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CHAPTER TWO

Peru's Sendero Luminoso
Rebellion: Origins and Trajectory

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In mid 1982, Edith Lagos, a 19-year-old Peruvian guerrilla commander, died in a battle with the police in the small, remote southern highlands city of Ayacucho. More people turned out for her funeral than for any other event in recent Ayacucho history. The crowd was estimated at between 15,000 and 30,000 people in a city of only about 70,000. Hand-carved statuettes of Lagos sold briskly in the Ayacucho market.

Lagos was a leader of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas. To most analysts, Sendero Luminoso is the ugliest guerrilla movement that has ever appeared in Latin America. Savage, sectarian, and fanatical, it is compared to Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge rather than to the Sandinistas or the Farabundo Martí National Liberation movement (FMLN) in El Salvador. Without military provocation, Sendero initiated armed struggle in 1980 against an elected government considered democratic by most criteria. Sendero labels every past and present Peruvian government "fascist" and "reactionary," though virtually all other analysts see many differences among these governments and consider some of them to have been reformist and progressive. Claiming to be Maoist, it has refused to work with other Marxist groups in the country, and it has assassinated officials from Marxist and social democratic parties as readily as those from conservative parties.

Sendero repudiates not only the United States but also the Soviet Union and, perhaps most virulently, the current Chinese leadership. Until recently, it rarely sought to explain its actions or its vision of Peru's

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future. Yet for several years Sendero Luminoso apparently enjoyed the support of a majority of the people in Ayacucho. The primary concern of this chapter is to understand how this apparent anomaly happened—how guerrillas considered “lunatic” and “terrorist” not only by conservatives but also by many Peruvian Marxists could have gained substantial popular backing in one region of the country. Core support has come from various “provinces” (the rough equivalent of counties in the United States) in the Ayacucho “department” (the rough equivalent of a state in the United States). About sixteen provinces in Ayacucho and the neighboring departments of Apurímac and Huancavelica have been classified as an “emergency zone,” where the military has been put in control and many constitutional rights have been suspended in an effort to defeat Sendero.

The evidence of popular support for Sendero is virtually irrefutable and comes from various sources. Consider, for example, electoral data for the region. In the May 1980 national elections and the November 1980 municipal elections, abstention rates were higher in Ayacucho than in any other department. The rate was almost 50 percent in November 1980, about twenty percentage points higher than the national average (Tuesta Soldevilla 1983:61). While abstention might have reflected fear of Senderista retaliation, null and blank voting would not have, and the percentage of null and blank votes was also extraordinarily high in the emergency zone departments. In the May 1980 election the null and blank vote was 42 percent of the total cast in Ayacucho; the rate nationwide was 27 percent (Presidencia de la República 1981:101-7). Such patterns were new for Ayacucho.¹ Amid fears of violence, the November 1983 municipal elections were not even held in most of Ayacucho. In the one province where balloting was possible, abstention was over 50 percent, and 56 percent of all votes were null or blank. The victorious party, PADIN, was the only party to promise amnesty for the guerrillas; it won 19 percent of the vote (González 1984:34).

Journalists have also reported support for Sendero from their interviews in the region. In mid 1982 a journalist asked “all those who wanted to converse” in Ayacucho whether or not they thought Sendero was a peasant movement and whether or not it counted on support from the population; according to the journalist, the response was virtually unanimous: “It’s a movement supported by the youngest peasants. The older ones are resigned to their lot, but they do back their kids” (González 1982:47). Also in the early 1980s, an Ayacucho police chief estimated

1. In 1963, for example, the abstention rate was only 18 percent, not a great deal higher than the national average of 11 percent; the percentage of null and blank votes was apparently below 1 percent (Larson and Bergman 1969:383-84). Although there were many new voters in the 1980s elections, who were more likely to be illiterates with a tendency to spoil their ballots, this was the case throughout Peru, not just in Ayacucho.

that “80 percent of the townspeople of Ayacucho sympathize with Sendero” (*Andean Report*, March 1984, p. 47).

Through 1982, most Ayacucho peasants refused to report on Senderistas in the vicinity, whom they supplied with food and shelter.² Government intelligence personnel were rarely able to secure information from the emergency zone peasantry about Senderista leaders.

The Sendero guerrillas themselves are currently estimated to number between 2,000 and 15,000; an intermediate estimate is most common.³ At first, most militants were young, and many were students or former students, often from peasant backgrounds; by 1986, however, recruits came from diverse age and occupational groups.⁴ The number of actual peasant combatants is small.

The toll of the guerrilla war has been very high. Between 1980 and 1987, political violence took more lives in Peru than in any other Latin American nation save El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Colombia. According to official figures, the toll between May 1980 and December 1987 was 10,541 lives.⁵ Among the dead were 283 civilian authorities and 568 security personnel.⁶ Most of the rest were ordinary folk, especially Andean peasants and Senderista suspects.

The violence has gradually affected more people and more parts of the country. Between May 1980 and December 1987, a total of 9,534 attacks were recorded.⁷ During the first four years of the violence, almost one-third of all attacks took place in the department of Ayacucho, versus 23 percent in Lima.⁸ In contrast, in 1985-87, the largest number of attacks (more than 30 percent) occurred in Lima and the second largest percentage in Ayacucho.⁹ In the early 1980s, the only provinces declared

2. Informal interviews with peasant leaders (not from Ayacucho) during various periods in the early 1980s.

3. The 15,000 maximum figure is Sendero's own. See Sandra Woy-Hazleton and William A. Hazleton, “International Human Rights Concerns: The Challenge of Guerrilla Terrorism in Peru” (Paper presented at the International Studies Association Meeting, April 15-18), p. 2. For the government's estimates, which average about 5,000, see *New York Times*, 23 April 1987; *In These Times*, 1-7 April 1987, p. 11.

4. According to data provided by the Dirección General de Inteligencia of the Interior Ministry, of the 1,765 persons arrested on charges of terrorism between January 1986 and October 1986, slightly fewer than half were under twenty-five years of age; 34 percent were workers, 21 percent were unemployed, 18 percent were students, and 11 percent were white-collar employees. Similar figures for earlier years showed a larger representation for students: see *El Comercio*, 4 April 1985, p. A8.

5. *Peru Report*, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 42, and *Caretas*, no. 987, 30 December 1987, p. 28.

6. *Caretas*, no. 884/885, 30 December 1985, pp. 32-35; *Caretas*, 29 December 1986, pp. 17-19; *Caretas*, 30 December 1987, p. 28.

7. *Idem*.

8. *Caretas*, no. 807, 9 July 1984, p. 10.

9. *Caretas*, no. 884/885, 30 December 1985, p. 34; *Caretas*, 29 December 1986, p. 17; and Diego Garcia-Sayan, “Violencia Política y Pacificación en el Perú” (unpublished paper, Lima). 1987 data are January-June only.

as "emergency zones" were in the southern highlands; by late 1987, the number was over thirty provinces—more than double the early 1980s figure—including Lima, Callao, and provinces in the northern upper-jungle coca-growing region (Americas Watch 1987: 5).

As the violence expanded, its context and character changed. In early 1983 the state launched a massive counterinsurgency campaign in Ayacucho, repressing the rebellion to a considerable degree. It is likely that more than one Sendero subsequently emerged. Some Senderistas went to the nearby southern highlands area of Puno, especially to the provinces of Azangaro and Melgar, where they sought to establish the kind of peasant base they had enjoyed in Ayacucho, but their success was limited (González 1986; *Latin America Regional Reports, Andean Group*, 31 July 1986, pp. 2–3). Another Sendero may be in the cities now, especially in Lima, building support in squatter settlements and public universities. Yet another Sendero, one that takes advantage of political and economic opportunities presented by Peru's drug trade, is active in the northern upper-jungle coca-growing region.

The analysis in this chapter draws on various sources. First, it draws on my own interviews in Lima, Huancayo, and Trujillo at numerous intervals between 1980 and 1987. Economic data and electoral data are culled from numerous publications. For information on the role of Sendero in the Ayacucho university, the works of Palmer (1985) and (1986) and Degregori (1986) have been especially important. Also, I have been carrying out research on an agrarian cooperative in Peru's central highlands since 1973 and have gained the confidence of a number of people there who are familiar with the problems of Ayacucho and Sendero. Members of my original 1973 research team have from time to time carried out informal surveys in parts of this cooperative; one site in the department of Huancavelica, which we have called "Varya," has allegedly become a pro-Senderista community. The surveys are "informal" in the sense that they were nonrandom and are relatively small.

SENDERO'S ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOCIAL BASE IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS, PRE-1983

Ideally, a social science analysis of a revolutionary movement would determine the precise importance of various economic, political, and social factors. This scholarly task is difficult, however, as revolutionary movements are not, of course, laboratory experiments where specific contingencies may be manipulated. For the relatively few cases of real-world revolutionary movements, the scholar cannot always isolate economic, political, and social factors from one another. Yet the southern highlands region that provided Sendero's original support has economic, po-

litical, and social characteristics that are *all* different from those of Peru's other regions and that would *all* be considered to make backing for guerrilla groups more likely.

Nor can the scholar readily measure "revolutionary leaders' skill"—in this case, the effectiveness of Sendero's strategies. Certainly, in comparison to the guerrillas of the 1960s, Sendero was much more successful in building mass support in the southern highlands. A rigorous assessment of Sendero's effectiveness is, however, impossible. There were rival Marxist groups to Sendero in the southern highlands in the 1970s and 1980s, but not rival guerrilla groups, and so it cannot be shown that citizens preferred Sendero to another band. Also, after 1982, as peasants became more aware of many characteristics of Sendero—especially its dogmatism and brutality—they withdrew their support. Furthermore, Sendero has not to date achieved the same kind of success—broad and deep support among peasants and students—in any other rural area. Sendero's strategy may thus only have been appropriate in a small, unusual part of the country at a particular time. Sendero's approach may have facilitated gaining mass support in one region, but not winning state power nationwide.

