

14. What is the MRTA?

On Dec. 17, an international commando unit of approximately two dozen narco-terrorists, reliably reported to include Chileans and also, possibly, Colombians and Central Americans, seized the residence of the Japanese ambassador in Peru, along with over 500 individuals present at the time for a diplomatic reception, including ambassadors, businessmen, and dozens of high-level Peruvian government and military officials. The terrorists, from the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), are part of a continental narco-terrorist insurgency known as the São Paulo Forum (see appendix 15).

The MRTA, often described as “middle-class” and “urban,” was founded in the early 1980s by members of Peru’s APRA party, and has maintained a close ideological affinity to Cuba. In 1986, the group joined forces with a larger Andean-based narco-terrorist army calling itself the Americas Battalion, which included terrorist groups from Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. Néstor Cerpa Cartolini, the head of the MRTA commando squad occupying the Japanese ambassador’s residence, reportedly trained in Cuba, and fought with the Nicaraguan Sandinistas in 1979-80.

The MRTA today protests that it is not like Peru’s more widely known narco-terrorist army, the Shining Path, but they are in fact sister organizations which have been jointly deployed for years to topple the Peruvian government. Born out of the same international narco-terrorist apparatus directed by London, they both used an “indigenist” profile, they both worked hand-in-glove with drug traffickers, they both used assassinations and bombs to sow terror, and they both targeted for assassination or destruction, all pro-development agencies in any area in which they operate.

Despite its current protestations to the contrary, the MRTA has in the past openly admitted its co-deployment with Shining Path. MRTA chief Víctor Polay told *Cambio*, the MRTA’s weekly, in December 1987, that their differences with Shining Path were merely in “the realm of the ideological struggle,” and “no left-wing organization, even less those who have taken up arms, could be interested in confrontations between themselves.” Until 1990, when they were shut down, the newspapers of both MRTA and Shining Path openly celebrated each others’ terrorist actions.

As for its drug links, note that the MRTA commando unit holding the Japanese residence has demanded that, after their other demands are met, they be taken to a safe haven in the Upper Huallaga region of Peru, the center of coca production and processing, not only in Peru, but worldwide. The MRTA divided control of this region with Shining Path, before the Fujimori government crushed them. The MRTA, which ran

“federations” of coca-growers in the area, is on the record supporting drug legalization, and, today, the MRTA’s regional networks are actively organizing, with Colombia’s FARC and Evo Morales’s group in Bolivia, a nationwide insurgency of coca-growers.

In the period leading up to April 5, 1992, MRTA and Shining Path narco-terrorism had driven Peru to the brink of disintegration, with daily bombings and assassinations creating an environment of terror along with virtual paralysis of the institutions of government. On April 5, President Alberto Fujimori moved to re-take control over the country, decreeing severe war-time measures that enabled the government over the next few years to nearly eliminate the narco-terrorist insurgency. Mass arrests and convictions, with attendant lengthy sentences, of MRTA and Shining Path members, including most of their leaders, nearly succeeded in eliminating those terrorist organizations.

Despite his tremendous success, Fujimori came under brutal international pressure orchestrated out of London—from both the pro-terrorist “human rights” lobby and from various governments, including that of the United States—to order a retreat, in the much-abused name of “democracy.” In the course of, especially, 1995 and 1996, the Fujimori government was gradually softened up by the carrot of “foreign investment” and the stick of “human rights,” into dropping its guard, thus enabling the São Paulo Forum to regroup its forces in Peru, and surrounding nations.

The chronology which follows reveals how the MRTA was rebuilt.

April 5, 1992: President Alberto Fujimori, with the backing of the Armed Forces, declared a national emergency, and decreed a series of measures designed to facilitate a war on terrorism. These included the temporary shutdown of the Congress and judicial system, the unification of military and police under a single anti-terror command, the creation of a cabinet-level national intelligence capability, the establishment of a “faceless judges” court system, and a variety of other anti-terrorist decrees that had been repeatedly torpedoed by the terrorist-dominated Peruvian Congress and courts. The “faceless judge” system was particularly important: until then, the MRTA and Shining Path had turned the courts and jails into a revolving door (nearly 8,500 terrorists had been absolved by the judiciary and released between 1980 and April 1992), by bribing and threatening the judges into line, and simply murdering those who wouldn’t capitulate to the terror.

