., surrender.

### A Programme of Massacres

A week after García took office, seven peasants, including a young boy and a pregnant woman, were seen being taken away in an army truck from the village of Pucayacu, in the Huanta region. Shortly afterwards, a hidden grave found by their relatives disclosed their mutilated bodies. Such events are so common in the 29 provinces under direct military rule that even the regular Lima press has come to refer to "genocide" in the countryside. The García government, which the same week renewed the state of emergency under which these provinces are subject to military rule, sought to avoid the discredit that the last year's series of discoveries of mass graves had brought its predecessor. In a dramatic move on the eve of an appearance by García before the United Nations General Assembly, he fired the head of the Armed Forces Joint Command, General Enrico Praeli. García complained that General Praeli had "kept the reality of the anti-subversive struggle secret" from him. But this move served more than just finding a scapegoat. Praeli had criticised García's election as unconstitutional (as indeed it was). All in all, this Belaúnde-appointed general was unpopular with the rest of the armed forces command, which generally supported García. Perhaps Praeli had sealed his fate when shortly before his firing he criticised the UNITAS "training" operations being carried out in Peru jointly with the U.S. armed forces.

García acted a little too hastily, however, since the need for scapegoats was just beginning. Peasants from the village of Llocllapampa, in the area of Accosmarca which had repeatedly suffered armed forces incursions, told reporters about an army patrol which had come into the area in helicopters August 14th. Walls in the village had been painted with the

PCP's hammer and sickle emblem and the slogans "For a Workers' and Peasants' Government—Long Live the Armed Struggle." (Later, after the facts came out, the reactionary Lima newspaper *Comercio* implicitly defended the army's action by reporting that out of the area's 895 registered voters, only 40 had voted, and less than half of those for García's APRA party.) Most of the peasants fled, but the 30 soldiers with attack dogs managed to trap the older men and many women who were pregnant or had young children. First the soldiers raped women and girls, then they herded their prisoners into several buildings. Shouting "terrucos" (terrorists), the soldiers threw in grenades and set the buildings ablaze.

Some of the peasants who had escaped and hid in the woods made their way to Lima. When reports began circulating about the massacre, García, instead of dealing directly with the matter, arranged instead for Parliament to call on two generals to respond to the reports: General Wilfredo Mori, the Sandhurst (British officers' school)-trained political-military head of the Ayacucho region, and his superior, General Sinieso Jarama. These men produced documents purporting to prove that the armed forces had not been anywhere near the area August 14; they even denied that there had been any massacre. APRA parliamentary representatives pronounced themselves fully satisfied with their testimony. Several hours later, the television evening news showed mass graves in Accosmarca with 69 bodies, including 22 young children. García's newly-appointed head of the Armed Forces Joint Command then issued a communiqué admitting that indeed an army patrol had killed 40 peasants. The communiqué blamed army Second Lieutenant Telmo Hurtado for first ordering the massacre and then hiding it from his superiors. (Second Lieutenant Hurtado, who volunteered to take all the blame, is a product of U.S. counterinsurgency training at Fort Gulick, Panama. No doubt he was familiar with a certain Lieutenant Calley, who performed a similar role in the cover-up

of a U.S. Green Berets massacre at My Lai in Vietnam.) To put an end to the matter, Mori asked to be retired and Jarama was transferred out of his job.

García, as the bitter Praeli pointed out in an interview, is not only constitutionally supreme chief of Peru's armed forces, but also had already met several times with its Joint Command to discuss how it should smash the revolutionary armed struggle. At any rate García certainly could not complain that his personally appointed head of the Joint Command didn't keep him informed. It was also pointed out that second lieutenants don't carry out helicopter incursions into the countryside on their own without anybody knowing about it.

Later reports began to appear indicating that the Accosmarca massacre had been just one of a series of similar Vietnam-style search and destroy operations carried out in the Ayacucho emergency zone during August. Around the same time, six people from a village near Llocllapampa were killed, probably because they'd witnessed the Llocllapampa massacre. In another village in the area an elderly couple were found shot and chopped up, with army-style tyre tracks in the ground outside their home (the guerrillas do not use trucks). These indiscriminate killings took place in conjunction with military efforts to force the rural population in the most revolutionary areas to live in armed forces-supervised strategic hamlets, where there is a dusk-to-dawn curfew and all movements are strictly controlled. Accosmarca, which had 6000 inhabitants when the armed forces came in to Ayacucho at the end of 1983, is now virtually deserted. Vilcashuaman, a town where the old authorities had been driven out in 1982 and replaced by a revolutionary People's Committee, is now an army headquarters. Similar operations were reported in the adjoining department of Huancavelica, including the arrest and murder of a school teacher who had testified about previous armed forces abuses to a European human rights commission. In the department of San Martín, seven boys who were engaging in

karate club practice were murdered.

García's War Minister José Flores announced September 25 that 400 villages have been turned into strategic hamlets run by armed forces "civil defense committees." He also announced that after making an inspection tour of Ayacucho, "I return reassured and satisfied that the Army continues to enjoy a high level of morale and discipline, despite the events of Accosmarca. I have seen for myself, on the spot, the great love of the local communities for the armed forces."

In the wake of the Accosmarca incident, García, as was to be expected, warned against any possible attempt to use it to discredit the armed forces in general. In this he was joined by the leader of the United Left parliamentary opposition, Lima Mayor Alfonso Barrantes, who declared "there's no point in exaggerating things or trying to injure the guiding institutions of the country." The pro-Soviet Peruvian Communist Party's spokesman in parliament expressed "complete agreement with (García's) position." The parliament unanimously passed a resolution praising both García's "affirmation of constitutional order" and the armed forces' "disciplined conduct."

Coming after these events, the massacre at Lurigancho prison could not have been more explicit. The government's policy is to burn people alive while the parliamentary opposition applauds its "defense of the constitutional order."

However, the more it exposes itself in this matter (and the more that reformism and revisionism in general join the government in this orgy of self-exposure), the better the political conditions for its armed overthrow. The PCP's poster leaflet put out shortly after García's assumption of office shows García backed by the heads of the various armed forces. The caption reads: "July 1985 - ?" □



"Seize the Land!"