Thus, I cannot provide here a rank-order of conditions important to the emergence of Sendero Luminoso. I think, however, that it is possible by various techniques to identify a set of factors that all seem to have been necessary to the growth of support for Sendero through 1982. First, the "emergency zone" where mass support emerged—first Ayacucho and then Huancavelica and Apurimac in the southern highlands—may be contrasted to other areas. Second, changes in economic, political, and social factors, as well as in the character of guerrilla organization, can be assessed from the period of the 1960s, when revolutionary groups were defeated rather quickly, to the 1980s, when they have not been.

My analysis below identifies four factors as necessary to the development of popular support for Sendero in the southern highlands prior to 1983: (1) absolute economic decline and a real threat to subsistence; (2) politicization of various groups during the 1970s leading more peasants to blame their plight on the government; (3) shrewd organizational strategies on the part of Sendero; and (4) a weak and inappropriate response by the Peruvian state. As all these conditions applied at the same time, no one can be singled out as most important, or sufficient. I believe that all four were necessary, and all together sufficient.

The following subsections deal in turn with each of these four factors. The final subsection discusses factors that cannot now be empirically demonstrated to have influenced popular support in the southern highlands—in particular, cultural factors and the rise of a new cash crop.

CAUSES
OF
SUPPORT

TABLE 2.1 Regional Inequalities in Peru

	Annual Farm Income Per Capita (thousands of soles, 1961)	Life Expectancy (years at birth, 1979)	Adult Illiteracy (percentage, 1981)	Without Potable Water (percentage, 1981)	Population Per Physician (1981)	Caloric Intake (percentage of FAO require- ments, 1980)
Southern Highlands ^a	3.8	51	45	84	18,000	—
Ayacucho	3.3	51	45	85	16,779	—
Northern and Central Highlands ^b	8.1	57	28	76	8,236	72 ^c
Coast ^c	11.2	63	13	48	1,749	—
Lima	30.2	70	5	26	525	96
Poor Southern African Nations ^d	—	50	57	—	21,124	92

SOURCES: Consejo Nacional de Población 1985; except potable water figures from Banco Central de Reserva 1986a: 22, farm income per capita from Webb 1977: 119-29, and caloric intake from World Bank 1981: 35.

^aAverages for the five poorest southern highlands departments: Ayacucho, Huancavelica, Cuzco, Apurímac, and Puno.

^bAverages for the three exclusively highlands departments: Junín, Pasco, and Cajamarca.

^cAverages for the five main coastal departments: Piura, Lambayeque, La Libertad, Lima, and Ica.

^dAverages for low-income nations in Africa south of the Sahara, from World Bank 1983: vol. 2, 152-55. Estimates were the most recent available, generally late 1970s or early 1980s.

^eFigure is for "northern highlands" only. Exact area is unspecified.

coca. (Subsequently, coca has clearly been an important factor in other regions, not so much because of the emergence of the coca industry as because of U.S.-backed attempts at its eradication).

Economic Decline and Threat to Subsistence

In the early 1980s peasants in Peru's southern highlands faced what was possibly the most serious threat to their subsistence of the twentieth century. Living standards plummeted throughout the nation; in Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica, where living standards were already much lower than in the rest of the country, the decline meant virtual starvation. Poverty was both relative to other regions and absolute. Scott (1976) has emphasized threats to subsistence as the sine qua non of peasant rebellion, and the Peruvian case bears out his argument well.

Table 2.1 shows that Peru's southern highlands are a region as poor as some of the poorest countries in the world. In 1961 agricultural incomes in the southern highlands were less than half those in the northern and central highlands, and less than one-seventh of incomes in Lima. Agricultural incomes in three Ayacucho provinces of early core support for Sendero—Huanta, Huamanga, and Cangallo—were lower than for all but 9 of Peru's 155 provinces (Webb 1977: 119-29). There are about thirty-five times as many people per doctor in the southern highlands as in Lima. The lack of physicians was a major reason for life expectancy rates that were as low as in sub-Saharan Africa.

The major reason for the poverty in the southern highlands is that the departments are heavily agricultural in a region ill-suited to agriculture. In Ayacucho, Huancavelica, and Apurímac, over three-quarters of the labor force was employed in agriculture as of 1961 (Larson and Bergman 1969: 324-25). Yet it is estimated that in Ayacucho only 4 percent of the total land area of the department is used for agriculture (Gitlitz 1984a). Most of the rest of the land is too arid, too stony, too precipitous, or too high. Ayacucho's land/family ratio is probably one of the worst among Peruvian departments, and Peru's ratio as a whole is the second worst in Latin America, after El Salvador (Martínez and Tealdo 1982: 39).

The central highlands (Junín and Pasco) and the northern highlands (Cajamarca) seem better off than the southern highlands because there are more alternatives to farming. The greater prosperity of the central highlands, with per capita farm incomes at about 9,000 soles in 1961, is probably due to the mining and commerce in the region (Webb 1977: 119-29). In the northern highlands, where per capita resident farm incomes were about 6,400 soles in 1961, the greater prosperity seems due to easier access to the coast and a prosperous dairy industry in the department's capital (Gitlitz 1984b: 7).

Living standards in Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica are also

below those in Cuzco, the southern highlands department that has not been severely affected by guerrilla actions. In the government's 1972 and 1981 maps of poverty, Apurímac, Ayacucho, and Huancavelica were the three poorest departments in both eras; Cuzco was the eighth poorest in 1972 and the sixth in 1981, of twenty-four (Banco Central de Reserva 1982 and 1986b).¹⁰ Further data are reported in table 2.2. It should also be noted that tourism has boomed in Cuzco since the early 1970s, and that some of the income from tourism is not reported in Cuzco. Cuzco has benefited in recent years not only from increased tourism but also from a more significant agrarian reform and better access to the coast.

Not only are peasants in Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica poor relative to other Peruvians, but they became poorer in the past decade. Per capita highlands farm income dropped from an index figure of 106 for 1950 and 1961 to 100 for 1972 and further to 82 for 1980 (McClintock 1984: 59-61). Whereas per capita incomes were estimated to be about U.S. \$100 annually in Ayacucho in 1961, by 1979 they were about \$60 or \$70, and they were even lower by the early 1980s (Gitlitz 1984a: 2).

Many peasants perceived a crisis. For example, in Varya, the allegedly pro-Sendero community in Huancavelica that I studied, peasants were very negative about their community's progress. In my research team's informal survey, 84 percent of twenty-five respondents said in 1980 that the community's progress in recent years had been "bad."¹¹ Varya peasants were also asked, "What have been the achievements in your community in recent years?" Despite the optimistic phraseology, 92 percent of the respondents replied, "None." I asked the same questions in 1980 at two other sites, one a coastal cooperative and the other a prosperous central highlands peasant community. Of fifty-five respondents in these areas, only 7 percent said that progress had been "bad."

Subsistence became threatened in the southern highlands. As of 1980, daily caloric intake was estimated at below 70 percent of minimum FAO requirements in the southern highlands (McClintock 1984: 58-59). In a study made by the Peruvian government, daily per capita intake among lower-class people throughout the country was found to have plummeted from 1,934 calories per capita in 1972 to 1,486 in 1979 (Fernández Baca 1982: 89-90). Most disturbing of all are some official data for particularly poor zones in the southern highlands. As of roughly 1980,

10. In the 1972 map Cajamarca was tied for third place with Huancavelica, but this finding is atypical. See, for example, the 1972 ENCA (Encuesta Nacional de Consumo de Alimentos) study, reported in Havens et al. 1983: 20.

11. This was a nonrandom application, primarily to men, of a brief questionnaire. For further information on the nature of these surveys and a description of Varya, see McClintock 1981: 102-5.

TABLE 2.2 Living Standards, Ayacucho versus Cuzco

	Ayacucho	Cuzco
Gross domestic product (per capita, in real intis, 1979) ^a	54	99
Gross domestic product (per capita, in real intis, 1984)	45	99
Illiteracy rate, 1961	73%	67%
Illiteracy rate, 1972	56	48
Illiteracy rate, 1981	45	37
Without potable water, 1972	93	89
Without potable water, 1981	85	76
Population per physician, 1981	16,779	5,904

SOURCES: For gross domestic product data in 1979 and 1984, Instituto Nacional de Estadística 1987: 94; for 1961, Larson and Bergman 1969: 364; for 1972, Amat y León 1981: 37-39; for 1981, illiteracy and potable water, Banco Central de Reserva 1986a: 22, 24; population per physician, Consejo Nacional de Población 1985.

^aIntis became the official currency in 1985.

individuals in these zones were apparently consuming as little as 420 calories a day (González 1982: 43).

The World Bank characterized the nutritional situation in 1980 as "bad" (World Bank 1981: 35). By 1983, a year in which the Sendero movement grew considerably, it was even worse. Minimal subsistence conditions were reduced further by natural disasters. Warm ocean currents (El Niño) brought floods to Peru's northern coast and drought to Peru's southern highlands. While the southeastern highlands department of Puno was the one most devastated by the drought, almost all the southern highlands region, including Ayacucho, was seriously affected.¹² In the country as a whole, 1983 agricultural production fell by about 15 percent, and potato production more; in the southern highlands, potato production can be estimated to have fallen between 40 and 50 percent.¹³

The Ecumenical Committee on the Andes described the situation in the following terms:

In the southern Andes, severe drought completely destroyed the harvest, forcing peasants to consume surplus seed intended for this year's planting. Starvation is rampant among subsistence farmers; illness, particularly tuberculosis, has spread alarmingly. The price of basic foodstuffs rose dramatically in regional and national markets, affecting the urban

12. See *Andean Focus* (a publication of the Ecumenical Committee on the Andes), no. 2 (November-December 1983), and *Latin America Weekly Report* (WR-83-23), 26 August 1983, p. 9.

13. Calculated from *Latin America Weekly Report* (WR-84-02), 13 January 1984, p. 11; *Latin America Weekly Report* (WR-83-23), 26 August 1983, p. 9; and *Latin American Regional Reports, Andean Group* (RA-84-02), 2 March 1984, p. 6.

poor. Unemployment increased in the agricultural sector (subsistence farmers traditionally work as paid laborers at harvest time). . . . News reports documented cases of peasants selling their children for \$25. (*Andean Focus*, November–December 1983, p. 1)

While many peasants sought to migrate, the vast majority failed to find jobs. Unemployment was very high. Nationwide, unemployment and underemployment, which had been less than 50 percent of the work force in the early 1970s, skyrocketed to about 59 percent in 1983 (World Bank 1981:6; Panfichi 1984:70). Peasants had long depended on seasonal employment to supplement their agricultural incomes, but the work was less and less available, and wages were lower (see below).

