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THESIS

**TARGETING TERRORIST LEADERS: THE PERUVIAN
UNTOUCHABLES EXPERIENCE**

by

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December 2005

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UNTOUCHABLES EXPERIENCE**

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ABSTRACT

Peruvian civilian and military authorities were trapped on a dead-end road in the counterinsurgency struggle against the terrorist movement Shining Path until the capture of the organization's top leader on September 12, 1992. The episode led to the eventual demise of the terrorist organization. This thesis argues that the successful operation was a consequence of the particular organization and working processes of the intelligence unit assigned to this sensitive case, and describes the extent to which the capture contributed to the defeat of the insurgency.

Given the characteristics of the Shining Path terrorist organization, it was necessary to design a Special Intelligence Group with specific characteristics that made the group strong enough to overcome the obstacles of the reality it faced in Peru. Several other units with the same mission were unsuccessful in the twelve years of open struggle against the Shining Path. During its 22 years of activity, the Shining Path had built a solidly impenetrable organization, which allowed the police and military to hit the organization's military apparatus, but not the political one. In Maoist organizations like the Shining Path, the political apparatus controls the organization. A study of the tactics, techniques and procedures developed by the Special Intelligence Group and the exchange between the intelligence and the operations components, as well as the decision making process within the group itself, demonstrates the organizational necessity of secrecy, isolation, motivation and delegation of authority for this type of mission.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

On the afternoon of September 12, 1992, the order was given to take over the long-observed house in the district of Los Sauces in the Lima suburbs. Armed only with two revolvers, a couple of nervous agents broke into the two-story residence, where they found three women on the first floor. The agents felt hidden eyes observing them from the second floor. One of the agents climbed up the stairs and broke into a room where Shining Path's leader, Abimael Ruben Guzman Reynoso, was found sitting with his girlfriend who tried to protect him. "You have cut short the revolution" she said to the agents.

Defeating terrorism requires the application of an integrated state strategy that identifies the multiple aspects of the conflict, analyses them in depth, prepares a policy, and assigns tasks to the respective agencies and institutions in charge of them. The effectiveness of the state against terrorism depends on the frequency and determination with which the counterterrorist attacks apply all the tools of statecraft: diplomatic, economic, military and psychological.¹ These instruments must be used against all levels of the terrorist organization and must be directed by the estimated effect of each individual action, given the general situation and the nature of the particular terrorist organization.

Focusing on the terrorist leader is a traditional aspect of counterterrorist warfare. Examples abound, from the first terrorist organization, the Assassins, to more recent efforts to capture Osama bin Laden. In the Peruvian case, the situation leading up to September 1992 was extremely unstable. The Shining Path or Sendero Luminoso (SL) terrorist group was active in 114 out of 183 Peruvian provinces, and as the final stage of its revolution neared, terrorist attacks in the cities were carried out on a daily basis. The state decided to

¹ The White House, "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism," February 2003, 2. http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/counter_terrorism/counter_terrorism_strategy.pdf. Accessed February 10, 2005.

strengthen its strategy of hunting for the terrorist leader, and achieved success through the work of a police unit called the Special Intelligence Group (SIG).

The purpose of this thesis is to identify the particular working process and procedures applied by the SIG to succeed in the sensitive case of the capture of the terrorist organization's top leader, in order to apply these same processes and procedures, with appropriate modifications, to similar cases. In this thesis, it is hypothesized that the success of the Special Intelligence Group depended on four variables: decision making capability, strong leadership, secrecy, and exclusive dedication. The identified variables were present during SIG operations, whether they were explicitly granted to the group or the group simply took them for granted. Beginning in January 1979, when Guzman went underground, Peruvian units with the same objective were created within the armed forces and the police. Yet none of these units succeeded. In that regard, the specific strengths and weaknesses of SIG will be observed in order to present decision makers with an example that may be applied to future situations, in Peru or elsewhere, taking into consideration the characteristics of any particular insurgency and its leaders.

SIG procedures will be analyzed, including their vigilance over terrorist networks and hubs and their avoidance of momentary success in capturing low-value targets in order to reach the higher-value targets of the terrorist network. Several other captures followed the apprehension of Guzman. In this study, the combined effect of the capture of Guzman and the others upon the partial defeat of the Shining Path will be evaluated.

The issue of terrorist manhunts arises today as a consequence of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. The increasing threat of terrorism brings up the questions of the effects and worthiness of counterterrorist leader operations and the topic of this study: what elements are necessary for the group assigned to the counterterrorist leader mission?

B. METHODOLOGY

This thesis was developed using a single case study: the Peruvian success in capturing the Shining Path terrorist organization leader Abimael Ruben Guzman Reynoso and the subsequent control of the terrorist threat in Peru. The case was selected because it portrays an internal conflict that was increasingly deteriorating and could have led to the insurgency's success. When the Shining Path leader was captured, the situation changed dramatically in favor of the state, and within two years the terrorist organization was disbanded. The case study shows how leadership decapitation affects this type of organization, not only ideologically and militarily, but more importantly, psychologically as well.

The information used to support this study comes from personal interviews with key personnel involved in SIG operations, statistics, and a review of the available literature.

The interviews regarding the Special Intelligence Group were conducted with individuals on both ends of the chain of command. First, the responsible leaders of Peruvian counterinsurgency policy were interviewed to obtain the picture from the top down; then lower officers were interviewed to obtain the picture from the bottom up. The police officers interviewed include the National Counterterrorism Director, the SIG's Commander, Operations Officer, Senior Analyst, and the agent who led the team and physically caught Guzman. Peruvian and international sources have provided the statistical data. Among the Peruvian sources consulted were the Counter Terrorism Directorate, the National Intelligence Service, and national circulation magazines like *Caretas* and *Debate*. Statistics on terrorist activity throughout the period of time relevant to the study were provided by the DESCO organization, the owners of a complete database on the subject.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

The thesis is organized in six chapters. Chapter II describes the Peruvian situation prior to the capture of Guzman. It presents a brief description of the progressive corrosion of Peruvian national institutions as a result of the terrorist activity and the counterterrorism policy's lack of effectiveness. On the other hand,

in the eyes of observers, the Shining Path was consolidating an image of strength, although still with several flaws. President Alberto Fujimori took office on July 28, 1990, and passed several economic measures, which improved the national macroeconomic situation. But later, the April 5, 1991 *autogolpe*² was severely criticized internationally for moving the country away from democracy. The executive could pass the counterterrorism laws by presidential decree, but the main reason for the *autogolpe*, the counterterrorism policy, was not working as planned. Chapter II also presents the characteristics of charismatic leadership and places Guzman in this category. The influence that Guzman exercised over his militants determined the government's decision to strengthen the leadership hunt. Finally, this chapter explains the possible effects of the mission of hunting terrorist leaders on the overall counterterrorist strategy.

Chapter III describes the characteristics of the government organization and the operations carried out by SIG prior to the Victoria operation in which Guzman was apprehended. These operations served as a trial and error learning system for SIG. To take account of the Peruvian situation, the group had to be organized to overcome specific obstacles, and had to develop not only a legal-police procedure but also had to figure out the instruments to keep SIG operating as a cohesive organization.

Chapter IV narrates the Victoria operation as the consequence of all previous SIG operations. Even after having presented results to the state, the SIG was still operating with limitations. In the aftermath of the terrorist leader's capture in September 1992, the Shining Path's operations declined, but the dramatic downturn came during 1993 and 1994, when most of the mid-level leaders were captured.

Chapter V is based on the SIG operations and their learning by trial and error process. It explains the variables determining SIG's success: decision making capability, leadership, secrecy and isolation, and exclusive dedication. It

² Self inflicted *coup d'état*.

also presents the main lessons learned from this case study that might be used by decision makers considering terrorist leader capture operation as part of their counterterrorist strategy.

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II. THE PERUVIAN SITUATION ON SEPTEMBER 11, 1992

Fujimori took office on July 1990, a result of the Peruvian population's rejection of the traditional political parties that had driven the country to catastrophe. Peruvians endured the 1968-80 military government with hopes for democracy, but up until 1990, it was clear that the governing political parties and state institutions were unable to address the citizens' democratic aspirations. The result was a search for a new political identity independent of the established parties which had so often let the majority of Peruvians down.³ During the first months of Fujimori's presidency, the administration took several drastic measures, but up until the first week of September 1992, internal unrest and the economic situation still haunted the Peruvian government.

A. ECONOMICS

In the economic arena, the bank nationalization and the suspension of all foreign payments during President Alan Garcia's term in office (1985-1990) initially labeled him as a strong leader, but ultimately condemned Peruvian economics. Inflation grew to 1,722 percent in 1988, 2,600 percent in 1989, and 7,650 percent in 1990. The economy declined by more than 20 percent during this period.⁴ Prices were regulated by the government, several products were subsidized, and foreign loans were stopped due to Garcia's refusal to honor external debts. After taking office in 1990, Fujimori applied most of the neoliberal economic measures proposed by Mario Vargas, his political opponent in the previous elections, measures which Fujimori himself had repeatedly downplayed. By March 1991, Fujimori's administration had brought down inflation to 3.7 percent per month, the budget had been balanced, price controls and subsidies had been eliminated and other economical measures made the Peruvian

³ Deborah Poole and Gerardo Renique, *Peru: Time of Fear* (Nottingham: Russell Press, 1992), 136.

⁴ David S. Palmer, *Introduction: History, Politics, and Shining Path in Peru* (New York: San Martin's Press, 1994), 15.

economy grow 2.8 percent that year.⁵ On the other hand, the social cost of the neoliberal economic policy was enormous for the least privileged social stratum. Forced to tackle real market prices with no substantial income raise, the average Peruvian citizen was still far from satisfying his basic needs and still potential prey for Sendero Luminoso's appeals or threats. In the short run, Fujimori's drastic economic measures pushed 60 to 70 percent of the Peruvian population below the poverty line.⁶

B. JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The judicial system in Peru did not change much until 1991. It was very delicate for the magistrates, judges and prosecutors to produce enough evidence under the law to convict people under terrorism charges. As noted by Tarazona Sevillano, a member of the judiciary system from 1984 to 1986, the lack of evidence and the need to prove innocence beyond a reasonable doubt set free most of the detainees; handing down decisions became a psychological factor for judges and prosecutors, due to the consequences that conviction could carry.⁷ Like any other state employee, judges and prosecutors were underpaid and not well protected against the SL's permanent threat against their own lives and the lives of their families. Between 1980 and early 1992, 5,200 judicial processes for terrorism were begun, but only 552 individuals were convicted. The rest were released due to lack of proof.⁸ By 1993, terrorists had killed 13 prosecutors and 70 peace judges.⁹ On top of the limitations that judges had to confront was the complicated nature of the Peruvian judiciary system, which slowed down the judicial process.