June 10, 1992: MRTA chief Víctor Polay was arrested for the second time, and sentenced to life imprisonment. He had been jailed before, but “escaped” on July 9, 1990, just weeks prior to the inauguration of President Fujimori, with the suspected complicity of then Peruvian President Alan García, from whose APRA party Polay had split to form the MRTA. Polay and García had been roommates for three years while



All civilized humanity owes a great debt of gratitude to Peru's President Alberto Fujimori, who has stood up to the terrorists and their international controllers.

studying at the Sorbonne in Paris, and Polay's escape was described by more than one reporter as García's inaugural "gift" to Fujimori. Following Polay's 1990 arrest, sections of the APRA party called for the MRTA's legalization, on the model of Colombia's M-19.

Sept. 12, 1992: Shining Path chief Abimael Guzmán was arrested, leading to the virtual beheading of that narco-terrorist organization in the succeeding months.

May 7, 1993: Peru's Gen. Rodolfo Robles Espinoza sent a letter to the media, from asylum in the U.S. embassy in Lima, charging that the Peruvian military are "assassins" involved in death squad activity. Robles demanded the firing of Armed Forces Commander Gen. Nicolás Hermoza, who has led President Fujimori's successful war against terrorism until now. Robles went on to become the darling of the international human rights movement.

Oct. 15, 1993: Peruvian anti-terror police raided an MRTA "people's jail," and freed Peruvian-Japanese businessman Raúl Hiraoka, who had been held captive in shackles for four months in a "tiger cage" too small to stand up in. He was the fourth prominent Peruvian-Japanese businessman to be kidnapped that year, but many of the others were not so lucky: They were mutilated, tortured, or assassinated.

Also discovered was the largest arsenal of weapons ever captured in Peru, ranging from bazookas, grenades, and FAL and AKM rifles, to high-power Russian-made anti-tank rockets. In addition, plans were found for a wave of assassinations and bombings to sabotage an Oct. 31 referendum on Fujimori's new "tough-on-terrorism" Constitution.

Nov. 1, 1995: The MRTA kidnapped former Bolivian planning minister Samuel Doria Medina, in La Paz, Bolivia. One week earlier, two MRTA members had travelled to Uruguay to open up a bank account for receiving the multimillion-dollar ransom from the Doria Medina kidnapping. They were arrested, but then released by a Uruguayan judge, whereupon they sought, and were granted, "political refugee" status by the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNCHR) in Montevideo.

On Dec. 17, Doria was released by his MRTA captors, after paying a ransom of \$2-5 million. There is strong evidence that these funds were used to carry out the current assault on the Japanese ambassador's residence.

Dec. 1, 1995: Peruvian anti-terror police raided an MRTA safehouse in Lima; after a 12-hour shootout, 20 terrorists were captured, including six foreigners. One of these was U.S. citizen Lori Berenson. Plans were discovered suggesting that the Peruvian Congress was to be the target of an MRTA assault, comparable to the November 1985 M-19 attack on the Colombian Justice Palace.

Found in the Lima "bunker" were weapons which had come from the FMLN terrorists of El Salvador, which had entered Peru via a complex route involving the Nicaraguan Sandinista Liberation Movement, the N-26 Movement of Panama, and the Alfaro Vive, Carajo! of Ecuador—all members of the São Paulo Forum. Evidence was also found indicating that many members of the MRTA's "southern command" had been granted "political refugee" status in Bolivia by the Sánchez de Lozada government, through the mediation of the UN High Commission for Refugees, including the kidnapers of Doria Medina.

Other evidence found pointed to MRTA links with Cuba, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, and Chile.

May 17, 1996: Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter issued a letter to the Fujimori government, asking for a new trial for American MRTA terrorist Lori Berenson, who had been sentenced by a military tribunal to life imprisonment for terrorism and treason. Carter protested that her rights had been violated by being denied a civil trial. Carter's letter coincided with a public demand by the London-based Amnesty International for the release of Peru's "political prisoners," and for an end to the country's anti-terrorist legislation. One week later, President Clinton met at the White House with President Fujimori, and urged a review of Berenson's trial proceedings.

May 25, 1996: A prominent member of the Japanese Red Army was captured in Lima, with evidence pointing to

close Red Army political ties to the Shining Path, and plans to financially revive that narco-terrorist organization.

July 27, 1996: One day after a car-bomb was detonated in Lima, killing one and wounding eight passers-by, the United Nations called on the Peruvian government to release from prison some 4,000 terrorists—who are called “political prisoners”—and to review all terrorist convictions by military courts. That same day, the George Soros-funded NGO Human Rights Watch/Americas demanded an end to Peru’s “faceless judges” courts, and an independent review of all those “unjustly” convicted of terrorism.

Sept. 4, 1996: The United Nations announced plans to send a special rapporteur to Peru to investigate the “independence” of its judiciary and to determine whether the human rights of prisoners are being violated.

Dec. 16, 1996: More than 1,000 imprisoned members of MRTA and Shining Path in Lima’s largest prison declared a hunger strike to protest “inhuman” prison conditions.