Employment in coca cultivation and production was probably the most lucrative alternative, but insufficient jobs were available even in this new boom industry, which in any case was centered in the northern, rather than southern, highlands. Overall, a much smaller percentage of peasants in Peru seem to have participated in the benefits from coca production than in Bolivia, where the crop has had a substantial positive effect on peasant incomes (Healy 1985). "Guesstimates" are in the range of 5 percent of peasants participating in Peru versus 10 percent in Bolivia.¹⁴

Politicization in the Southern Highlands

During the 1960s and 1970s political life was transformed in Peru's southern highlands. For most of the twentieth century, peasants in the area did not see their problems in a national political context. They were illiterate and isolated from the national political arena, dominated by a traditional elite who owned the haciendas and mines of the area. Suddenly, however, for various reasons these conditions changed: young people from the area were able to secure an education and learn about the wider world, and they became more sensitive to the gross social and economic inequalities in Peru; they were also able to communicate their perceptions to the Ayacucho peasants.

Until the 1960s very few people in Ayacucho were able to gain an understanding of Peru's society and economy. In 1961 illiteracy affected over 70 percent of the adult population in Ayacucho, Huancavelica, and Apurímac—the highest rate in the country (Larson and Bergman 1969:364). Contact with the coast was much more limited for Ayacucho and Apurímac than for any other highlands department. Ayacucho was not connected directly with the coast until the mid 1960s, when the Vía de los Libertadores (Highway of the Liberators) was built to Pisco (Palmer

14. Interviews with Kevin Healy, Roldolfo Osoreo, Luis Deustua, and other analysts in 1986.

1986:134). At this time, there were only two buses for local transportation in Ayacucho and fewer than a hundred cars and trucks (Palmer 1986:133).

Not only did peasants and townspeople thus rarely travel out of the region, but people from the coast rarely reached Ayacucho. In particular, political activists did not seek to mobilize the people of this region. In the 1963 presidential election, the percentage of the total population that voted was lower—at between 6 and 8 percent—in Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica than in any other department in the country; the rates were slightly higher in Cuzco and Puno, and much higher in the northern and central highlands (Larson and Bergman, 1969:383). In much of the northern and central highlands—Cajamarca and Pasco—the political party APRA (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance) worked successfully to build a popular base, capturing solid majorities at the polls in the early 1960s (Larson and Bergman 1969:381, 384; Gitlitz 1984b). In the southern highlands, however, APRA was relatively inactive.

Union organizers and Marxist political leaders were rare throughout Peru during this period. When they sought to mobilize peasants in highland regions, they were usually identified quickly by hacienda authorities and barred from the vicinity (Cotler 1970; McClintock 1981:64–83). While there were fewer large haciendas in the Ayacucho area than in most of the highlands, the traditional landed elite, in alliance with the Catholic church, seemed to maintain a conservative political hegemony in much of the area (Palmer 1986:133–34; Degregori 1986:237–38).

Change began after 1959. In that year the National University of San Cristóbal of Huamanga was reopened in Ayacucho (it had been closed since 1885). The university grew rapidly, with an open admissions policy; by 1970 it employed at least 300 faculty and enrolled perhaps as many as 15,000 students (Palmer 1986:136). At this time, about 70 percent of the students came from the department of Ayacucho itself; many were the children of peasants, the first in their families to gain a higher education (Palmer 1986:138).

The implications of the university's emergence were numerous and important, and they illustrate why—as Timothy Wickham-Crowley notes in his comparative study in chapter 4—guerrilla movements have emerged in countries with expanding university systems. With the arrival of many leftist scholars, the traditional hegemony of the landed and religious elite eroded, and political debate intensified, primarily among various groups of leftists. The opportunity to gain a higher education greatly raised students' professional expectations, but, as a result of Peru's post-1975 economic depression, very few of them were able to realize these expectations. Jobs were scarce, and a graduate of a provincial high-

lands university was rarely competitive. Commented one student: "No one gets a job anywhere with a degree from the University of Huamanga" (González 1982: 46).

A considerable number of the university's graduates became teachers. Ironically, as Palmer (1986) emphasizes, education was the only major program not slighted by the Peruvian government during this period. By 1981 there were 4,741 teachers and 1,450 schools in the department of Ayacucho (Palmer 1986: 138). In 1961 literacy stood at a mere 21 percent among persons aged seventeen and older; by 1981 it was 56 percent of persons of fifteen and older (Larson and Bergman 1969: 363-64; Palmer 1985: 84). This percentage is still increasing (Palmer 1986: 138).

Understanding of the national political arena also increased as a result of improvements in transportation and communication, as well as migration. The new road to the coast greatly facilitated transport. In 1974 electrical supply was improved in the city of Ayacucho, and television arrived shortly thereafter. Migration rates out of Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica have traditionally been among the highest in the country, presumably because of the poverty in these departments (Larson and Bergman 1969: 309; Presidencia de la República 1981: 475). In the 1970s, as a result of the economic depression in the country as a whole, some of these migrants began to return to Ayacucho, and apparently brought with them a more radical worldview.¹⁵

Another very important factor in the politicization of the Ayacucho peasants was the character of agrarian reform in the area. During the 1960s and 1970s agrarian reform was the banner of two successive governments—the democratically elected Belaúnde government (1963-68) and the reformist military government under General Juan Velasco (1968-75). Ultimately, however, the economic promise of the reform was not fulfilled in the emergency zone departments. Although interpretations of the reform in the area certainly vary and have not been fully documented, many citizens seemed to decide that reform had not succeeded in the region and that a more revolutionary approach would be necessary.

In the early 1960s the Acción Popular political party and its presidential candidate, Fernando Belaúnde Terry, won the popular vote in the southern highlands departments, to a considerable degree on the basis of his promise of agrarian reform. At this time, many politically attuned peasants spurned guerrillas in the belief that agrarian reform was a better option than revolution (Handelman 1975; Craig 1969; Tullis 1970). This promise went almost totally unfulfilled during Belaúnde's

15. Conversation with Billie Jean Isbell, who said that a study by Teodoro Altamirano is reporting results of this nature.

five years in office. In Ayacucho, a mere fifty-four families benefited from the government's reform (Palmer 1973: 191).

Agrarian reform was also a key promise of the Velasco military government later in the decade; under this administration, a sweeping reform was, in fact, implemented in most of the country. By many criteria the Velasco government's reform was the most ambitious in Latin America save Cuba; virtually all large haciendas were swept from the countryside (McClintock 1981). In Ayacucho, however, the impact of the reform was more limited than in almost any other part of the country (see table 2.3).

Why was the impact of the reform scant in Ayacucho? Primarily because there were very few prosperous estates in the department. The value of the property expropriated and transferred to peasant beneficiaries in the Ayacucho Agrarian Zone (which included parts of Huancavelica and Apurímac as well as Ayacucho) was a mere 4,900 soles per family, or less than U.S. \$250, compared to twice as much in Cuzco, four times as much in Junín, twelve times as much in Puno, and thirty-two times as much in Lima (McClintock 1984: 66). The absolute number of haciendas that could be transformed into viable peasant cooperatives was also small. By and large, such haciendas had been expropriated and restructured by 1976; as table 2.3 shows, in Ayacucho the number of enterprises in this category was smaller than anywhere else in the Peruvian highlands. The number of beneficiaries was also modest—barely more than 10 percent of the rural population.

Unfortunately, precise data comparing peasant families in Ayacucho to peasant families elsewhere in terms of their landowning status are not available. Calculation is complicated by the fact that agrarian reform zones did not correspond to departments. However, it seems that the number of reform-based cooperative workers was small in Ayacucho, and the number of families in indigenous peasant communities high (Palmer 1973: 192-94; Bonilla 1986: 5).

Yet, although the material impact of the reform was slight in Ayacucho, its political impact was large. As mentioned previously, the traditional *hacendados* had been able to maintain political hegemony in the region and to control access to much of the countryside, barring leftist political organizers. With the agrarian reform, the *hacendados* and their staff left. Land titles, which previously had often been disputed between haciendas and peasant communities, became secure. The feudal services that many hacienda managers had required from peasants, again in both haciendas and communities, no longer applied. Many peasants throughout the Peruvian highlands felt autonomous for the first time. From the guerrillas' perspective, tactical mobility was greatly enhanced. A large new political space was opened to political organizers.

TABLE 2.3 The Impact of Agrarian Reform in Highlands Peru

	<i>Reform Beneficiaries (percentage of rural population)</i>	<i>Number of Cooperatives as of December 1975</i>
Ayacucho	11%	9
Apurímac	14	20
Huancavelica	36	11
Cuzco	39	50
Puno	15	30
Junín	37	24
Cajamarca	6	25
North Coast ^a	54	54

SOURCES: Number of family beneficiaries by department from "Reforma agraria en cifras," Documento de Trabajo no. 11, 1975, from the Ministry of Agriculture. This number is multiplied by five to indicate the total number of beneficiaries, and then divided by rural population figures for 1972 given in Presidencia de la República 1984:629.

^a Averages for La Libertad and Lambayeque.

In the case of previous Latin American agrarian reforms, governments have been able to establish new political institutions in the countryside to channel demands and coopt unrest. For example, during the 1930s and 1940s, the Mexican government forged the strong grass-roots links of its ruling party, the PRI; during the 1960s, the Venezuelan government achieved a similar political base for the political party Acción Democrática. In contrast, the Velasco government failed to build such a political institution.

The Velasco regime tried: in mid 1971 the "social mobilization" agency SINAMOS was launched. In many respects, SINAMOS was to have fulfilled the traditional role of the progovernment political party; yet it survived for only a few years. The reasons for the failure of the military government's political plan are various and complex (McClintock and Lowenthal 1983). One problem was military factionalism, which led to ideological and organizational confusion at the grass roots. Also, by 1976 Peru was in the midst of a grave economic crisis, and resources were no longer available for rural organization.