Threatened by the terrorists and the government's consequent reaction, frightened peasants continued the trend of leaving the Sierra seeking security

5 United States Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *The Threat of the Shining Path to Democracy in Peru: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs*, 102 Congress, 2nd session, March 11, 1992, 120.

6 Palmer, 16.

7 U. S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 75.

8 Jose Paez, *Desafíos a la Pacificación* (Challenges to Pacification) (Lima: Paez, 1994), 212.

9 Victor Manuel Quechua, *Perú. 13 Años de Oprobio* (Thirteen Years of Oddity) (Lima: Tetis Graf, 1994), 589.

and better incomes. Migration from the highlands dominated by Sendero to the cities grew, leading to greater populations in the cities' shantytowns. Most of the land invaded was private property. The migration of the upper social class abroad grew as well. Estimates are that during the 1980s, about 600 million dollars in capital fled the country every year. Between 1985 and 1990, around 400,000 people left the country and its inherent problems.¹⁰

C. ARMED FORCES AND NATIONAL POLICE

On May 17, 1980, the Shining Path started the armed struggle. A year afterwards, the areas threatened by SL were designated as "emergency zones" and put under the control of the armed forces. The army had defeated the Che-inspired communist guerrillas of 1965 with relative ease in just seven months using the military approach,¹¹ and since that time had been preparing to confront militarily regular armies due to the theoretical war threats posed by the neighboring countries of Chile and Ecuador.¹² Given this experience, once in charge of the counterinsurgency operation, the armed forces, assuming that the new threat was similar to that of the 1965 guerrillas, implemented a military solution. The net result was a series of accusations of human rights violations presented by organizations like Amnesty International and the Red Cross International. At the end of the 1990's, the Peruvian military was considered the number one violator of human rights worldwide, even though the internal unrest could not be controlled. However, the Peruvian military, due to the 25 to 30 years of training against external threats, was better than most militaries in Latin America. The institutional organization was solid, but it suffered from an overburdened command structure and inexperience in dealing with insurgency rather than conventional war.¹³

¹⁰ Simon Strong, *Shining Path, The World's Deadliest Revolutionary Force* (Lima: Peru Reporting, 1992), 200.

¹¹ For more information on the 1965 Communist guerrilla defeat see Armando Artola, *Subversión* (Subversion) (Lima: Editorial Jurídica, 1976), 10-11.

¹² U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 81.

¹³ U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 81.

Peruvian Armed forces usually had a minister from each branch as a representative in the cabinet.¹⁴ In October 1987, the three branches were joined under the Ministry of Defense, losing representation in the cabinet and consequently losing power over the distribution of the budget. The situation for the police was not different. After the police unification in 1988, rivalries among the former three branches were deep at every echelon.¹⁵ Information sharing among the military intelligence directorates, the police intelligence directorate, and the National Intelligence Service proved ineffective.

D. EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS, CONTRARY EFFECTS

In September 1990, the Special Intelligence Group (SIG), a unit of the Counter Terrorism Directorate (DINCOTE), seized a house in the uptown neighborhood of Monterrico, disrupting the Sendero propaganda apparatus, and the next year, in January 1991, they declared the capture of electronic files and videos showing Guzman dancing with his deputies. The police could prove that Guzman was alive.¹⁶ Regrettably, Guzman had managed to escape. On the other hand, SL's newspaper, *El Diario*, published his pictures on the first page, happily announcing that the terrorist leader was not only alive but also able to dance.¹⁷ After that action the police seemed to have lost its track of him again, and Guzman saw his image as "invulnerable" improve.

In the early 1990's, the government's strategy changed. The war against terrorism would be directed by the president, the local organized militia called Rondas Campesinas was going to be improved, the armed forces and the intelligence agency were to be upgraded and integrated, and the penal law was going to be modified. Most of these concepts had been used already, but the

¹⁴ Peru has a presidential democratic system; the cabinet is formed by ministers headed by a prime minister.

¹⁵ Until 1988 there were three police branches in Peru: the Civil Guard, Investigative Police, and Republican Police. Afterwards they were reorganized in the Peruvian National Police.

¹⁶ Guzman went underground in 1979, after which no state institution could track him. Stories circulated that he was in some remote area in the mountains or dead.

¹⁷ *El Diario* (Lima), no. 601, April 22 1991.

legal framework was innovative and would support the whole strategy.¹⁸ After a year, however, there was no progress toward SL's dislodgment.

On April 5, 1992, President Fujimori dismissed the Congress, arguing that it was delaying all executive initiatives. The fact is that the government had failed to set up and implement medium and long term national objectives. It had also failed to get the collaboration of other political parties in confronting the terrorist threat and relied on the alliance with the military leaders. The *autogolpe* led to a harsh critique abroad, with Peru given the status of "civilian dictatorship" in the international community and limitations on international aid.

As of 1991, 56 percent of Peruvian citizens were living under a state of emergency in areas where the top political military authority was a military flag officer and most civilian rights were suspended.¹⁹ That year the government estimated SL's militant forces as between three and five thousand, but at least 22,000 people were collaborating with them.²⁰

E. SENDERO LUMINOSO

Eleven years after SL's first symbolic action, 21 years after it became an independent organization lead by Guzman.²¹ Sendero Luminoso was solid and spread throughout the country with representation in 114 Peruvian provinces out of 183.²²

The American-Peruvian counter narcotics cooperation was seen by Guzman as a way to disguise the foreign counterinsurgent support. He predicted the net result of full involvement during a ceremony in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Chinese revolution: "Yankee aggression, direct or using

¹⁸ For more information on the new rules see Jose Paez, *Desafíos a la Pacificación* (Challenges to Pacification) (Lima: Páez, 1994), 210.

¹⁹ U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 41.

²⁰ Strong, 228.

²¹ Benedicto Jimenez, *Inicio, Desarrollo y Ocaso del Terrorismo en el Perú* (Beginning, Development and End of Terrorism in Peru) (Lima: Vizcarra, 2000), 28.

²² U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 10.

its puppets, will bring us to a liberation war . . . due to the sacrifice and effort that it will demand, it will have an excellent prospect of unifying 90 percent of the Peruvian population.”²³

Sendero built a parallel organization to the state with the strategy of attacking any governmental or nongovernmental organization that could offer a better alternative to the population, thus trying, in essence, to be the population's only hope.

In the annual survey of the ten most powerful men in Peru that DESCO Organization printed in its magazine *Debate*, Guzman rocketed to the top. Between 1983 and 1986 he was seventh, and between 1987 and 1990 he was fifth. In 1991 he was in fourth place and in the 1992 survey, his name was placed in the third spot, behind only President Alberto Fujimori and Prime Minister Carlos Boloña.²⁴

The country's internal security balance was ambiguous and plagued with uncertainty, to the point that either side could access power after a protracted war in subsequent years.

F. HUNTING TERRORIST LEADERS: THE EFFECTS

Across the large spectrum of organization types, it is noticeable that all organizations share a commonality: they are ruled by a leader or a council based on some kind of authority. Max Weber points out three kinds of legitimate authority: the legal-rational, based on the legality of patterns of normative rules; the traditional, based on the established belief in the sanctity of traditions from time immemorial; and the charismatic, based on the devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person.²⁵ From this perspective, gunning for the commander's head has been a common strategic mission in regular and irregular warfare since human organizations first started to fight each other. Similarly, counterterrorist policies have aimed at the head of the terrorist organization, logically thinking that this would disrupt the

²³ Strong, 203.

²⁴ Revista Debate, *El Poder en el Perú*. (Power in Peru) (Lima: DESCO, 1983 1992).

²⁵ Max Weber, *Selections from His Work*, (New York: Thomas Crowell Co, 1966), 63.

organization and in consequence stop or diminish terrorist attacks the quickest. However, results may vary depending on a series of variables and characteristics.

1. Effects of Targeting Terrorist Leaders

Langdon, Sarapu and Wells carried out an investigation on this topic, discussing the future of terrorist organizations when their leaders had a disease or died of old age, were killed, or were arrested. According to the authors' propositions, the groups have four choices determining the group's survivability or evolution: to disband, schism, become more radical, or remain unchanged. The variables the authors suggest for determining the level of group resilience during a leadership crisis are a strong ideology, a hierarchical structure, and popular support.²⁶

Based on the thirty-one cases they studied, Langdon, Sarapu and Wells conclude that the terrorist organization would survive if the leader was captured. SL is an exception to this conclusion. In the SL, case, Guzman was not only charismatic, but also the designer of "Gonzalo Thought," an approach integrating prior communist ideologists that ultimately only Guzman could interpret.

2. Charismatic Leadership

The term charisma is often used in political science and sociology to describe a subset of leaders who by the force of their personal abilities are capable of having profound and extraordinary effects on followers. Followers perceive the charismatic leader as one who possesses superhuman qualities and accept unconditionally the leader's mission and directives to action. These leaders represent revolutionary social forces, and they are responsible for significant societal transformations.²⁷ Charismatic leadership is also referred to

²⁶ Lisa Langdon, Alexander Sarapu and Matthew Wells, "Targeting the Leadership of Terrorist and Insurgent Movements: Historical Lessons for Contemporary Policy Makers," *Journal of Public and International Affairs*, Vol. 15 (Spring 2004): 59, <http://www.princeton.edu/~jia/pdf2004/Chapter%204.pdf>. Accessed June 3, 2005.

²⁷ Jay Conger and Rabindra Kanungo, "Toward a Behavioral Theory of Charismatic Leadership in Organizational Settings," *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 12, no. 4 (October 1987): 637, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0363-7425%28198710%2912%3A4%3C637%3ATABTOC%3E2.0.CO%3B2-X>. Accessed March 2, 2005.

as transformational, visionary or inspirational; it transforms the needs, values, preferences and aspirations of followers from self-interests to collective interests. Leadership theories emphasize symbolic leader behavior, visionary and inspirational messages, nonverbal communication, appeals to ideological values, intellectual stimulation of followers by the leader, displays of confidence in self and followers, and leader expectations for follower self-sacrifice and for performance beyond the call of duty.²⁸ This tradeoff between leader and follower under charismatic authority downplays material incentives and centralizes the responsibilities of management in the person of the leader. On the one side, the basis of charismatic leadership is the leader, but on the other side, there is an interplay between the leader's attributes and the needs, beliefs, values, and perceptions of his or her followers.²⁹

3. Sendero and Its Charismatic Leader

Guzman constructed SL's ideology as the actualization of Marxism, Leninism and Maoism, calling it "Gonzalo Thought," wherein he resolved the flaws of these ideologies and adapted the ideas to the Peruvian reality, creating the most orthodox communism. Acknowledging the deep racial conflicts inside Peruvian society, Guzman proposed a class struggle that involved the petit bourgeoisie, the proletariat and the peasantry in spite of the racial issues. Using this concept, SL was able to recruit militants from all social classes, with the exception of the upper class, and was able to handle the possibility of infiltrating different organizations as happened later during the struggle as well.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, SL began politically in 1970, and militarily in 1980. From the very beginning, Guzman organized a strong political apparatus around himself that would later rule the revolutionary army following Mao's precept that "the party rules the rifle." However, due to the underground

²⁸ Boas Shamir, Robert J. House and Michael B. Arthur, "The Motivational Effects of Charismatic Leadership: A Self-concept Based Theory," *Organizational Science*, Vol. 4, no. 4 (November 1993): 577, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=1047-7039%28199311%294%3A4%3C577%3ATMEOCL%3E2.0.CO%3B2-%23>. Accessed May 6, 2005.

²⁹ Conger and Kanungo, 637.

and secret organization, means of communication were scarce and dangerous, so Guzman had to develop a rigid and authoritarian command.

According to SL ideology, as the ultimate communists they rejected any ties with the Soviet Union, because “we cannot be in any way united to the most sinister center of contemporary revisionism, which made the motherland of Lenin and Stalin into today’s hegemonic power.”³⁰ They rejected as well any ties with the Chinese government, as “yesterday’s enemies of Deng Xiaoping and today his adorers can do no less than attack us for combating the Yankee social imperialism of their new master and, more seriously, for applying the Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that they invoked yesterday and today renounce.”³¹ They rejected also the Peruvian legal left that participated in the political context established by the “old state.” The war was against everybody who would not serve under Guzman’s precepts, even non-state organizations that worked on behalf of the populace. This attitude was demonstrated by the SL attacks on development projects as Wayllapampa and Allpachaka, both supported by state and foreign aid programs and oriented to the improvement of agricultural and cattle raising techniques.

Sendero Luminoso's evolution was marked by the transformation from a communist organization into a fundamentalist one. Militants had to renounce everything they had and embrace the party. All ties with their old lives had to be broken. They received a new identity, they couldn’t visit relatives or they would be charged with liberalism, and they had even to turn in their relatives who were state servants to the Party justice apparatus.

Guzman found in the precepts of Stalin and Mao the tools to “purify” the party and remain in power alone. Criticism and self-criticism were used as a kind of feedback after the operations, but the peculiarity was that when an issue arose, the deciding word came from the leader, no matter what the opinion of the Central Committee. Self-criticism was used as well to get rid of potential leaders

30 Abimael Guzman, “Let Us Develop the Guerrilla War,” quoted in Gustavo Gorriti, *The Shining Path* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 174.

31 *Ibid.*, 176.

who could dispute or argue against Guzman's supremacy. As early as 1982, a clear example was seen in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the Huamanga jail, which ended in an SL victory but in Guzman's eyes was plagued by mistakes. After a process of criticism and self-criticism, the hero of the day, Comrade Cesar, was confronted with the responsibility for the support units which were also under scrutiny. After twenty-one days of conversations, Guzman doomed the five military leaders to begin the process of self-criticism, which included accepting all that had been blamed on them and reaffirming their ties to the guiding thought and to the party. But all were demoted, anyway. However, the main objective was accomplished: Guzman was confirmed as the only dominant power and the only one who wasn't suitable for the process of self-criticism. Among the symbols used by SL to represent good and evil, red and black, their main symbol was Guzman himself, characterized as the *Puka Inti* or Red Sun, the "guarantee of success for the revolution." Guzman had concentrated all the organization's powers in his own person; he was the ideology mentor, the party political leader, and the Revolutionary People's Army chief. Loyalty commitment of the militants were not made to the party but to Guzman himself, placing him, according to SL publications, as the "fourth sword of Communism," after "Mao's Thought" was promoted to Maoism and Guzman's interpretations were considered "Gonzalo's Thought."

Militants had to sign a membership letter acknowledging the supremacy of Guzman as the head of the organization and the compromise of the "quota,"³² understanding the necessity of giving their own lives at Guzman's order and for the party. During the Fourth Plenary Session in May 1981, the concern was to make war the main issue for the Peruvian population, thus increasing the violence. To meet this objective, the militants had to be convinced of two things:

³² J. Bowyer Bell, "Revolutionary Dynamics: The Inherent Inefficiency of the Underground," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 2, no. 2 (Winter 1986-87): 205, argues that the greater sin for rebels is betrayal, not only because the traitor may inform the authorities about rebel activities, but because betrayal makes evident the incapacity of the revolutionary organization to maintain faith.

the need to kill in a systematic and depersonalized way, and the expectation of giving up their own lives.³³

4. Sendero's Last Revolutionary Stage

SL's strategy was broken into five phases after 1980: (1) agitation and armed propaganda, (2) the opening campaign against Peru's socioeconomic system, (3) the generalization of the guerrilla struggle, (4) the conquest and expansion of the movement's support base and the strengthening of the guerrilla army, and (5) general civil war, the siege of the cities, and the final collapse of state power.³⁴ The final stage would establish the "Republic of New Democracy." However, the conditions for operating in the city were very different than in the countryside, even though Guzman had quite successfully led the organization from safe houses in Lima because of the centrality of the capital city and his high-altitude related illness.³⁵ In May 1991, Guzman decided that SL had reached the "strategic equilibrium" and began the "maneuvers war."³⁶

Guzman proposed Mao's concept of popular war with a modification: the cities were important not only for the final assault, but during the whole struggle. The countryside would be the main scenario and the cities the necessary complement.³⁷ The strangling of the cities from the Sierra was based on the main Peruvian cities' dependence on countryside resources, with the ultimate objective of reaching the capital city, Lima, the economic and social center of the country which depended on the food, energy, and water of the countryside.³⁸

³³ Gustavo Gorriti, *The Shining Path*, (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 99.

³⁴ Gordon McCormick, *From the Sierra to the Cities: The Urban Campaign of the Shining Path*, (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1992), 23.

³⁵ In 1972, Guzman was diagnosed with polycythemia, due to his poor adaptation to high altitudes. He could not reside permanently in high lands. Besides polycythemia, Guzman also suffered from psoriasis.

³⁶ Poole and Renique, 95.

³⁷ Abimael Guzman, *Bases de Discusión (Basis of Discussion)* (Lima: *El Diario*, January 1988).

³⁸ For more information on SL urban campaign, see Gordon McCormick, *From the Sierra to the Cities, The Urban Campaign of the Shining Path*, (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1992), 5-10.

To this end, energy plants were infiltrated in the low- and mid-levels to recognize and gather information about the most sensitive spots in the energy network. These infiltrations allowed SL to plan precise bombings, provoking long electrical blackouts in the cities. The weapons the militants handled were not abundant, but their transport system was effective. Weapons could be transported throughout the country to attack distant targets in very little time. Tracking suspects in the countryside was quite difficult for the authorities, as the peasants would not cooperate and any stranger's presence was immediately noted.³⁹ Yet all these conditions would play against the revolution in the cities. Furthermore, when SL attacked the police in the countryside, it forced them to retreat back to the cities where all the political and military power was concentrated and the police were playing on their own field. Citizens would realize that the war was not only for the *indios* and *serranos*, but for the whole country.

G. COUNTERTERRORIST EFFORTS

President Fernando Belaunde's administration (1980-1985) didn't identify the insurgency immediately at the beginning of its term. Once they realized an insurgency was under way, they sent the police to control it, underestimating the insurgents' strength in the countryside and overestimating police capabilities and resources in that operational environment. The net result was an increase of attacks in that period, the retreat of police units from the countryside to the cities, and the designation of the armed forces to solve the problem in 1982. The military approach that the armed forces had used to defeat the *foco* type guerrillas of 1965, combined with use of the government-granted political and military control of the insurgency areas, led to a repressive strategy. The result of this new approach was an initial drop in the terrorists' open actions, but an increasing hatred of the military units and an increase of terrorist actions in other areas of the country to which the insurgents had been pushed. The military approach continued even when Garcia took office (1985-1990) after his heavily-

³⁹ For a discussion on SL obstacles in the city see Gordon McCormick, *From the Sierra to the Cities: The Urban Campaign of the Shining Path*, (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1992), 55-69.

loaded social campaign. During this period the Rondas Campesinas⁴⁰ were reinstalled, but without weapons. The net result of this period was again an increase in terrorist attacks, and even stronger disapproval of the military methods that human rights organizations denounced repeatedly in international forums. In 1990 Fujimori took office and took a multi-approach strategy, backed by the military. The administration enhanced the intelligence apparatus, the legal aspects, and the Rondas Campesinas systems, replacing the necessity of stationing troops in distant villages. The government implemented a civic action program to change the population's ideas about the military and to make them more cooperative.

H. CONCLUSIONS

The Shining Path organization was present long before it was recognized and attacked by the state. The organization was politically active since the 1970s, strengthening their ideological basis and setting the basis for a protracted war that would start at Guzman's command. As the developer of Gonzalo Thought, also called "Guidance Thought," Guzman was the only leader of the party's political bureau and the Revolutionary Army, the deciding vote on any party issue, and the only interpreter of Marx, Lenin, and Mao. Even when he could not be physically present in the Sierra heights where the battles were fought, he managed to establish an effective and secure communication system to spread his orders and receive feedback from the countryside leaders while he waited in safe houses in Lima and the media remained uncertain about his location or even if he was still alive. The SL's compartmentalized organization enabled him to gather with his political and military subordinates in the suburbs in Lima with adequate security.

Political, economic and social conditions in the country helped Guzman to decide the right moment to start the revolution and exploit the state's inefficiency in delivering goods, or what the Shining Path called "contradictions." The state felt itself caught in the trap presented by the insurgent strategy of seeking a

⁴⁰ Self Defense Village Patrols. These patrols were used since the 1960's to keep thieves away from the small villages that police could not reach in a timely manner.

violent response which resulted in more SL recruits, sharpened the contradictions, and condemned the state in the international arena for human rights violations. However, Guzman's decision to move forward to the last stage of revolution is arguable. As discussed earlier in this chapter, urban areas presented harder challenges to SL.

Previous Peruvian governments tried different approaches with no success. The Fujimori administration tried a more complete approach, improving the military intelligence agencies and linking them with the National Intelligence System. There were positive results, with the capture of the insurgent military apparatus which, however, was easier for SL to replace. Rare hits were delivered to the political apparatus, the foundation of SL strength. Early achievements in locating Guzman's safe houses (but not capturing him) were effectively exploited by insurgent propaganda to project the image of Guzman as an invincible leader who could escape any state effort to capture him and would inevitably reach power. The government institutions and representatives were losing a political and ethical stand in the counterinsurgency war.