While the government did not succeed in mobilizing the peasantry, other political groups were able to operate more effectively in the highlands. Two peasant confederations became active. The National Agrarian Confederation (CNA) was established in 1974 under official auspices; it claimed to include as many as twenty departmental federations

and 144 provincial agrarian leagues during the mid 1970s, with a total membership of about 170,000 peasants (Matos Mar and Mejia 1978: 120). Some top military government officials had apparently hoped that the CNA would provide a vehicle for government control over the peasantry, but the CNA resisted such a role. After a leftist peasant leader from Cuzco was elected CNA president in 1977 and the confederation began to criticize the government more vehemently and call for further land redistributions, the government dissolved the CNA. The CNA continued on its own, however, and established close ties to the Partido Socialista Revolucionario (PSR), a pro-Velasquista party that is currently a member of the Izquierda Unida (United Left) coalition. A second confederation, the Peruvian Peasant Confederation (CCP) also grew a great deal during the 1970s. The CCP, which was tied to the Marxist Vanguardia Revolucionaria in the 1970s, is generally considered to be to the left of the CNA, although many policy positions of the two federations have been similar. In 1978 the CCP claimed 250,000 members (Matos Mar and Mejia 1980: 120).

Unfortunately, there is no major study of these two peasant confederations. From the work of Handelman (1981), García-Sayan (1982), and Bejar and Franco (1985), some characteristics of the two federations are evident, however. Both were active in demanding a more radical agrarian reform and, to this end, in supporting land invasions. The regions of greatest activity seem to have been Cuzco, Cajamarca, Piura, and the Andahuaylas province of Apurímac.

The messages of the two peasant confederations were of considerable interest to the people of the southern highlands. In part as a result of recruitment by the two confederations, the vote for the Marxist left skyrocketed in the Peruvian highlands. Whereas a Marxist left had barely existed in the elections of the early 1960s, in the 1978 Constituent Assembly elections (the first to be held since 1963), the Marxist left tallied almost 40 percent of the vote in most southern highlands departments, versus 29 percent nationwide (McClintock 1984: 56). In 1980, in an election that was essentially a contest between the center-right Acción Popular and the center-left APRA parties, the vote for the Marxist left declined in the southern highlands; yet, in Ayacucho the Marxist tally was still 27 percent, greater than in any other department of the country except for two tiny mining departments on the southern border (McClintock 1984: 56).

Was the overall effect of the peasant confederations to orient the highlands peasantry toward electoral politics and away from violent protest? The answer to the question is unclear. They may have in some areas, especially Cuzco; it is also interesting to note that they were unusually inactive in Ayacucho—perhaps because entry to the region was prohibited by Sendero, or perhaps simply because of the remoteness of

Ayacucho and the small number of haciendas there. On the other hand, militants of the large and militant Andahuaylas peasant federation, led by Julio César Mezzich in the department of Apurímac, are widely believed to have joined Sendero in the early 1980s (Berg 1986).

Certainly, however, by the 1970s peasants and students were much more inclined to ponder their lot and to criticize social injustice in Peru. They were much more attuned to the nature of government policies toward agriculture, and they correctly perceived that these policies, never very advantageous to the peasantry, were becoming ever more adverse (see below). More than ever before, peasants and students blamed their abject poverty on the government.

For example, in my informal surveys of the early 1980s, peasants were almost unanimous in criticizing the government for "not helping at all" (McClintock 1984:72-73). Thus, in one central highlands community in 1981, for example, 94 percent of seventeen respondents said that the government "did not help at all," versus a much smaller 37 percent in 1975. In two coastal cooperatives, the figures were 95 percent in 1983, versus 30 percent in 1974. Peasants' complaints were vehement, often full of rage and despair:

There's no help from the government. On the contrary, everything costs more. Living has just become impossible and every day it's more difficult, especially when you have kids and depend solely on your land. Here, they've always forgotten us. There's no help. Exactly the opposite—the cost of everything has risen too much, and that's not the way to help. They're killing the poor people.

The Organizational Strategies of Sendero Luminoso

Sendero Luminoso was much shrewder and more dedicated than Peru's 1960 guerrillas, and much more effective in building an alliance between its militants and the peasantry. Sendero was correct in thinking that conditions were ripe for armed struggle. Although most Ayacucho communities that provided Sendero with its original base of support were unfamiliar with other Marxist groups, many communities in Huancaavelica and Apurímac that were quickly attracted to Sendero were familiar with them, and apparently did prefer Sendero. However, during the 1980-82 period, peasants did not seem to anticipate a strong reaction from the state; we cannot know what their choices would have been if they had foreseen the post-1982 counterinsurgency offensive. Also, peasants have come to reject many Senderista characteristics.

As Gott (1971), Chaplin (1968), and Wickham-Crowley (in chapter 4 of this volume) have pointed out, Peru's revolutionary activists of the early 1960s were naive and impatient intellectuals. Generally of middle-to upper-class origin and from the coastal cities, these guerrillas knew very little about highlands Peru or its people. They were familiar neither with the Indian language nor with indigenous customs. Persuaded by

the example of the 1959 Cuban revolution that they could mobilize the Andean peasantry relatively quickly and easily, they did not establish a political base in one place. Rather, they fanned out to different parts of Peru's central and southern mountains and jungle fringe, for the most part roving from place to place.

The guerrillas failed to realize that wandering, unprotected guerrilla bands, led by undisguised non-Indians, would be readily spotted by government authorities. The revolutionaries overlooked the differences between the Cuban Sierra Maestra and the Peruvian highlands; the Peruvian mountains are quite bare and thus provide little protection, especially against aerial surveillance. While these dangers were apparently not weighed by the guerrillas, they were by peasants in the area. Probably only a few hundred highlands peasants were recruited to the guerrilla cause at this time. Most actual recruits seem to have been jungle Indians, many of whom proved to be politically fickle. The military defeated the guerrillas in about two years; several thousand people were arrested, and about five hundred were killed.

Sendero's strategies were very different. Sendero's strategies diverged also from those of the other Marxist groups of the 1980s, which rejected guerrilla war in favor of participation in the new democratic system. Many Marxist parties continued to be dominated by upper-middle-class intellectuals and developed neither the commitment nor the resources for grass-roots organization that have characterized Sendero Luminoso.

Sendero's patience, dedication, and long-term perspective have been virtually unique among Peruvian revolutionary groups. Abimael Guzmán, the original leader of Sendero, was a political activist in Ayacucho for more than fifteen years before the start of violent actions. Guzmán came to Ayacucho in 1962 from the university at Arequipa, a large city off Peru's south coast, where he had earned degrees in philosophy and law with theses on the "Kantian Theory of Space" and "The Bourgeois Democratic State." He taught as a philosophy professor in the university's education department.

Until the late 1960s Guzmán's primary focus was mobilizing support in the Ayacucho university itself. Guzmán was reportedly charismatic and popular as a teacher. He devoted large amounts of time to political meetings and discussions at his home in Ayacucho. At first, Guzmán was a member of the Communist Party, which was pro-Soviet; in 1964, following the Sino-Soviet split, he as well as many other Communist Party members broke away to join Bandera Roja (Red Flag), one of Peru's first Maoist groups. In 1966, in the wake of steep cuts in the university budget, pro-Guzmán radicals won control of the university council and took various initiatives that garnered support for the Guzmán group among Ayacucho's urban population (Palmer 1986; Gitlitz 1984a; De-gregori 1986).

Guzmán's decision to transform university students into revolutionary

militants was not unique among Peruvian Marxists, but his effort was particularly shrewd and intensive. The focus upon the university's education program was truly brilliant, as many students would ultimately become teachers in the Ayacucho peasant communities, giving lessons not only in reading or mathematics but also in politics. As previously mentioned, there were almost 5,000 teachers in Ayacucho by 1981, perhaps as many as half of whom had studied in the Sendero-controlled education program in the university. Also, for about two years in the mid 1970s, Sendero controlled the large high-school education program at the university (Degregori 1986:250-59). The Guzmán group's success with the students was probably in part because they were inclined to radicalism owing to their origins in impoverished Ayacucho and their own slim chances of upward mobility; but the band's commitment to the students' radicalization was also important.

In the late 1960s the Guzmán faction was expelled from the Bandera Roja, apparently because Guzmán was demanding more immediate preparations for armed struggle. In 1970 the group commonly known as Sendero Luminoso, officially named the Communist Party of Peru, was established. At about the same time, much more intensive efforts were begun to build support among peasant communities in Ayacucho. Sendero militants fanned out from Ayacucho to the surrounding villages. Many worked as teachers, some took up odd jobs in their native communities, and perhaps a few became social workers or the like. In contrast to most Peruvian revolutionaries from middle-class backgrounds, the Senderistas were prepared to live austere for many years in remote, bleak places. They learned the Indian language if they did not already know it, and they often married into the communities.

Sendero was also unique among Peruvian Marxist groups in its openness to young provincial militants as leaders. At its inception, Sendero included a substantial number of white, cosmopolitan intellectuals from the coast or large cities; but, by 1980, with the exception of Guzmán himself, the leadership was largely Ayacucho-born (Degregori 1986:248). The Senderistas were often considered "country bumpkins" by other Peruvian Marxists (Palmer 1986:128). It was apparently these young Ayacucho-born militants, such as Edith Lagos, who pressed the decision to begin armed struggle in 1980 (Degregori 1986:249).

Sendero was also much more careful than other guerrilla groups to provide its peasant allies with material benefits. Often in coordination with university extension programs, Senderistas provided regular paramedical services and agricultural advice, as well as education, to many Ayacucho communities for more than a decade. Between 1980 and 1982, too, it appears that Senderistas utilized violence selectively and that some of their violent actions at this time benefited the peasantry. During this period, Sendero blacklisted relatively well-to-do landowners, shopkeep-

ers, and intermediaries, killing them or causing them to flee. Sendero would then distribute their property among villages, and debts to them would be cancelled. To recruits Sendero offered basic subsistence.