III. THE SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

The National Counter Terrorism Directorate (DINCOTE) had its initial stages at the beginning of 1981, when, in response to the increasing terrorist attacks in Lima, a division of the State Security Directorate was created with the name of Counter Subversion Division. The division started to work with little support from the hierarchy. The only facility for the unit was an office that functioned as the headquarters, the communication and analysis center, the operations center and even the detainee center. During this period, the division concentrated on understanding the terrorist movement, analyzing seized material, and sketching suspects. They then attained the level of Directorate, the same level as State Security. During 1982, DINCOTE carried out some significant arrests but only of people in the SL military's middle level. The lack of intelligence and the fact that they could act only when a crime had already been committed prevented them from climbing any higher in the terrorist organization.⁴¹

In 1991, DINCOTE was reorganized and separate units were created at the police regions level, independent of their regional commands.⁴² This enabled the decentralized commanders in the field to report directly to the headquarters in Lima and inform the middle bureaucracy at the same time, thus improving the speed of information flow within the directorate. As happens frequently in state organizations, they grow up but their budgets do not. Agents were working in adverse conditions and the directorate had to ask for private support from the Association of Peruvian Entrepreneurs; eventually, an extraordinary budget from the state was designated to tackle their modernization.

National Counter Terrorism Director General Antonio Vidal's main idea was to change the image in the media of SL as a criminal organization into the image of SL as an organization looking for power, with Guzman harboring a

⁴¹ Gustavo Gorriti, *The Shining Path*, (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 255.

⁴² Peruvian National Police divided the territory into six police regions.

political intention and an ideology. Vidal's intention was to use media as allies in the war against terrorism in Peru.

Since the origin of SL, service in state security (and later, in DINCOTE) was among the least-coveted fates for those working for the Investigations Police. The reason was simple: nobody could make money in security deployments.⁴³ The ranks of state security were filled with officers who were rejected from other, more desirable units, and had no other opportunities. In 1991, approximately 90% of them were removed, and new personnel were assigned to the cases. Police officers that were to present the captured terrorists on TV were ordered to dress in suits and present a sharp look in order to change public opinion about the police and to heighten the contrast between what the state represented (a sharply-dressed, clean officer) and what SL represented (a dirty, aggressive criminal). DINCOTE units in Lima were divided again, going from eight delta teams with the mission of persecuting the terrorist organizations, into five delta units and five intelligence units. One of them was the Special Intelligence Group. In addition, there was a unit in charge of criminals who used the terrorists' reputation to conduct hijackings and ask for ransom.⁴⁴

A. DELTA GROUPS AND INTELLIGENCE GROUPS

The five intelligence groups were assigned to gather and analyze information about the various level terrorists of both terrorist groups, the Shining Path and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), which was also operating in the area but without a connection to SL. They were assigned geographically within the area of Lima. After sufficient intelligence was put together, the delta groups were informed so they could seize the installations, capture the suspects, and build the criminal case. After every attack they went to the location to gather information and clues that might help the analysts to find out which group was responsible and eventually to build a criminal accusation that the prosecutor could present against the suspects.

⁴³ Gorriti, 209-211.

⁴⁴ General PNP(r) Antonio K. Vidal, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 11, 2005.

Chiefs of every group met with the director daily to share information on a “need to know” basis and to plan possible joint future operations.⁴⁵

B. SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

In 1990, the Chief of Investigations Police General PNP Fernando Reyes appointed Commander PNP Benedicto Jimenez, who had been working in the directorate for eight years, with his final assignment: to be commander of Delta Group 5, a unit specializing in the capture of SL’s leaders. For this purpose Jimenez was authorized to ask for the necessary personnel from the directorate. Jimenez started with a captain, two ensigns, and a corporal from the police, and a navy intelligence NCO, and ended up in 1993 with eighty-two agents, including three women. The unit was supposed to report to the DINCOTE director according to the formal chain of command, but it reported directly to the Police Investigations Chief General Fernando Reyes.⁴⁶

1. Mission

DINCOTE had oriented its efforts toward attacking the SL and MRTA at different levels. SIG was assigned to hit SL leaders specifically. Several strikes were made against the organization, capturing guns, explosives, and low-level military cadre in the Revolutionary Army (these were replaced almost immediately by the party). SIG leaders realized that flashy captures worked very well for media purposes, but terrorist activities were not decreasing. These captures were used by the state to send the wrong signals of success to the public. But SL could rapidly recruit more militants to replace their losses; so if the intention was to inflict critical damage on the organization, SIG leaders realized they must aim at the party leaders. Apart from SIG, there were other intelligence units within DINCOTE or the other services going after the political leaders. The methods used by other units included following the tracks of identified political leaders' relatives to reach the leaders, using the evidence discovered at attack locations. Other methods included the infiltration, or attempted infiltration, of the

⁴⁵ General PNP Carlos Delgado, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 12, 2005.

⁴⁶ General PNP Marco Miyashiro, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 16, 2005.

terrorists' ranks. In the first instance, the units encountered the obstacle that the terrorist leaders had renounced their family ties in order to embrace the party (see Chapter II); in the second instance, SL's compartmentalization and cell structure isolated the cadres from the operatives, and the fact that SL upper-level members served ten or fifteen years in the organization stymied the attempts to infiltrate at high levels. In addition, another method that failed was the use of informants, who turned out to be nonexistent at higher levels of the hierarchy. SIG decided to pursue patient vigilance of cadres that were let out of jail, or of other identified cadre who might reveal their links to the leaders.

The newborn unit tried to start with a complete knowledge of the enemy; they patiently studied all documentation and publications distributed by SL or captured by the police in order to predict SL's trends. Based on their investigations, they concluded that SL had a formal organization based on the party, the army, and the front, and that their activities were not a result of improvisation but were systematic, planned and oriented to destroying the democratic establishment with a solid ideology that gave the terrorists the moral support necessary to legitimate their criminal actions.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Benedicto Jimenez, *Inicio, Desarrollo y Ocaso del Terrorismo en el Peru* (Beginning, Development and End of Terrorism in Peru) (Lima: Vizcarra, 2000), 708.

2. Organization

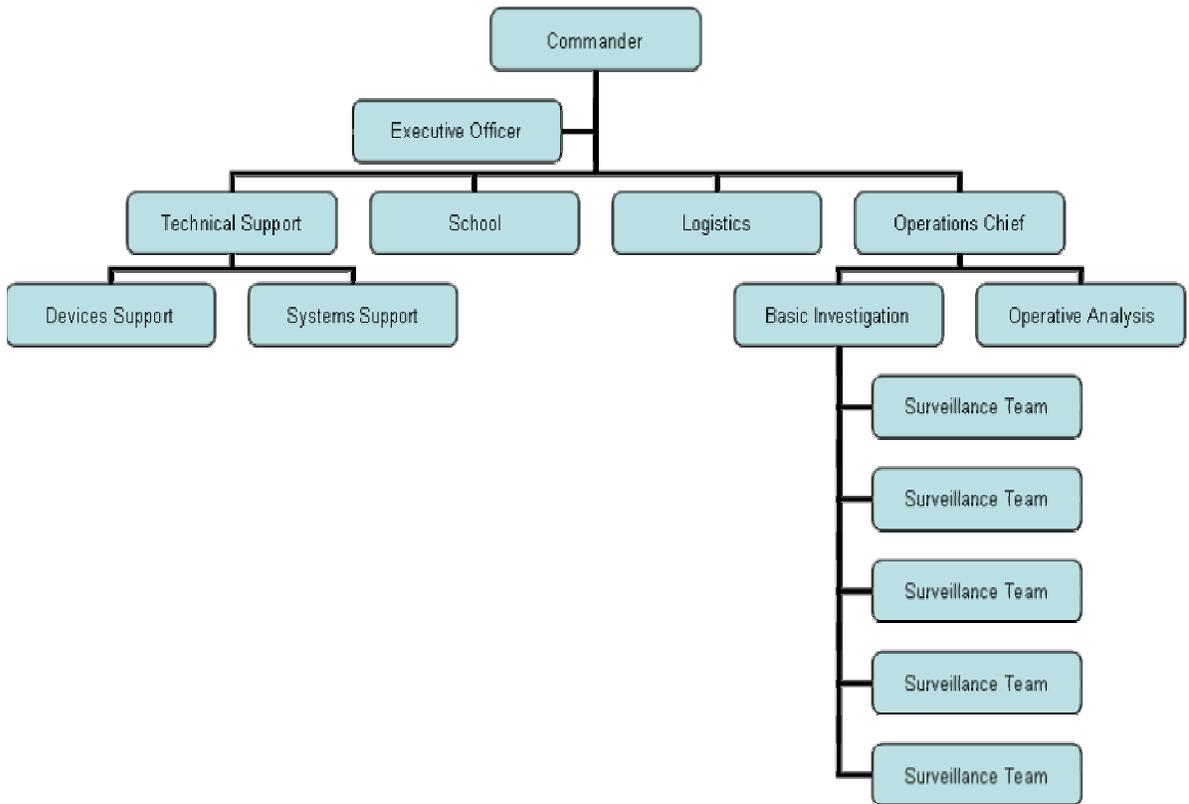


Figure 1. Special Intelligence Unit Organizational Chart.

Overview of organization and functions

Commander (Commander Marcos Miyashiro):

Responsible for the Group to the upper level

Capability to take decisions on his level

Executive Officer (Commander Benedicto Jimenez):

Also Chief of Operations

Responsible for the Group to the Commander and in charge of planning operations.

Technical Support:

Two offices functioned in the Technical Support Department: the Devices Support Office, in charge of developing the necessary devices for the Surveillance Units to perform undercover, and the Systems Support Office, in charge of the computers.

School:

In charge of the incremental development of the agents' capabilities in the different intelligence techniques according to their requirements

Logistics:

In charge of the supplies. This task required permanent communication with the DINCOTE Executive Officer as a supply liaison.

Office of Strategic Analysis:

In charge of the analysis and establishment of relations between the conclusions of the Operative Analysis office, previous operations, other units' known operations, and the strategic situation

Office of Operative Analysis:

In charge of the analysis of the information brought by the Surveillance Units pertaining to a specific case

Surveillance Units

In charge of the observation, vigilance, and surveillance of the targets. Their number varied depending on the number of targets they had to observe

3. Recruiting

The first agents that joined the group were people who had worked for Commanders Miyashiro and Jimenez in their former units. The police's situation required that the recruitment process and selection be extremely careful. The threat of infiltration was high, and the moral and ethical values that the agents

needed had to be balanced with the capabilities necessary to enhance the group's performance.

As SIG discovered the terrorist network, they needed more surveillance units in order to keep the suspects under watch and more administrative personnel to support them. The recruitment process had several steps. First the potential agents were recommended by group members, who accepted a degree of responsibility for the people they proposed; no volunteers were accepted. Potential agents were then asked if they agreed to join SIG. If the answer was affirmative, they took a psychological test to prove their mental stability and were evaluated in their skills by a board consisting of senior officers from O3 to O5. Finally, the senior members performed a counter-check on the candidates to find anything suspicious that might be not in the previously-presented paperwork. After that they attended the SIG School. The command avoided deploying personnel already working in SIG to other units, expanding only with new recruits. Most of their knowledge was acquired by experience, so giving people away would be a waste of invested time and effort.⁴⁸ Considering that an operator will perform better in the tasks he perceives as more attractive and for which he has more relevant skills, the agents were classified again and assigned to their jobs accordingly.