During this period Sendero was also careful to protect its peasant allies as well as its cadres. As early as the 1970s, government officials trying to enter Senderista territory were shot (Palmer 1985:81); a decade later assassinations and assassination threats against civilian authorities were so common that almost none remained in the area. Of course, if no government officials were in the region, they could not monitor organizations or individuals. However, during this period, Sendero was not confronting a counterinsurgency effort; when this effort was begun in 1983, Sendero was unable to protect its allies, and thus lost a great deal of support. It does not appear that Sendero planned its response to the counterinsurgency offensive carefully.

Sendero reduced risks from detection to its militants in other ways too.¹⁶ Most important, in contrast to the 1960s guerrillas, Senderistas were indigenous to the region and thus did not stand out physically from the rest of the population. Also, members' identities have been carefully concealed. All members use aliases, and during terrorist actions they are masked with large woolen hoods. Few Senderistas know more than four others: each guerrilla cell has a maximum of five members; one is the leader, joining the committee at the next higher level. If one Senderista is captured, the entire cell is usually disbanded. Infiltration of top Sendero ranks is virtually impossible, as Sendero has not allowed any new members into key leadership groups since the early 1980s, with the possible exception of long-time peasant leader Julio Mezzich.

Weak and Inappropriate Response by the State

There has been a great deal of debate in Peru about the type of response that should be made to Sendero by the state: whether it should be primarily military or primarily economic and political. Virtually all analysts agree, however, that a response of some kind was necessary if Sendero were to be countered. For more than two years, however, the Belaúnde government chose to virtually ignore the Senderista rebellion.

Between May 1980 and December 1982, the Belaúnde government's only response to Sendero was to dispatch a special police unit, called the *sinchis*, to Ayacucho. The *sinchis* were purportedly trained in counterinsurgency techniques, but their behavior in Ayacucho gave little evidence of any professional expertise. Most were from coastal areas and felt ill at ease in the very different highlands environment. The *sinchis* were widely reported to be not only abusive but also ineffectual.

16. Interviews with Raúl González and Gustavo Gorrutti in Lima, July 1986.

No special economic or political initiatives were taken to alleviate the human suffering in the southern highlands. In 1981, only 2.7 percent of all Peruvian agricultural investment was made in the highlands; over 90 percent was devoted to the coast or jungle (Abusada 1984:64). The percentage of total public investment planned for Ayacucho in 1982 was only 1 percent of total public investment—even though Ayacucho holds about 3 percent of Peru's population (Presidencia de la República 1982:523). The 1 percent figure was only slightly more than the 0.6 percent annual average under the military governments between 1968 and 1980 (González 1982:61).

The terms of trade for agricultural products, which had not been especially favorable to peasants for many years, became more adverse in the early 1980s. In part because of Belaúnde government liberalization policies, prices for basic agricultural products rose by only about half as much as the consumer price index, and prices for potatoes—the key product in the southern highlands—rose by only about 30 percent versus roughly 150 percent for the CPI during 1981 and 1982 (McClintock 1985b:table 4). Simultaneously, the amount of real credit available declined by about 20 percent, while the cost of fertilizers and other important inputs increased (McClintock 1985b:27–29).

Why did the Belaúnde government fail to fashion a more effective response to Sendero? While a definitive analysis cannot be attempted here, some tentative explanations can be advanced. First, President Belaúnde seemed personally unwilling to focus on either Peru's mounting social and economic problems in general or on Sendero in particular. Cartoonists often portrayed the president sitting in the clouds. For about two years, Belaúnde dismissed Sendero as a band of unhinged individuals with no support, or as common criminals, or as dupes of the drug traffickers or communist foreign powers. Perhaps, Belaúnde remembered too well that he had been ousted from the presidency in 1968 by the military in part because of the officers' perceptions that he had mishandled the 1960s guerrilla problem, and he did not want the 1960s events to be repeated in the 1980s.

Nor by most accounts were the Peruvian military eager to enter Ayacucho. After all, at this time the military government had just completed a major agrarian reform, which it hoped and said had brought social progress to Peru. Leaving office in 1980, President Morales Bermúdez emphasized that the military's reforms had laid the basis for a real democracy in Peru. The military apparently did not want to believe that their interpretation of the 1970s reforms was not fully accurate. Perhaps weary of politics, and certainly divided on many political issues, the military were apparently in no mood for a major counterinsurgency offensive in one of the most remote areas of the country.¹⁷

17. Confidential interviews, Lima, July 1986.

Ayacucho's remoteness was itself a factor in the inadequate response of the state. While the road between the city of Ayacucho and Lima was quite good, travel to many rural communities in the department was extremely hazardous, and reaching some parts of the department from Lima could take three days. Apparently, Abimael Guzmán chose Ayacucho as his base of activities not only because of its poverty but also because of its remoteness, which he correctly perceived as a geopolitical advantage.

Other Factors That May Have Contributed to Sendero's Growth

Two additional factors may have contributed to Sendero's success. They are (1) southern highlands culture and its fit with Sendero and (2) the coca industry. Definitive evidence on the role of these factors is not available, but they will be discussed here because they are of considerable analytical interest, and are often discussed in the scholarly literature, including in Wickham-Crowley's chapter for this volume.

Has Sendero enjoyed a special resonance among the Ayacucho people for cultural reasons? "Culture" is an imprecise term, and so this question has various dimensions. Perhaps the most important dimension is whether or not Ayacucho has had a particular culture of rebellion.

Briefly, the historical record suggests that the people of Ayacucho have not been more prone to overt political protest than the people of other central and southern highlands departments. Indeed, peasant villages in Ayacucho have been less inclined to join together to fight against domination, and less successful when they have tried. First, prior to the Spanish conquest, the Ayacucho peoples had been conquered by Cuzco's Incas, who were more aggressive and more successful in battle (Degregori 1986; Bonilla 1986). The most important rebellion of the eighteenth century, led by Túpac Amaru between 1765 and 1783, was centered in Cuzco; while many provinces to Cuzco's south participated, Ayacucho did not (Golte 1980:207 and map 27). There were numerous rebellions in the Peruvian highlands during the early twentieth century, but again the major areas of protest were Cuzco and Puno, not Ayacucho (Burga and Flores Galinod 1984:111, 118, 122, 172, 173). The geographical pattern was similar during the 1960s, when peasants were demanding land reform. Cuzco and, to a lesser extent, the central highlands departments of Cerro de Pasco and Junín were the most frequent sites of land invasions and other protest activity (Handelman 1975; Tullis 1970).

One reason for the lower level of political protest in Ayacucho may have been the high level of intercommunity conflict in the area (Palmer 1973; Bonilla 1986). For example, the number of boundary disputes among peasant communities in Ayacucho has been one of the highest in Peru (Palmer 1973:198). Communities may have quarreled more frequently with each other in Ayacucho than elsewhere because there were

fewer hacienda targets. The massive forced migrations ordered under Viceroy Francisco de Toledo in the sixteenth century may also have fragmented the peoples of Ayacucho (Palmer 1973: 198–99). Various scholars believe that the intensity of intercommunity conflict in Ayacucho is a major barrier to any movement that would try to mobilize support on the basis of a broad appeal to Indian ethnicity.¹⁸

Certainly, in the 1980s Ayacucho peasants were angry. They interpreted their suffering in the light of their history as a conquered people and the discrimination they had long suffered as Indians in a country governed for centuries by and for whites.¹⁹ Sendero's call for a new government run by and for Indians was indubitably very appealing.

Yet, if the basis of Sendero's appeal were primarily cultural, Cuzco should be a major locus of the movement. As noted above, Cuzco has been the center of most major Indian movements in Peru, and the "Indian-ness" of Cuzco has not changed in the past decade. So, why did Cuzco not become a social base for Sendero? The answers were suggested above. It seems that Cuzco became more prosperous in the 1960s and 1970s, and that, in the wake of substantial agrarian reform and peasant organizational activity in the department, a larger number of citizens became oriented toward electoral politics, sympathizing with the Marxist electoral coalition Izquierda Unida. While traditions of protest may incline peasants to rebel, they are not likely to spark defiance in the absence of appropriate economic and political preconditions.

Another dimension of the cultural question is religious. Recently, various analysts have noted the spread of apocalyptic and millenarian beliefs in the Peruvian highlands. While peasants who experience subsistence crises and economic dislocations may be drawn to such noninstitutional religious movements, there is no evidence that they simultaneously turn to anti-institutional guerrilla groups. On the contrary, in one of the few attitudinal studies carried out in the southern highlands, surveying miners of peasant background in Huancavelica in the late 1970s, Langton (1986: 39) found that indigenous religious beliefs and practices (such as belief in mine spirits and participation in rituals) were associated with lower social consciousness and less participation in protest activities. Sendero's heavy recruitment among young people also suggests an appeal based more on political ideology than on religious faith.

Yet another dimension of the cultural question is Sendero's own character and its attractiveness to southern highlands people. In other words, did southern highlanders offer support to Sendero rather than other

18. Heraclio Bonilla, "Structure and Conflict in Andean Communities" (research proposal to the Tinker Foundation, 1986). Also, Billie Jean Isbell, in a guest lecture at George Washington University, April 1986.

19. Various interviews, in particular with Luis Millones, Lima, July 1986. See also Granados 1987.

Marxist groups, not because of Sendero's organizational skills, but because of its "totalitarian," "fanatical," or "brutal" nature?

First, it is not clear exactly how "totalitarian" Sendero is. Especialmente since 1982, it has seemed possible that there is more than one Sendero, and that the various new organizations have distinctive orientations. Also, there may not be one major leader at this time. Guzmán disappeared from public view around 1980 and he is sometimes rumored to have died. Further, when Sendero has unilaterally reached policy decisions and tried to force them on the peasantry, its approach has often backfired (see below).

Sendero's ideological fanaticism is well known. Senderistas consider themselves Gang-of-Four Maoists. They are so fanatically Maoist that they paint slogans on Andean village walls proclaiming "Death to the Traitor Deng Xiaoping," despite the fact that most Ayacucho peasants have never heard of the Chinese leader. Senderistas use esoteric symbolism; for example, when they hang dead dogs from poles, it is apparently to repudiate the current Chinese leadership as the "running dogs" of imperialism. In the few pamphlets Sendero has distributed, such as *Desarrollemos la guerra de guerrillas!* (Let's develop the guerrilla war!) and *No votar! Sino, generalizar la guerra de guerrillas para conquistar el poder para el pueblo!* (Don't vote! Rather, generalize the guerrilla war to conquer power for the people!), the language is rather academic. Words such as "feudalism," "bourgeoisie," and "imperialism" are common, whereas references to the Incan past, indigenous customs, and popular anecdotes are nonexistent. Nor do such references appear frequently in Senderista posters or slogans (Salcedo 1986: 64–67). The same tendency is evident in Senderista names. For example Guzmán's nom de guerre, Comrade Gonzalo, is Spanish rather than Quechua. Various Senderistas have also named their children "ILA" or "IRA," acronyms for "Inicio de la lucha armada" or "Inicio de la revolución armada" (start of the armed struggle or armed revolution).

Such ideological fanaticism must have appealed to the students and young people who became Senderista militants, but there is no evidence at all that it appealed to peasants. As Gitlitz (1984a) suggests, it was probably rarely grasped by peasants. The peasants seem to have interpreted Sendero in part in their own way, without a great deal of basis in fact. Thus, for example, peasants seem to put Sendero into a Quechua and Incan worldview (Gitlitz 1984a: 17). In fact, however, as we saw above, Sendero does not commonly use Incan symbols, and Sendero has often opposed many Incan rituals (Degregori 1986).

There is also no evidence that Sendero's brutality appealed to peasants. Especially since the government's counterinsurgency offensive, the prevailing peasant attitude in Ayacucho seemed to be fear, not bloodthirstiness (Degregori 1986: 256).

The effects of Peru's coca boom on peasant support for Sendero Luminoso in the southern highlands are also uncertain. Probably, the effects in this region were minor. The coca industry has expanded rapidly in Peru over the past decade. As of 1982 it was estimated that the value of Peru's drug exports was about U.S. \$850 million, more than any of the country's legal exports (Lee 1985-86: 145-46). Only a decade before, Peru had produced very little coca for export. Coca grows easily on the lower altitudes of most of the eastern Andean foothills including Peru's southern highlands. However, the center of Peru's drug trade is in the northern highlands, especially in the departments of Huanuco, San Martín, and Pasco. The Upper Huallaga river valley in this area is one of the most lucrative coca production sites in the world.

A question of major theoretical importance is whether or not the coca industry dislocated the peasant smallholders in the southern highlands. As Eric Wolf (1969) first emphasized and as Wickham-Crowley discusses in this volume, capitalist expansion and concomitant peasant dislocation have often been considered important to rural protest among peasant smallholders. As noted above, the southern highlands peasants were indeed smallholders, and many can be expected to have been critical of the expansion of modern capitalist enterprises.

In the case of coca, however, there is no evidence from either Peru or Bolivia that the growth of the agroindustry alienated peasants. Amid the nation's economic crises, most peasants are pleased about the availability of some new economic opportunities (Healy 1985). In contrast to previous export commodity booms, coca has not displaced peasant smallholders. Much of the area where coca is grown had not been intensively cultivated in the past (because of poor access to these lower foothills), and coca production is predominantly by smallholders.

In one important way, however, there is a link between Sendero and the coca industry: Sendero receives money from the coca traffickers.²⁰ The exact nature of this relationship is unclear, and seems to vary by region and era. Sendero itself denies profiting from the drug trade, but proclaims cocaine as a weapon in the anti-imperialist struggle and a boon for Peru's peasants.

THE EROSION OF SENDERO'S SOCIAL BASE, POST-1982

First, this section describes the trends in guerrilla activities and in popular support for violent movements since 1982. These events are recent, and definitive studies of them are not available, but it appears that Sendero's social base has eroded considerably, except in coca-growing areas. Then, the section explores the various explanations for this trend, em-

20. González 1987; *Andean Report*, March 1987, pp. 38-39; *Wall Street Journal*, 1 May 1987, p. 23.

phasizing the impact of new military and political initiatives by the Peruvian state.

Trends in Guerrilla Violence and Popular Attitudes, 1983-86

Between 1983 and 1986, violent actions by Sendero and other groups increased. As noted above, however, the number of Sendero attacks did diminish in Ayacucho—from 1,226 in 1983 to 821 in 1984, and yet further to 495 in 1985 (González, Salcedo, and Reid 1986: 45). Perhaps more important, there is substantial evidence of a decline in popular support for Sendero in Ayacucho as well as in Apurímac and Huanavelica. The electoral data in table 2.4, for example, show the drop in null and blank voting and in absenteeism in these and other departments between 1980 and 1986. In step with the nation as a whole, Ayacucho went for Alan García in 1985, giving him 50 percent of the department's valid vote (Tuesta Soldevilla 1987: 200). Fear was one factor in the electoral trend, as communities with high rates of absenteeism or Marxist voting would be more likely to be charged with pro-Senderista sympathies by the military. However, the reports of journalists and human rights groups are virtually unanimous that after 1982 the prevailing political attitude to the military and Sendero in Ayacucho became "a plague on both your houses" (Americas Watch 1985; González 1983 and 1985; González, Salcedo, and Reid 1986).

Sendero was by no means defeated. Some communities continued to support Sendero (Berg 1986); null and blank voting and absenteeism remained at higher levels than in other parts of the country (see table 2.4). Sendero retained a capacity to reappear in zones that it had once left, and it increased its actions in other parts of the country, especially in Lima, as noted above. Yet, Sendero did not achieve the social base in any of these areas that it had in Ayacucho.

During 1986 the Sendero guerrillas targeted a new southern highlands department: Puno. While Sendero had been active in Puno since about 1984, its violent actions there quintupled in 1986 (*Caretas*, 31 July 1986, pp. 10-12). Sendero's decision to target Puno as a new social base was logical; Puno is one of Peru's poorest departments, and the legacy of the 1970s agrarian reform was unusually bitter there, as a relatively small number of families became members of rather prosperous and large agricultural cooperatives called SAIS. However, for various reasons to be discussed below, Sendero failed to build the kind of support that it had in Ayacucho. As table 2.4 shows, electoral trends indicate decreasing, not increasing, alienation from the democratic system in Puno. In 1987 violence was once again at relatively low levels in Puno; between January and June 1987, less than 1 percent of all terrorist actions were in Puno, and less than 3 percent of all deaths (García-Sayan 1987; *Andean Report*, March 1987).

Violent actions have increased more in Lima than in any other part of

TABLE 2.4 Electoral Trends in Selected Regions of Peru, 1978-85

	Null and Blank Votes (percentages of total votes)				Absenteeism (percentages of registered voters)			
	Presidential		Municipal		Presidential		Municipal	
	1980	1985	1983	1986	1980	1985	1983	1986
Ayacucho	42%	36%	52%	39%	27%	17%	74%	41%
Emergency Zone Departments*	41	33	47	37	28	19	61	36
Puno	26	25	27	24	19	9	43	21
Cuzco	30	26	31	18	22	13	45	30
Lima	17	7	11	7	15	8	26	15
Nationwide	21	14	18	15	19	10	36	22

SOURCE: Tuesta Soldevilla 1987: 189-233.

* Averages for Ayacucho, Apurimac, and Huancavelica.

Peru. From mid 1980 to mid 1984, Lima attacks were 23 percent of the reported total, whereas during the first six months of 1987 they were 37 percent (*Caretas*, 9 July 1984, p. 10; García-Sayan 1987: 6). For various reasons, however, the spiraling violence did not indicate rising support for Sendero. First, many of the attacks were selective assassinations and bomb placements, which did not require large military contingents; in contrast, in the early 1980s in Ayacucho, Sendero coordinated major maneuvers, including the takeover of the Ayacucho prison.

Second, many of these actions have been carried out not by Sendero but by a second group, the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (MRTA).²¹ The MRTA is a more conventional group than Sendero; MRTA's leaders seek to communicate with a broad spectrum of citizens about their goals, try to justify their actions, and engage in more "Robin Hood" actions and fewer assassinations. Typically, they take public responsibility for their attacks and are less secretive and clandestine than Sendero; in one region in 1987, MRTA leaders gave lengthy interviews to the Peruvian media and wore guerrilla uniforms. Whereas Sendero has scorned alliances with foreign guerrilla groups, the MRTA is linked to Colombia's M-19 (*Caretas*, 16 November 1987, p. 17). By late 1987, especially after the spectacular takeover of Juanjui, a town in Peru's upper-jungle coca-producing region, Sendero felt eclipsed by the MRTA. New, intense controversies over strategy and tactics emerged within the Sendero leadership; apparently, some Senderista militants believed that, to compete with the MRTA, Sendero should give new emphasis to political work in urban areas (González 1988).

Third, while the number of violent attacks increased in Lima, according to various sets of data, popular support for them did not. Table 2.4 documents the rise in electoral participation in Lima during the 1980s—a degree of participation that is excellent by any standard. The respected public-opinion firm Datum has monitored attitudes toward different regime types in Lima regularly during the 1980s; table 2.5 shows that citizens have gradually become more enthusiastic about democratic government and less inclined toward socialist revolution. An in-depth analysis of political attitudes in one poor area of Lima between 1983 and 1985, carried out by well-known, highly respected scholars loosely identified with Peru's left, found virtually no support for Sendero (Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch 1987).

Sendero has, however, established a new social base in one region: the prime coca-growing territory around the Upper Huallaga valley in the departments of Huanuco and San Martín. Many analysts were surprised at the appearance of Sendero in this zone. In contrast to the southern

21. On the MRTA, see in particular González 1988; *Sí*, 16 November 1987, pp. 13-16; *Caretas*, 16 November 1987, pp. 8-17.

TABLE 2.5 Attitudes toward Democracy in Lima, 1982-86 ($N \cong 400-800$)

	Preferred Political Regime in Lima		
	November 1982	January 1984	June 1986
Democratic (elected) ^a	69%	72%	88%
Socialist (by revolution)	13	13	6
Military (by coup)	5	9	3
Other, don't know	14	6	4

SOURCES: Figures are from Datum polls. The question was: "Which of these types of government do you consider to be the most adequate for a country such as ours?" *Caretas*, 13 December 1982, p. 22, and 20 February 1984, p. 24. Data for 1986 from Manuel Torrado, director of Datum.