4. Training

After selection, the officers and agents attended three weeks of training in the facilities of SIG and were assigned immediately to the surveillance units for a practice period. Most of the trainees came from the former Investigations Police School, where they learned the basics of police activities. Then the SIG School reinforced that instruction and taught them specific procedures. The in-class period, as a complement to their previous studies in the Police Academy, consisted of indoctrination in democratic values, terrorism ideology, police-critical procedures, human behavior observation, communications, documents analysis, and camouflage. According to the interviewed officers, the main part of the

⁴⁸ General PNP Marco Miyashiro, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 16, 2005.

acquisition of knowledge process was in the field. Trainees in surveillance teams were assigned to different jobs but not permitted to lead the unit, no matter how great their seniority. In this case, experience in the field was preferable to rank. After experience was acquired, officers were assigned according to their ranks.

From 1990 on, the school received assistance from specialists from the American Embassy in Lima in the areas of cover and camouflage⁴⁹ Techniques of surveillance were taught in accordance with the Peruvian National Police doctrine. In the field, learning was a long trial and error process. Complementary training was prepared according to the needs of the agents and the weaknesses revealed in the field and the offices. As soon as a fault in surveillance was detected, if it was due to lack of training, the agent had to attend the school; if it was due to lack of skills, the agent was reassigned to another job in the organization. The SIG leaders held the idea that if a man had integrity, they could find a job for him in the unit and train him to perform satisfactorily.

In the SIG school and afterwards, while working in the field, agents were indoctrinated in liberty, justice, respect for human life, and protection of democracy; the main values of the Method of Operative Intelligence.⁵⁰

5. Chain of Command

In 1990, when the Chief of Police Investigations appointed Commander Jimenez to start the group, the intention was that Jimenez would report directly to the Chief. However, his immediate formal chain of command was the DINCOTE director.

Within the group, the units under the Commander and Executive Officer reported directly to either one, sometimes skipping echelons to achieve greater speed in the flow of information.⁵¹

⁴⁹ General PNP Marco Miyashiro, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 16, 2005.

⁵⁰ Jimenez, 712.

⁵¹ Major PNP Ruben Zuñiga, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 12, 2005.

There was a unique factor that helped SIG in the leaders' relations with the upper echelons: Commander Miyashiro was a close friend of Santiago Fujimori, President Fujimori's brother and advisor, as they both belonged to the Nisei community in Peru. Santiago Fujimori was not involved with the group's issues, but he served as a protector when needed. Earlier, the same role had been played by police chief General Reyes Roca, up until his retirement.

6. Operational Security

The operations office assigned nicknames every fifteen days to the agents to keep their real identities out of the communications. At the time, this procedure was very common within armed forces and police units in emergency zones.

In order to keep the agents' profiles low, agents who belonged to the surveillance teams did not go to the headquarters. They reported only by radio communication and used messenger agents to receive supplies and deliver written reports. In addition, the surveillance teams worked only for two hours shifts, and if the target was extremely alert, they could only observe it for an hour (depending on the availability of personnel). The command periodically ordered random counter-checks on every individual working for the SIG. In addition, SIG personnel were not involved with presentation of the captured terrorists to the media; other DINCOTE agents did that, and announced the captures simply as DINCOTE achievements. The use of high technology devices to track suspects was limited. Even when the American embassy could provide them, it was not possible to use them in the neighborhoods where the mid-level cadres operated. Most of them lived in the hills surrounding Lima, in areas which presented very few communication possibilities. For this reason, the agents often lost track of the terrorists and had to wait until a lost target made contact with another observed target or until the target was found again in one of his habitual locations.

There were three criteria behind the decision to finish an operation: first, if the surveillance teams were discovered and the targets could pass the word to their cell directors and flee; second, when the operation was three months old and the operation became unstable and logistically difficult for SIG; and third,

when the whole cell direction was discovered or did not lead to new targets.⁵² In order to achieve surprise, SIG planned the captures for weekends or holidays, because the targets would not expect police agents to work on those days.

7. Obstacles

Quality of personnel: As discussed in Chapter II, the quality of personnel in the police units was quite poor. Most police officers were looking for safe desk jobs and the chance of another job part time, or for a deployment that would earn more income. Those who ended up in the DINCOTE ranks were the officers who could not get a better job or a recommendation from someone powerful in the government or the police; they had little or no interest in staying in the police service other than to earn a living. The directorate offered only low paid and dangerous jobs. Officers in the counterterrorist units were often identified and threatened by terrorist cells; some were kidnapped or murdered.

In the cities, because of their low income police officers lived in police villages if they could afford them, or in poor neighborhoods in the city. In either case, their neighbors rejected them because were permanent targets for the terrorists, whose bullets and bombs might reach the surrounding houses as well.

Infiltration: In ten years of struggle, SL had managed to infiltrate public organizations, like electrical companies and mining companies, to extract valuable information for their attacks. Law enforcement units and the armed forces were no exception. As early as 1981, a soldier in Ayacucho was arrested by the police when he was discovered to have SL pamphlets and a number of dynamite sticks in his house. Later the same year, a navy crewman at the Callao navy base deserted, taking with him several rifles.⁵³ There was even a woman named Eva Gomez (aka Comrade Mariana) who infiltrated as a psychologist in charge of the treatment of police officers who had just returned from the emergency zones with post-combat trauma symptoms. She was the romantic

⁵² Colonel PNP (r) Benedicto Jimenez, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 13, 2005.

⁵³ Gorriti, 84.

partner of Deodato Juarez, SL chief of propaganda who was, until his capture, considered by some observers the only accepted successor to Guzman.⁵⁴

Reward: The 1.5 million dollar reward for the capture of Guzman offered by the government with the sponsorship of private companies attracted several private adventurers and even inspired in other state agencies the hope of collecting it.⁵⁵ The adventurers sometimes had better electronic equipment for communications interception and could take advantage of SIG surveillance by tracking their communications. The agents used their communications codes for people and places, and sometimes even planned two or three alternate plans to send their followers to different locations and identify them.⁵⁶

On the other hand, the reward had the positive outcome of increasing the general public's participation. Besides the reward for Guzman's head, there were rewards for the identified cadres. These were highly publicized, and consequently, terrorist activities were driven even more underground in the face of civilians eager to bring information to the government that would earn them reward money.

Lack of intelligence sharing: As with intelligence units generally, those in Peru, motivated by professional jealousies and hunger for individual success, did not share vital information. Each branch of service in the armed forces had an intelligence directorate that reported to their commands and, since 1990, to the empowered National Intelligence Service (SIN). The sharing of information was encouraged by national strategy makers but the agencies were afraid of leakages. In an effort to get SIG information, the powerful National Intelligence Service opened up an office in the SIG facility with the excuse that it was developing a new doctrine for Army units operating nation wide. Furthermore, Commander Jimenez was appointed liaison officer between DINCOTE and SIN, and was called in frequently to conduct conferences and briefings.

⁵⁴ Quechua, 532.

⁵⁵ It was not clear if the reward would be awarded if a state agency carried out the capture.

⁵⁶ Colonel PNP (r) Benedicto Jimenez, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 13, 2005.

Political interference: Due to the important impacts of SIG achievements, political patrons expected to take advantage of them in the political arena. In April 1992, the President had dismissed the Congress, arguing that it was an obstacle to his counterterrorism policy. Even with the Congress closed and new laws in action, terrorist actions increased. In addition, there was permanent pressure on SIG to achieve results. The fear of SIG leaders was that politicians would release important information if the “political moment” was propitious, thus taking down a ongoing larger operation.

8. Method of Operative Intelligence

To make patience an art and waiting a virtue.⁵⁷

At the beginning, SIG operated in the traditional way inherited from its DINCOTE and delta ancestors. Two events, both consequences of their first successful operation, pushed SIG to develop its own method. (SIG's main operations will be discussed later in this chapter.) The first event was the frustration caused by the delta groups' inability to build criminal cases after the SIG work had concluded. The second event was the disappointment when Operation Caballero was about to end with the seizure of a safe house, and it turned out that no cadre was inside, apparently because information about the raid had been leaked. That time a delta unit had been informed of the operation in order to collaborate with SIG.⁵⁸

The "method of operative intelligence" (MOI) was built to fight organized crime by aiming to dislocate leaders from operatives. The method is carried out once suspects have been identified but before a criminal act has occurred. It consists of combining intelligence with the criminal investigation carried out within a single unit. According to traditional procedures, these should not be combined for security purposes. The objective of the intelligence phase is to gather as much data as possible before the terrorist crime is committed; then, during the

⁵⁷ Benedicto Jimenez, *Doctrina y Ciencia Policial* (Doctrine and Police Science) (Lima, 2003), 156.

⁵⁸ Jimenez, *Inicio, Desarrollo y Ocaso del Terrorismo en el Peru*, 714.

criminal investigation phase, the circumstances and judgments are established and the criminal accusation is prepared for the prosecutor's office.⁵⁹

The process has two phases: intelligence and criminal investigation. The intelligence phase starts with the identification of mid-level targets, location, and assignment of a surveillance team suitable for the target's characteristics. Because there is no criminal action yet, the target may be simply a suspect mentioned by other mid-level militants or a militant recently released from jail. The team observes its target 24 hours a day until his or her routine is established, after which they observe the target during his hours of activity. At this time, the structure of the target organization begins to take shape. The job is difficult because at this level there are no informers if the target is lost, and targets are trained to take all kinds of safety precautions to lose their tails. The agents camouflage themselves as ice cream sellers, street retailers, lovers, trash collectors, etc. In SIG's the task was made more difficult because the terrorists used to act in the marginal neighborhoods of Lima where some technological devices would not work, requiring that the agents had use their knowledge and creativity to follow, reach, and observe the targets.

Typically, the operational analysis office prefers a tape or video recording whenever possible. To this end, the office of technical devices provided SIG with ingenious homemade gadgets. If tapes or video recordings were not possible, simple observation was needed. Special attention was paid to the suspects' body language and superior-subordinate behavior to establish their positions in the hierarchy and their value. Afterwards, each member of the surveillance team had to deliver a complete report, even if the team had been working together the whole time, in order to not miss any detail or observation. The report was analyzed in conjunction with the reports of other surveillance teams working on the same case, producing a report for the strategic analysis office that established relations with other current and prior cases and also producing a recommendation to the commander and executive officer of whether to take

⁵⁹ Jimenez, *Doctrina y Ciencia Policial*, 155.

down the cell--or not. Once the suspects were apprehended, the criminal investigation began and the surveillance teams went back to their observation job. By law, the SIG had fifteen days to interrogate suspects to gather more information, but with the advantage of having already collected evidence for prosecution during the surveillance period. Evidence was picked up from the sites and a report prepared for the prosecutor. The method was improved based on constructive criticism after each operation in which higher leaders were captured, a process which in turn led to interest by those authorities who accompanied the economic support from the government and the American embassy.⁶⁰

9. Main Operations

SIG carried out a total of ten operations (listed in the Appendix). Each operation was debriefed and used as a learning experience for the next.

a. Operation Isa, March 5 to June 1, 1990

A safe house that had functioned since 1987 as the Organization Support Department (DAO) and the Party Support Group (GAP) headed, respectively, by Elvia Zanabria (aka Juana) and Carlos Torres (aka David), was taken. This was the second-most important house at the time. The house was located in a neighborhood built during the military government for army officers, most of whom at the time were retired but had military security. It was ten blocks away from the Army general headquarters. The search agents found a list of codenames, phone numbers and addresses of the central committees' leaders and the main staff hidden in Zanabria's books. The house served as a link between the Central Department located in the Buenavista safe house (discovered a year later) and the heads of the party committees. This information was the key for subsequent SIG operations. Operation Isa allowed SIG to conclude that Guzman was alive and ruling the party and that the central committees only followed orders. This is supposedly the first time that Guzman escaped. The operation was coordinated with a delta unit from DINCOTE; presumably there was a leak of information enabling Guzman to escape.

⁶⁰ Colonel PNP (r) Benedicto Jimenez, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 13, 2005.

However, in this operation thirty houses are seized and forty terrorists captured.⁶¹ SIG agents made their way in when one of the terrorists, playing the role of a maid, opened the garage door. Armed resistance in this kind of safe house was nonexistent; these locations were used only as political sites.

b. Operation Caballero, October 2, 1990 to January 31, 1991

SIG seized Natividad Mendez's apartment and the safe house located on Buenavista Street. The agents found videos of Guzman performing a "Zorba the Greek" dance filmed in June 1989, along with several party documents. The footage was presented to the media and used as a psychological operation, as it showed Guzman drunk and dancing with several party leaders. Also captured in this operation was Nelly Evans, a former nun turned terrorist leader. Guzman had been living in this house since 1989, but Angelica Salas, a member of the central committee, had observed the agents on January 28 and managed to take Guzman and Iparraguirre, Guzman's romantic partner, to another safe house. With the video, the police could identify the central committee. Before it was not clear what Guzman looked like, or how many served on the central committee and their identities.

10. SIG's Organizational Characteristics

SIG final performances resulted from a progressive evolution during a three-year trial and error process. The Peruvian police are organized in a military fashion nationwide; however, the former Investigations Police, where most of SIG members came from, had a more flexible organization. That prior organizational experience provided the starting point for Jimenez in building the unit. DINCOTE procedures mandated working in coordination with delta groups for the operative part of the process, following strict procedures to get permission to hit terrorist cells, and reporting any progress in their tasks, but these procedures had been used for years with poor results.

Mintzberg classifies the coordination mechanisms in organizations into six types: the simple structure characterized by direct supervision, the machine

⁶¹ Benedicto Jimenez, *Inicio, Desarrollo y Ocaso del Terrorismo en el Peru*, 714.

bureaucracy where standardization of work prevails, the professional bureaucracy dominated by the standardization of skills, the adhocracy relying on mutual adjustment, the divisional form with its standardization of outputs, and finally the missionary, relying on the standardization of norms or ideology.⁶²

Mintzberg states that the “pure missionary is built around an inspiring mission--to change society in some way, or to change the organization’s own members, or just to provide them with a unique experience--an accompanying set of beliefs and norms.”⁶³ In every organization, all coordination mechanisms are present to some degree, but one (and sometimes two) prevails, generating a hybrid organization.⁶⁴ Using this frame of reference, SIG can be placed within the organizational span. SIG was a unit inside the police and had to maintain a level of standardization, so the group became a professional bureaucracy in a sense. However, the SIG executive officer took advantage of the organization's newness to establish a fresh set of procedures (the method of operative intelligence). Jimenez set up the organization with the commander’s and his own reputation as backup and example; their strong leadership organized the group in a simple structure. Miyashiro and Jimenez would be there any time an agent or an analyst intended to report something, or a decision had to be made, no matter the time or the day. Jimenez would even resolve personal issues among agents, personally calling them to his office and clarifying issues in his own particular way. In addition, no birthday or personal problem was overlooked by the commanders.⁶⁵ As Mintzberg noted, the grouping should be in relatively small units because personal contact is the only way to maintain strong ideology.⁶⁶ SIG grew to only 82 members, most of them in the surveillance teams, leaving the offices with only the minimum number of people required. If necessary, office agents collaborated

62 Henry Mintzberg, “Organization Design: Fashion or Fit?,” *Harvard Business Review* (January-February 1981): 5-11.

63 Henry Mintzberg, *Structure in Fives* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1993), 294.

64 Class Notes, Professor Erick Jansen, Organizational Design, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, September 2004.

65 Major PNP Ruben Zuñiga, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 12, 2005.

66 Mintzberg, 295.

in the field as well. Technical and administrative support was kept to the minimum necessary. Inside SIG, a culture grew where loyalty was paid to SIG leaders and peers only, regardless of the fact that they belonged to the police organization in first instance. The level of responsibility was necessarily very high, especially in the surveillance teams who performed their tasks in groups of two or three, away from the bosses' supervision and reporting only by radio. Meanwhile, the tasks performed by the operating core, the surveillance groups, were highly specialized; agents performed only a narrow range of tasks. Through periodic attendance at SIG school the leaders indoctrinated the rank and file with the values of liberty, justice, respect for human life, and protection of democracy, giving the agents a sense of mission⁶⁷ and unity that made them feel different from the rest of the institution which was being so heavily criticized at the time. The agents felt that they were working not only in the correct way, but also that the outcome of their work would have national consequences. In other words, the political future of the country was in their hands. Few other rewards were offered apart from the sense of doing the right thing. The logistics office would provide some money for daily meals and they were granted fifteen days of leave after each operation. The economic reward for the capture of Guzman was uncertain, since it was not clear if it was available for employees of state agencies.

C. CONCLUSIONS

The revolutionary development of SL found Peruvian law enforcement and military institutions underdeveloped and unexpectedly behind, making it necessary for both the police and military to rush improvements while also combating the Shining Path and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement at the same time. The implementation of a national police force on paper underestimated the particular cultures of the three former institutions that, along with the armed forces, intelligence agencies, and the recently empowered

⁶⁷ Mintzberg defines sense of mission as a feeling that the group has banded together to create something unusual and exiting, p. 353.

National Intelligence System, became competitors in the race for the information necessary to succeed and ultimately to gain a larger portion of the national budget.

In the first near-decade of DINCOTE's work, it was able to feed the judiciary system with some solid prosecution cases against SL's military apparatus. However, against the high-level political apparatus, DINCOTE had almost no success. With the intention of improving the hunt for SL's leadership, the directorate appointed Commander PNP Jimenez to lead an ad hoc unit tasked with this assignment. Jimenez took special care in recruiting and training his agents, giving them a reason to perform well. More importantly, he put into practice his method of operative intelligence, oriented not only to building criminal cases, but also to finding clues that might lead SIG to higher levels in the SL political hierarchy.

The MOI had several advantages.

- Much data used to reach conclusions is not recorded in intelligence reports. Details from the intelligence section that were discarded or summarized for the report are still present in the agents' minds and report scratch notes, and these details can be used to build the criminal case, which is prepared by the same agents.
- The MOI increases operations security because the intelligence-operations loop is closed.
- The MOI, because it avoids the use of other units, increases autonomy from the superior echelon.
- The MOI helps to build a solid criminal case.
- Once a suspect is caught and exposed to enough evidence to be prosecuted, the suspect tends to be more cooperative.
- The MOI decreases the importance of interrogations, which helps avoid excessive use of police force. In addition, militants typically declined to collaborate in interrogations due to both Sendero's "Gold Rule" that forbade prisoners from betraying their comrades, no matter how the authorities interrogated or tortured them, and the "quota," discussed in Chapter II.
- The MOI provides easily-retrieved information from the criminal investigation phase through the intelligence phase, if needed.
- Feedback is much more frequent since only one unit is performing.

- If only one unit conducts the whole process, surprise and opportunity can be maintained.

Disadvantages of the MOI include the following.

- It demands too much time and effort.
- It demands motivated and dedicated personnel.
- Intelligence personnel can be identified while gathering evidence during the criminal investigation.

With these attributes, SIG was able to conduct a series of successful operations with both desired and collateral effects that at last situated them closer to the capture of Guzman.

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IV. THE CAPTURE

A. OPERATION VICTORIA

The operation started In June 1992 and ended with Guzman's capture on September 12, 1992.

After operation Caballero ended, an unidentified man ran as the central committee coordinator. He was observed when he met with Luis Arana⁶⁸ and when he went to pick up his children from school (thus violating the "liberalism"⁶⁹ rule). To the agent's surprise, one of the children called him by his name and later, with the help of a video surveillance footage, the man was identified as Zenon Vargas, a terrorist leader. On April 4, Arana and Vargas met with an unidentified man, and all three were picked up by a woman in a red car. On June 22, Arana was apprehended and declared he did not know the couple, but a scratched note of a secret meeting was found in his pocket. The police followed the track of the red car's license plate and showed Arana the owner's picture. The owner was Carlos Inchaustegui.

The police found Inchaustegui and followed him to a house in the Los Sauces neighborhood, where he was living with Maritza Garrido-Lecca. Surveillance on the house from a neighbor's rented room began on July 21. It appeared that only Inchaustegui and Garrido-Lecca lived in the house. Garrido-Lecca had established a fake dance school in the living room to disguise her activities. The analysts thought that, because the couple had brought Arana to Guzman, eventually they would lead the agents to Guzman, too. However, the house's security measures were extremely strict. Every time the couple left the house they double-locked the door; every morning and randomly during the day Inchaustegui would go to the roof and observe the neighborhood for a while; he

⁶⁸ Luis Arana was the accountant for the Cesar Vallejo Academy, which was used by SL to recruit militants and raise money to sustain Guzman in Lima. He had been under SIG surveillance for two years already.

⁶⁹ SL considered "liberalism" to include visiting relatives once the militants went underground and punished it severely.

used to leave the house early in the morning, walk around the city, and return in the afternoon to simulate going to work.

This suspicious activity prompted the agents to get closer. Disguised as city employees, they started to collect the trash and analyze it in their headquarters. Much evidence appeared in this period: the couple bought an excessive amount of groceries, the amount of discarded trash was quite large for just two people, and sometimes there were burned paper in the trash. On one occasion agents found a written note about the party congress that was later recognized to contain Iparraguirre's handwriting, but they were not sure yet if Guzman was there. On September 11, when Inchaustegui and Garrido-Lecca were out and the house was supposedly empty, agents knocked on the door insistently, posing as retailers. Nobody opened the door but a female silhouette on the second floor was recorded. That was Elena Iparraguirre.