^aIn 1986 includes responses "Democratic such as the current one" and "Democratic with a harder hand."

highlands, this valley is prosperous. The people living on these lower Andean slopes are less likely to be descendants of the Incas than the people living in the southern highlands. Sendero apparently chose to recruit in the Huallaga valley to take advantage of the popular opposition in the region to the coca-eradication programs sponsored by the United States and Peruvian governments. Sendero did mobilize and support coca-growers, and became the dominant authority at several sites. However, by 1987 it was also clear that Sendero's role in this zone was problematical in various respects.²² First, at times Sendero collaborated with drug traffickers in the area, and accordingly Sendero's puritanical image was tarnished. Second, when the MRTA also became active in the area, the competition between the two revolutionary organizations became so intense that violence erupted on more than one occasion.

Explanations for the Erosion of Sendero's Social Base, 1983-86

Why did Sendero's social base erode? Peru's economic crisis, which as we saw above was crucial to Sendero's rise, did not abate. Indeed, at least until 1986, it became more severe, exacerbated by the violence itself. Nor, in this short period of time, did citizens in the southern highlands or elsewhere become dramatically more or less politicized. With respect to the two other factors discussed above, however—the response of the state and guerrilla strategy—major changes are evident.

The most important change was in the response of the state. In December 1982-January 1983, the military went to Ayacucho, and a counter-insurgency offensive was launched. In turn, this offensive resulted in

²² González 1987 provides an excellent description and analysis. See also *Caretas*, 7 September 1987, pp. 31-39.

new tactics on the part of Sendero, many of which alienated their previous supporters. More gradually, with the inauguration of Alan García in July 1985, the state began to fashion a political and economic response to Sendero. In the view of many observers, however, the political and economic dimensions of the counterinsurgency effort were still slight.

The Military Offensive. During 1985 between 5,000 and 7,000 security-force personnel were deployed in the southern highlands emergency zone; most were from the army, but navy, air force, civil guard, republican guard and plainclothes investigative police representatives also participated (*Andean Report*, September 1985, p. 157). Another 2,500-3,000 troops were deployed in the emergency zone in the northern highlands and high jungle (*Andean Report*, June 1985, p. 94). About 10 percent of the Peruvian army was stationed in these areas. Counterinsurgency equipment included about five Bell 212 helicopters (*Andean Report*, September 1985, p. 157). In the view of many Peruvian military officers, more sophisticated counterinsurgency equipment, including, for example, new special high-altitude helicopters and night gear, would be a boon; in contrast to many Latin American governments facing guerrilla threats, Peru has enjoyed little U.S. military aid in recent years (USAID 1986:60).

The military's first priority in 1983 was to identify pro-Senderista communities and to raid them. Often, these raids were brutal and arbitrary (*Americas Watch* 1984). Soldiers would enter allegedly pro-Senderista communities and detain or kill the individuals whom they considered most likely to be guerrillas—teachers, high school students, leftist political leaders. Sometimes, they burned buildings and raped women. More than fifty clandestine mass graves have been discovered in various areas of the emergency zone, with about twenty bodies in each (*Americas Watch* 1985:8). Illegal detention and interrogation centers were set up in the zone, and numerous reports confirm that torture was common at these sites. As of mid 1985, the number of disappearances was 1,325 (*Americas Watch* 1985:5). At times, air raids were carried out against suspect communities. In 1983 Huancasancos was one targeted village; in 1984 Chapi was another, with a death toll of perhaps as many as 3,000 people (*Andean Focus*, April 1986, p. 10). Revelations of mass graves and air raids continued throughout 1986, suggesting that the number of victims in the struggle was considerably higher than official government statistics have indicated.

A second key strategy of the Peruvian military was the establishment of civil defense patrols among the emergency zone peasant communities. These have been called *rondas campesinas*, and alternatively *montoneras*. The theory behind their formation is that the peasant communities could then defend themselves against Senderista incursions. In

practice, however, the armed forces often monitor peasants for their willingness to join the patrols and accuse those who refuse to serve of being Senderistas (Americas Watch 1985: 2). Also, when the civil defense patrols were encouraged to apprehend and even kill suspected Senderistas, the patrols often took advantage of their new official mandate to charge traditional enemies—other communities, estranged relatives, and the like—with Senderista sympathies and to attack them. In many areas, violence escalated as newly armed communities tried to settle long-simmering disputes with other communities under the pretext of their being Senderistas (Degregori 1986: 258–59; Americas Watch 1985: 14).

Of course, such a brutal and indiscriminate counterinsurgency campaign did not build new popular support for the state; rather, it alienated citizens further. However, the campaign did greatly increase the costs of sympathy for Sendero. Most southern highlands people had not anticipated the intensity of the violence, and they blamed not only the military but also Sendero. Moaned one southern highlands peasant, for example:

Why don't they take care of us? They got us into this problem, but they don't protect us; they ought to protect us, defend us. Why did they say that they would be at the front of the battle and us behind? Where are they? Here you don't see them. They've gotten us into this mess and now they've gone. It just can't be. (Degregori 1986: 256; my translation)

After his inauguration in July 1985, in an effort to build support for the Peruvian state, President García quickly raised human rights standards. In October 1985 it was revealed that army troops had massacred as many as seventy-five civilians in two separate incidents a few months earlier. García's response, in a clear warning to the military, was to dismiss three top generals. Subsequently, Peru's human rights record improved markedly in most respects. The number of "assumed terrorists" (a classification widely believed to include a large number of innocent citizens) killed in counterinsurgency declined from 1,721 in 1984 to 390 in 1986 and 283 in 1987 (*Caretas*, 29 December 1986, p. 19, and 30 December 1987, p. 28). The number of civilians killed (many also by the military) declined from 1,750 in 1984 to 368 in 1986 and 350 in 1987 (*Caretas*, 29 December 1986, p. 19, and 30 December 1987, p. 28). During the final two and a half years of the Belaúnde administration, the number of "disappearances" averaged approximately 880 per year; during the first year and a half of the García administration, the number of "disappearances" averaged approximately 205 per year (Americas Watch 1987: 29).

Of course, however, while these figures indicate an improved human

rights situation, they also document the continuation of violations. The most notorious of these violations was the massacre of almost three hundred suspected Senderistas in Lima prisons by the Republican Guard and the army in June 1986. The government has failed to prosecute the responsible authorities.

As of early 1988, the Achilles heel of the Peruvian government's counterinsurgency program seemed to be the same as it had been since 1980: woefully inadequate intelligence.²³ Sendero remains virtually impervious to infiltration; the organization maintains a tight cellular structure and monitors new recruits closely, apparently limiting membership rights to those who carry out assassinations. At the same time, the intelligence efforts of the police and the military have been timid. Increasingly, however, the García government has recognized the importance of intelligence to the counterinsurgency campaign, and it has recently announced intelligence initiatives. In late 1986, for example, officials proclaimed a new program to persuade captured guerrillas to repent and disclose information about their former colleagues. In March 1987, the government established a new police intelligence outfit, the Dimin, including about 300 experienced counterinsurgency officers to be hand-picked by its new chief, who in turn was appointed by President García. According to sources, these initiatives had helped to improve the government's intelligence capability somewhat.²⁴

Political and Economic Initiatives. Although democratically elected, President Belaúnde was unable to maintain popular support for his government. Amid economic decline and guerrilla war, Belaúnde seemed unable to focus on realistic policy alternatives for the country. Many citizens, contemplating the government's economic policies, began to believe that it was not even trying to encourage the economic and social development of the country as a whole; in good part for this reason, majorities in my informal surveys in the highlands and on the coast judged the Belaúnde government *not* democratic (McClintock 1985: 34). In a formal survey reported in *Debate* (vol. 7, no. 32 [May 1985]: 24–28), more than half the respondents evaluated the Belaúnde government as either "a bad government" or "one of the worst governments Peru has ever had."

Fortunately for the legitimacy of the Peruvian democratic state, by 1983 a new political star appeared: Alan García. The dynamic and flamboyant García was chosen secretary-general of the APRA party in Oc-

23. *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, July 1, 1945–September 30, 1986* (Washington, D.C.: Agency for International Development).

24. Interviews with Raúl González, Gustavo Gorritti, and military officers, 1985–87; see also *Andean Report*, March 1987.

tober 1982, and then overwhelmingly nominated as the party's presidential candidate in February 1984. Peruvians were very impressed by García's youthful energy and charisma, and by his fervent indications of commitment to Peru and especially to the Peruvian peasantry. More than a year before the election, García was the odds-on favorite to win. García promised that, whereas the Belaúnde government had stood for "representative democracy," his government would stand for "social democracy," and that it would be much more meaningful for citizens.

In office, García did seek to ameliorate the social and economic grievances of poorer Peruvians in the southern highlands. (As Wickham-Crowley notes in chapter 4, guerrilla movements succeed in expanding their social bases only when states fail to be minimally responsive to citizens' grievances.) Perhaps the most important government initiative was to increase peasants' access to credit. Between 1985 and 1986, the total number of hectares in Peru that were worked with credit increased by 50 percent, and the total amount of money loaned increased by 68 percent (Banco Agrario del Perú 1987: 19). Loans were disproportionately favorable to the highlands region: the total number of hectares worked with credit there increased by 141 percent between 1985 and 1986, and the total amount of revenue loaned increased by 179 percent (Banco Agrario del Perú 1987: 33). In the "Andean Trapezoid," the García government's name for the poorest highland region of the country, including Ayacucho, Apurímac, Huancavelica, Cuzco, and Puno, as well as highland areas in Arequipa, Moquegua, and Tacna, the total number of hectares worked with credit rose by 119 percent, and the total amount of money loaned rose by 112 percent (Banco Agrario del Perú 1987: 38). In the Andean Trapezoid, a majority of the loans were made at zero interest rates (Banco Agrario del Perú 1987: 35). At the same time, the prices for most key agricultural inputs were slashed; accordingly, sales of fertilizer tripled between 1985 and 1986 (*Andean Report*, January 1987, p. 3). Farmers were also guaranteed reasonable prices for basic agricultural products by the government; in 1986, the total cost of the government's subsidies, which were paid primarily for rice, corn, and sugar, has been estimated at about \$110 million (*Andean Report*, January 1987, p. 5).