The next day, Jimenez ordered the seizure of the house in Los Sauces and all other locations related to the operation. Agents "Ardilla" and "Gaviota" took advantage of the fact that two friends of Garrido-Lecca were leaving the house and the door was open to enter the living room, where they found three women. Agent "Ardilla," who felt somebody was looking at him from upstairs, ran up the stairs and kicked the door open. He then fell into the room, aiming his 38 special revolver at Guzman's head while Iparraguirre pulled at "Ardilla's" hair, insulting him and telling him not to shoot. SIG captured four out of five members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee: Abimael Guzman (aka Gonzalo), Elena Iparraguirre (aka Miriam), Maria Pantoja (aka Eugenia), and Laura Zambrano (aka Rene). The only member of the Central Committee missing was Oscar Ramirez (aka Feliciano). In addition, they captured Carlos Inchaustegui and Maritza Garrido-Lecca who were in charge of the house.

B. AFTERMATH AND CONTRIBUTION TO SHINING PATH'S DEFEAT

The capture of Guzman and its impact on SL's activity cannot be seen as isolated events. At the national level, as explained in Chapter II, since 1990 the government had improved the Rondas Campesinas program, thus regaining rural ground that SL had disregarded in order to prioritize the battle for the cities. At

the same time, the judicial system was restructured, stiffening the punishments (up to life sentences) for terrorist criminals and defining them as traitors to the homeland.

At the party level, Guzman was closing the conference of the central committee and commanding the next offensive actions for October and November. After previous SIG operations, Guzman ordered that there be no large single meetings with the Central Committee members at the same time, but instead multiple meetings with the leaders divided into groups. On September 12, 1992, he had already met with most of his cadre and communicated them the next steps they were to follow.

At his public presentation after his capture, Guzman, wearing a striped outfit and inside a cage, took advantage of the situation and directed his militants to continue the battle, arguing that his arrest was only a curve on the way to victory.

The capture of Guzman represents a strong hit in the psychological arena for SL militants who had seen him as the *Puka Inti*, the Red Sun. The cult of personality Guzman built turned against him. In addition, organizationally he had concentrated all powers in his own hands. During central committee meetings that were supposed to discuss the party bearing, the cadre was limited to repeating Guzman's sentences and decisions. Guzman taught his militants that he was the guarantee of communism's triumph, to the point that he became essential for success. At the same time, his image as invulnerable melted away, and the state recovered the initiative. The party was built on an ideological foundation, but Guzman was the only one who could interpret that ideology. In his public speech after he was captured, he directed the militants to continue the struggle, but there was no successor for the period that Guzman was to spend in jail, incommunicado and unable to answer the cadre's questions.

In addition, during the operations described above, numerous subversive documents were confiscated, including plans, lists of militants showing their double identities, and statistics of terrorist activities carried out by SL.

Confiscation of these documents created a sense of insecurity about how much the state knew about the militants. After September 12, 1992, the DINCOTE apprehended all individuals related to the case and seized their safe houses. At the time, the SL's mid-level militants fell into a defensive position.⁷⁰

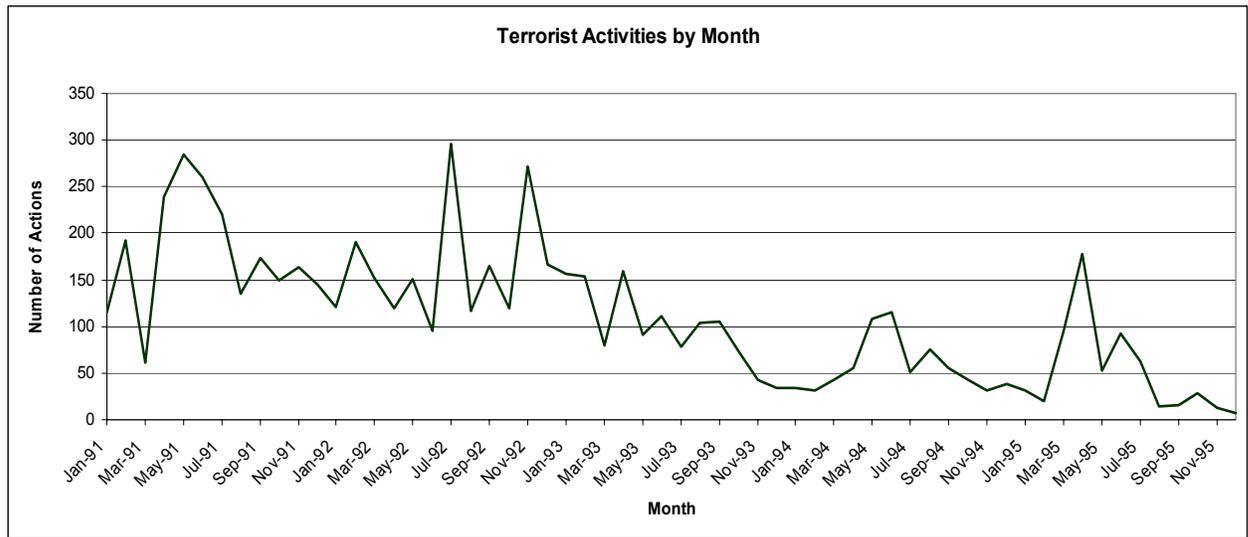


Figure 2. Sendero Luminoso Terrorist Activities by Month: 1991-1995 (From: DESCO Organization Archives).

⁷⁰ Carlos Ivan Degregori, *Shining Path and Counterinsurgency Strategy Since the Arrest of Abimael Guzman*, Institute for Peruvian Studies, 1993, 94.

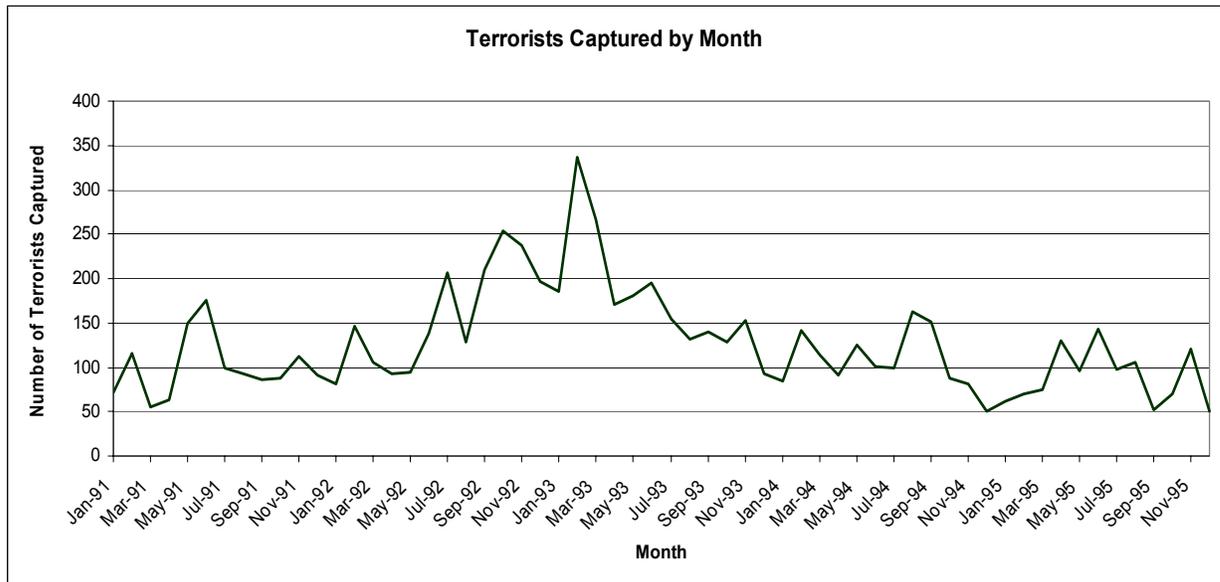


Figure 3. Sendero Luminoso Militants Captured by Month: 1991-1995. (From: Peruvian Counterterrorism Directorate).

As noted in Fig. 2, after a peak of almost 300 attacks in July 1992, the terrorist activities dropped off during August to 117, in September there were 165, and in October the activities went down to 119. However, in November they increased to 272. Probably, after a period of recovering from the capture of the political bureau, the terrorist group reorganized itself and followed the orders given by Guzman from the cage. While the number of SL actions increased after Guzman was imprisoned, the actions were not as well-coordinated as before. In addition, the number of frustrated attacks increased, indicating that militants with less military experience were going into action.⁷¹ From that point on, terrorist activities declined until March 1993 with 79 activities, and the trend continued downward until December 1995, which saw only seven attacks. Yet the terrorists' activities didn't stop dramatically after the capture of Guzman.

Once Guzman was in his cell, DINCOTE was able to apprehend all the militants known to be related to the operation; they hit a blow at the mid-level cadre of SL. As was noted earlier, there were more factors playing into the defeat

⁷¹ Degregori, 95.

of SL; however, given that the terrorist organization was hierarchical and centralized, it was necessary to capture its leaders and middle management. In addition, within a year of his capture, Guzman came to an agreement with the government that he would sign letters calling on his militants to surrender. In any case, this was also a consequence of his capture.

As seen in Fig. 3, up until July 1992, the curve that represents the number of terrorists captured seems stable. In August 128 terrorists were captured; in September, 209; and in October, 254. Then the curve descends for three months and then reaches its highest peak in February 1993, with 337. The judicial systems and regulations were in effect since 1991, the Rondas Campesinas were a slowly developing process (mainly in the Andes), but here the impact that Guzman's capture had on the militants is clearly visible. Only after his capture did the militants massively embrace the law allowing repentance and collaborate with the state.

V. CONCLUSIONS

A. SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP'S VARIABLES FOR SUCCESS

1. Decision Making Capability

Due to the uncertain consequences, hunting for terrorist leaders, raises questions about who should make the decisions regarding the timing of the seizures once the suspects are tracked. The capture of a top terrorist leader represents a high achievement for the administration in office, but a preference for the best political moment over the correct tactical timing may push politicians to choose to capture mid-level targets merely to deliver results to the public.

The Peruvian police have a military organization based on hierarchy and seniority. In 1990, when SIG began to function, the chief of police allowed them to report the results of their operations directly to him, giving SIG a high degree of autonomy to make decisions at the tactical level. The other operative units of DINCOTE, called deltas, did not enjoy this privilege.

Allison and Zelikow present three models for decision making processes: the rational actor model, based on a direct analysis of the relationship of cost and utility; the organizational behavior model, which considers the process resulting from the outputs of a large number of organizations among which primary responsibility for particular tasks is divided; and the government politics model, where many actors are players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse problems and who thus cannot act in terms of a consistent set of strategic objectives but rather must make decisions according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals.⁷²

The issue of political influence is quite important in the case study of this thesis. The reason Fujimori gave for dismissing the Congress was to overcome the constraints that the legislature put on the executive's counterterrorism initiatives. After the *autogolpe* on April 5, 1992, all presidential decrees were operative, but without important results. The administration was eager to achieve

⁷² Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, 1999), 13, 143, 255.

an important success to demonstrate the correctness of the president's decision to dismiss the Congress and to gain international support. On the other hand, information leakages may occur, not to mention that politicians in the government may not agree with operations like this or with the government's policy in general. Another consideration was that according to the same presidential decree, the chiefs of the armed forces and police were appointed by the president and could remain in power until he deemed otherwise. The relationship became personalized rather than institutional; this enabled the president to co-opt one sector and assert control over the rest⁷³ and at the same time push the chiefs to press their units to produce results as quickly as possible, disregarding the strategic profit that might be lost by not waiting.

The governmental politics model applied by President Fujimori, his administration, and the police command observed the intermediate-term goal of saving the administration's term, overlooking the set of risks brought on by following that chain of command. On the other hand, SIG leaders were mission oriented and, using the rational actor model, balanced the payoffs of following the SL chain of command; they made their tactical decisions according to the outputs of each operation that might lead them to the final outcome, which was the capture of the terrorist leader. SIG leaders used three criteria to finish an operation. First, the issue of timing: based on experience, they estimated that after three months an operation becomes logistically hard to sustain due to SIG resource limitations; and also unstable, so the balance could fall to whichever side acts first. Second, the exigency if the surveillance groups were discovered and the target could warn the entire network echelon. Third, the consequences if the complete terrorist network echelon were to be discovered. Due to the obstacles and constraints described in Chapter III, and given the dire political situation in which Fujimori's administration was governing, SIG leaders were ordered to "report all relevant information, and ask permission to carry on any

⁷³ Carlos Ivan Degregori, *Shining Path and Counterinsurgency Strategy Since the Arrest of Abimael Guzman*, Institute for Peruvian Studies, 1993, 86.

seizure operation, to the Counter Terrorism Directorate."⁷⁴ However, in order to avoid this procedure, the leaders reported seizures afterwards, arguing that these were emergency situations where the targets discovered the surveillance and would endanger the operation. They did not act as soon as they could to apprehend a mid-level cadre, rationally thinking that this lower-middle level target might lead to more apprehensions.

Decision making capability at the tactical level was given to SIG at the first by superiors. Later when they experienced the pressures of the political moment, SIG leaders took their decision making capability for granted, evaluating the situation on the ground according to their mission.

2. Leadership

In order to control an organization the leaders must have authority and execute effective leadership. Authority is the force for achieving desired outcomes that is prescribed by the formal hierarchy and reporting relationships.⁷⁵ It may be based on rational, traditional or charismatic grounds.⁷⁶ The hierarchical police organization empowers the officers in charge with the authority to command the unit, formally speaking. Their authority is based on rational grounds (legal authority).

On the other hand, the leadership issue depends entirely on the leader's ability to gain it. Jago notes that

Leadership is both, a process and a property. The process of leadership is the use of non-coercive influence to direct and coordinate the activities of the members of an organized group toward the accomplishment of group objectives. As a property,

⁷⁴ Colonel PNP (r) Benedicto Jimenez, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 13, 2005.

⁷⁵ Richard L. Daft, *Essentials of Organization Theory and Design* (Mason, South Western College Publishing, 2003), 178.

⁷⁶ Max Weber, *The Types of Legitimate Domination*, ed. Charles Lemert (Westview Press: Colorado, 1999), 112.

leadership is the set of qualities or characteristics attributed to those who are perceived to successfully employ such influence.⁷⁷

SIG leaders had to be able to not only manage personnel, but also to lead them, to indoctrinate them in the defense of democratic values, and to keep the group cohesive and integrated. Democratic values and correct police procedures were established long before but were not conscientiously applied.

Miyashiro and Jimenez based their leadership on two pillars: First, their theoretical knowledge of SL ideology and their practical experience in combating it; and second, their clean police record and personal background, which allowed them to start the practice of “leading by example.” The two officers came from the DINCOTE ranks and formed the SIG from scratch, according to their own personal characteristics. This was a different situation from that of the delta unit leaders who took charge of already-organized units that were resistant to change. The constituency of SIG was mostly officers. At the time of the Victoria Operation, there were 55 officers out of 82 people in the SIG ranks. The commanders passed down the “lead by example” practice to the leaders in each group to maximize integrity and control. In addition, the leaders intended to extend the unit nationwide if the subversive condition made it necessary, and intended to use these officers to spread SIG’s culture. From the foundation of a new organization, the leaders built a culture that was transmitted to the new recruits during their training in the classroom and later in the field, always absorbing elements in small groups so they would assimilate SIG culture and not bring their foreign culture to distort the SIG culture.

3. Secrecy and Isolation

One can observe the effects of secrecy under two conditions: when members of organizations attempt to keep certain information from those outside the organization (external secrecy) and when members of organizations keep

⁷⁷ Arthur Jago, “Leadership: Perspectives in Theory and Research,” *Management Science* 28, no. 3 (March 1982): 315, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0025-1909%28198203%2928%3A3%3C315%3ALPITAR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-R>. Accessed October 29, 2005.

information from other members (internal secrecy).⁷⁸ In this case study, the reasons for keeping external secrecy were quite clear, due to circumstances explained above, and for obvious security purposes as well. However, as a side effect, external secrecy “strengthens the organization by emphasizing its boundaries as necessary for collective identity. The members shield secret information from those who doesn’t belong to the group, emphasizing mutual allegiance,”⁷⁹ enhancing cohesion, and establishing differences that, in this case, separated SIG members from DINCOTE, their mother unit. On the other hand, inside the organization information was compartmentalized, and agents knew only what was necessary for them to know in regard to their specific operations. Surveillance teams knew about their targets only, to the point that sometimes agents were surprised by running into each other when their targets met. At such times, the Office of Basic Information would disclose the necessary information to both teams.⁸⁰

SIG offices were located within a police facility; however, the leaders isolated the agents physically from other units, at the beginning providing private offices and later occupying an entire floor of the building with restricted access. Isolation was necessary not only for security purposes, but also because the SIG's innovative methods and the early achievements raised jealousy in other units. They called them extraterrestrials or simply crazy,⁸¹ but were always eager to get information from them.

According to the MOI used by SIG, the intelligence and operations phases were a closed cycle that involved individuals from the same organization. They could rotate from function to function, from the surveillance units to the criminal

78 Gary Alan Fine and Lory Holyfield, “Secrecy, Trust, and Dangerous Leisure: Generating Group Cohesion in Voluntary Organizations,” *Social Psychology Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (March 1996): 30, <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0190-2725%28199603%2959%3A1%3C22%3ASTADLG%3E2.0.CO%3B2-5>. Accessed October 17, 2005.

79 Ibid.

80 Major PNP Ruben Zuniga, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 12, 2005.

81 Colonel PNP (r) Benedicto Jimenez, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 13, 2005.

investigations, but they didn't rotate to other units in the police, as would normally occur every two years. SIG agents stayed in SIG; the unit grew only by gaining new officers and agents.

4. Exclusive Dedication

The Peruvian National Police is a divisional organization⁸² subdivided into directorates and regions (as divisions) that are focused on precise tasks. DINCOTE, as one of the divisions, was tasked with the counterterrorism battle in the country, and sub-assigned specific tasks again to subordinate units. As discussed in Chapter III, SIG was assigned the capture of SL's terrorist leaders. However, due to its initial successes, the police chiefs assigned them tasks other than the original, from capturing other MRTA targets, to keeping surveillance on personal enemies.⁸³ SIG performed well, taking apart the MRTA ideological school with its leader Alberto Galvez and nine other cadres on May 31, 1991. But right after that, SIG agreed with the director that they would keep to their original mission. The procedures they developed were taught to their sister units within the DINCOTE, but they were not assigned any more unrelated cases.

Government personnel systems in agencies with far-flung responsibilities generally are biased toward frequent rotation at the expense of lengthy exposure. There is an advantage in having broadly experienced employees but there is also an advantage in having highly expert employees.⁸⁴ In addition, the Peruvian police promotion system requires that officers attend to certain training and grants extra points for special deployments. SIG opted for the approach of having highly expert agents so as to take advantage of their experience. In the same fashion, the SIG command retained all police officers who were recruited and indoctrinated from their entry into SIG up until the day the group was disbanded. Furthermore, the SIG command tried to recruit either fresh agents or

⁸² Daft defines a divisional grouping as one that organizes people according to what the organization produces.

⁸³ Colonel PNP (r) Benedicto Jimenez, interview by author, tape recording, Lima, Peru, August 13, 2005.

⁸⁴ James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), 170.

recommended agents experienced in SL counterterrorism in order to take advantage of their knowledge.

B. LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

1. High Technology vs. Human Intelligence

Hunting terrorist leaders in Third World countries cannot rely heavily on high technology devices that require regular support from retransmitters or advanced support technology. Databases and state records are frequently inexact and unreliable, national identity documents can be counterfeited and high security devices for them are unavailable. This environment requires the use of deep human investigation work to gather information about the suspects.

2. Keep it Small and Focused

Specialized units like SIG need to remain small. The use of direct supervision as a coordination mechanism necessitates keeping it that way, as does the necessity of keeping track of recruitment. Once personnel are recruited they are hard to fire--that would send a message of intolerance of failure, but also would reduce the agents' willingness to take risks and would affect morale. The leaders have to keep tight informal links between themselves and the members.

3. Learning How to Share Information Takes Time

In an ideal situation, intelligence sharing would be the reasonable decision for organizations seeking common final goals. However, in situations like the one that SIG confronted, where professional jealousy is rampant and rivals don't help in the pursuit of objectives but only erect obstacles to success, there was no chance of changing everybody else's cultural values regarding individuality and self-interest in time to take advantage of interagency collaboration. Information handled by SIG might have been useful for other delta units or other branches of service, and vice versa, but sharing information might also affect operational security.

4. Prioritize the Goals at All Levels

For the decision making process the goal of hunting terrorist leaders must remain as paramount for strategic political decision makers, as well as for the operative decision makers. The capture of a terrorist leader with the influence

that Guzman had over his followers, as was demonstrated, could not be downplayed against the best political moment, as SIG leaders feared would happen.

5. Multi-approach Strategy

Manhunting missions in this case study served as a booster that activated other governmental counterterrorism procedures for the defeat of SL in Peru; however, the apprehension of Guzman was not the only factor. Even when the leader was captured, it was necessary to weaken the terrorist organizational structures in rural areas by using the Rondas Campesinas, improving social conditions, and offering an alternative through new legislation for repentant militants.

6. Clean Job, No Shot

The SIG agents' achievement demonstrated the possibility of capturing terrorist leaders based mainly on intelligence, avoiding the use of force. In the aftermath of counterinsurgencies procedures, the common factor is the violation of human rights by state actors and the consequent years-long legal processes that sustain the country's social fractures. Unlike many of their colleagues from other branches, SIG leaders were not charged with human rights abuses.

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