The García government has also shifted public investment patterns, although not as dramatically as he had promised. Total public investment funds and the percentage of these funds allocated to the Andean Trapezoid apparently changed very little between the final years of the Belaúnde government and the first years of the García government (Instituto Nacional de Planificación 1986; 1987: 10). Some effort, however, was made by the García government to direct agricultural investment away from super-high-technology projects, considered boondoggles and white elephants by virtually all agronomists (World Bank 1986: 28; Urban 1986), toward projects that would more directly benefit the rural poor. Between 1981 and 1983, for example, the Belaúnde government

assigned a whopping 67 percent of all agricultural investment to four mammoth irrigation projects (Majes, Chira-Piura, Jequetepaque-Zaña, and Tinajones), at a cost of \$122 million annually; in 1986 the parallel figures for these four projects plus Chavimochic (located in the APRA party's political base) were 57 percent of the total agricultural budget and \$91 million dollars (Banco Central de Reserva 1986a; Instituto Nacional de Planificación 1987: 19). Perhaps more important than these official figures, however, was the widespread view in the provincial cities that I visited in the fall of 1987—Ayacucho, Cuzco, and Trujillo—that a greater share of the allocated funds was actually being spent on the projects rather than diverted into politicians' wallets. Whereas during the Belaúnde years I had at times found no evidence of any work on a project in the countryside that city officials had claimed was ongoing, in 1987 I was especially impressed by the intensive project efforts of the Ayacucho development corporation; when I checked the claims of development corporation authorities against the reports of numerous residents from one of the communities in the Ayacucho area, they jibed closely.

Agrarian reform was not a priority program of the García government. By and large, the government maintained that the agrarian reform that had been carried out by the military regime during the 1970s was sufficient. However, in the department of Puno, where the benefits of the agrarian reform had been particularly skewed in favor of a relatively small number of workers on ex-haciendas, where leftist political parties had been especially effective in mobilizing non-beneficiaries for a more egalitarian reform, and where Sendero was increasingly active in 1986, the government did act. In the last few months of 1986 and the first few months of 1987, approximately 750,000 hectares were distributed to nearly 400 peasant communities, benefiting some 150,000 people (*Andean Report*, March 1987, p. 41).

The García government initiated several programs that were advantageous to the poor both in Lima and elsewhere. The most important was the PAIT (Programa de Apoyo al Ingreso Temporal), a short-term public employment program. In 1986 this program gave jobs to 224,985 persons; in 1987 it employed 280,751 individuals, 30 percent of whom resided in the Andean Trapezoid (Banco Central de Reserva 1987).

A particularly innovative García program has been the "Rimanacuy," or dialogue between government officials and peasant community leaders. In 1986 and 1987 these exchanges have been held in Huancayo, Cuzco, and Puno. Apparently, government officials have learned more about peasants' needs at these meetings, and personal and political alliances have been begun.

In sum, the García government has clearly done more than its predecessor to try to build legitimacy for the democratic state among the impoverished citizens of the Andean Trapezoid. Yet it is far from clear

whether or not he has done enough; it is also far from clear whether or not the government will be able to continue its most important programs, such as the dramatic increase in agrarian bank credit, through its final years in office. Even as of 1986 and 1987, boom years for the Peruvian economy, the quality of life for most Peruvians in the Andean Trapezoid probably improved marginally, if at all. One of the reasons for the marginal effect of the government's programs was Sendero's direct obstruction of them.

Senderista Organization and Strategy. Prior to 1983 and the Peruvian military's counterinsurgency offensive, Sendero's tactics were very shrewd, enabling it to win considerable popular support. Since 1983, however, the military's offensive has sparked more vicious and extremist behavior among the Senderistas. With the notable exception of the upper-jungle coca-growing areas—not incidentally the only area where Sendero has built a popular base in recent years—Sendero's actions have demonstrated little or no concern for the security or well-being of most Peruvians, including the poorest Peruvians, at least from a short- or medium-term perspective. As documented above, the Senderistas' behavior cost them popular support; more and more, young male peasants in the Andean Trapezoid fled their communities to avoid the terror of Sendero and the terror of the military (González 1988:49). By 1987 Sendero was as much or more on Peruvians' minds than it had been in the early 1980s, but Sendero itself seemed to be a very different group. Once militants with a solid social base in Peru's most destitute and remote region, not only preaching but also practising Maoism, Sendero was now based in Lima and the coca-growing regions of Peru, mostly practising acts of urban terrorism that could be carried out by twenty to thirty Senderistas.

Since 1983 Sendero has used force against peasants or against their representatives much more frequently (Degregori 1986; González 1983 and 1985). Whereas previously Senderistas had attacked only community elites, the guerrillas began to identify "traitors" among the rank-and-file peasants, and sometimes executed them. As many as twenty-four peasants considered to be working with the government have been assassinated at one time (*Resumen Semanal*, 11–17 December 1987, p. 6). At least two mayors—one from the United Left in the community San Juan de Salinas near Puno and the second from APRA in the community Huanta near Ayacucho—were killed by Sendero despite overwhelming opposition to their executions from the townspeople (*Americas Watch* 1987:20; *Gonzales* 1987:35; *Resumen Semanal*, 27 November–3 December 1987, p. 4).

In an effort to obstruct the García government's development efforts, Sendero has also targeted development workers. In Ayacucho, Sendero

had killed at least thirty engineers and technicians by December 1987; the nationwide total was over forty (Americas Watch 1987:22). Not surprisingly, the government's development organizations in Ayacucho cannot fill a substantial number of its positions. Other Sendero activities exacerbating peasants' economic hardship include its destruction of transportation facilities and its attempts, primarily in the mid 1980s, to close peasant markets.

As described above, in 1986 and early 1987 Sendero fervently sought a social base in Puno, but failed in this attempt. Why, especially given the poverty of this department? First, social and political institutions were much stronger at the grass-roots in Puno than they had been in the early 1980s in Ayacucho. The Catholic church, whose leadership in Puno was much more progressive than in Ayacucho, the United Left, and peasant leaders who had benefited from the agrarian reform all collaborated to stop Sendero. This was especially the case after Sendero's assassination of the United Left mayor in the area. Second, the government's reactions were much sounder: the emphasis was on agrarian reform and on intelligence-seeking, not repression, by the military. Finally, Sendero's overall strategy was much more violent. Sendero killed numerous leaders of agrarian-reform enterprises and roughed up many peasants who refused to participate in Senderista schemes (*Latin America Regional Reports, Andean Group*, 31 July 1986, pp. 2–3).

Sendero's tactics in Lima also alienated citizens, especially in 1986. Attacks were made not only against luxury facilities frequented by elites but also on movie theaters and similar establishments visited by average citizens. In 1987–88, however, Sendero adopted new strategies in Lima, in part to compete with the more open, conventional MRTA (which has also been more discriminating in its violent attacks than Sendero). Sendero began to enter public debate, in particular by publishing the daily paper *El Diario*. Sendero sought to penetrate labor groups and participate in strikes. These new strategies might gain Sendero some new support in Lima.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has emphasized four conditions necessary to the emergence of Sendero Luminoso in Peru's southern highlands: poverty, politicization, shrewd guerrilla organization, and ineffectual state response. In the first two of these four factors, there has been little change during the 1980s. Since roughly 1983, however, Sendero Luminoso has seemed to err in important ways, alienating some of its supporters, whereas the government's response has become more appropriate and the state more legitimate.

The sine qua non is poverty. The relationship between regions of

abysmal poverty and regions of guerrilla strength has very probably been stronger in Peru than in any other Latin American country. The southern highlands departments that are now incorporated into the emergency zone (Ayacucho, Apurímac, and Huancavelica) are worse off by almost all criteria than any other departments in the country. Moreover, in absolute terms, income has declined for the peasant families of these departments, and in recent years they have even faced a threat to subsistence—rare in Latin America by the late 1970s. In comparison, Cuzco, which had traditionally been among Peru's most protest-oriented departments, has become somewhat better off in various respects in recent years, and few of its citizens have been attracted to Sendero.

A second key factor was politicization. In the 1960s and 1970s, education expanded at every level in the Peruvian highlands. Peasants, students, and teachers became much more aware of the gross social and economic inequalities in Peru, and more aware of the Peruvian state's centuries-long abuse and neglect of the people of the Peruvian highlands. At the same time, under the military governments of the 1970s, Marxist and other leftist groups were able to organize in the highlands more readily than in previous years.

In Cuzco, Puno, and various other highlands areas, leftist organizations with ties to nationwide movements and parties gained citizens' support, and peasants became less likely to be attracted to extremely violent groups like Sendero. In Ayacucho, however, Sendero seemed to gain a virtual political monopoly in the 1970s, in large part through Guzmán's extraordinarily shrewd politicking in the Ayacucho university. Galvanizing cadres from among the education students at the university, Guzmán and Sendero were more dedicated to grass-roots activities in remote areas than any other Peruvian guerrilla group has ever been. Sendero was also extremely careful to protect its cadres, developing a clandestine cell structure that is unprecedentedly tight among Latin American guerrilla movements.

However, after the onset of the Peruvian military's counterinsurgency offensive in early 1983, Sendero's dedication seemed to become fanaticism and brutality. Apparently, Sendero refused to accept the fact that most citizens were now more afraid for their lives than they were eager for revolution. Despite new public-relations efforts such as *El Diario*, Sendero resorted more and more often to sheer terror to achieve its goals. Increasingly, young revolutionaries, especially those in Lima, were attracted to the MRTA rather than to Sendero (Americas Watch 1987: 25).

The ultimate outcome of Peru's current guerrilla war will probably depend more upon the response and legitimacy of the Peruvian state than upon any other factor. If the Belaúnde government had taken more steps—militarily, economically, and politically—against Sendero in the

early 1980s, it is doubtful that Sendero would have gained such strength. As Wickham-Crowley points out in chapter 4, to date no Latin American revolutionaries have succeeded in taking power from a responsive government, and it would seem that Sendero built some popular support during the early 1980s in part because citizens did not perceive the Belaúnde government as responsive. If the García government can keep its key promises, and the real social and economic grievances of many of Peru's people are gradually ameliorated, then Peru may achieve peace.

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