Dec. 17, 1996: Approximately 20 heavily armed MRTA terrorists blew a hole in the wall at Japanese Ambassador Morihisa Aoki’s home in Lima, and captured around 500 people attending a diplomatic reception. They demanded the release of some 400 MRTA prisoners, safe passage to a region in the drug- and terrorist-infested Upper Huallaga jungle, and the MRTA’s establishment as a political party. They threatened to kill Foreign Minister Francisco Tudela, one of their hostages, unless President Fujimori came to talk with them personally.

Dec. 18, 1996: The former head of Colombia’s narco-terrorist M-19, Antonio Navarro Wolf, told the media: “It is obvious that President Fujimori has to negotiate. . . . It is inexorable; there is no other alternative. . . . In the Peruvian case, President Fujimori has always refused to negotiate, but this seems to be mistaken, and I think this operation of the MRTA is forcing him to accept a negotiation process. . . . He will finally have to accept that the only way to put an end to war in Latin America today is by negotiating.”

Colombia’s narco-terrorist FARC, which is holding 60 soldiers hostage in that country, put out a statement through an international spokesman in Mexico City, hailing the MRTA action as “spectacular and well-planned,” adding: “The MRTA, like all peoples of the world, has every right to fight by all means for basic rights.”

Dec. 19, 1996: The MRTA released four diplomats, to serve as a “communications bridge” to the outside. Among these are British-born Canadian Ambassador Anthony Vincents, who described himself as “a hostage on parole” and who announced that he planned to visit the prison cell of MRTA leader Víctor Polay, to mediate, as the kidnappers had requested. Vincents had directed the anti-terrorist office of the Canadian Foreign Ministry in the early 1990s.

Dec. 19, 1996: Peruvian “terrorism expert” and groupie Carlos Tapia, called for the formation of an international commission to mediate the crisis, made up of three São Paulo

Forum terrorist organizations: El Salvador’s FMLN, Colombia’s M-19, and Guatemala’s URNG.

Dec. 20, 1996: The MRTA commando released another 38 hostages. Among these are pro-terrorist legislator Javier Diez Canseco, who becomes a mouthpiece for the MRTA on the outside. Diez Canseco is a member of the advisory board of the magazine *América Libre*, organ of the São Paulo Forum.

Dec. 21, 1996: In a nationwide TV address, President Fujimori announced: “The captors must hand in their weapons to a committee of guarantors, and facilitate the evacuation of all the hostages, without exception. In this way, we rule out the use of force by the Peruvian state, and then, with full guarantees, we can study a way out.” He absolutely refused to release any MRTA prisoners, a position backed by the entire Peruvian cabinet.

Dec. 22, 1996: The Fujimori government refused to cave in to the narco-terrorists demands, and cut off electricity, water, and phone service to the Japanese compound. In response, the MRTA was forced to release 225 hostages, whom they did not consider strategic to their blackmail tactics.

Dec. 22, 1996: After an initially weak position, pushing for “dialogue” to ensure hostage safety, the Japanese government, through Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, declared: “We think we are at a stage where we shift our demands from the safety of the hostages to the immediate release of the hostages. It is the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement’s turn to respond. Japan supports President Fujimori’s televised message to the nation.”

Dec. 24, 1996: The MRTA commandoes released Uruguay’s ambassador to Peru, after his country struck a bilateral deal with the terrorists, and freed two MRTA prisoners who had been involved in the Doria Medina kidnapping in Bolivia.

Dec. 26, 1996: The terrorists released Guatemala’s ambassador “as a show of recognition for Guatemalans’ efforts for internal reconciliation,” a reference to the peace agreement the Arzú government would sign on Dec. 30 with the narco-terrorist URNG, a São Paulo Forum member. The Guatemalan ambassador emerged to shamelessly praise the MRTA’s motives and tactics.

Dec. 28, 1996: The MRTA terrorists issued a communiqué, after meeting with President Fujimori’s negotiator, Minister of Education Domingo Palermo, in which they focussed on improved prison conditions, and insisted that they should not be called “terrorists” nor compared with Shining Path.

Dec. 30, 1996: Four leaders of the terrorist Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front, the underground armed branch of the Chilean Communist Party, which also participates in the São Paulo Forum, escaped by helicopter from a Santiago prison. Ten days earlier, a spokesman for that group had come out in support of the MRTA action, threatening strikes against Peruvian, Japanese, and U.S. embassies in Chile, should any military action be attempted in Lima to free the hostages from their MRTA captors.

Dec. 31, 1996: Using the opportunity of a press conference inside the Japanese ambassador's residence, the MRTA reiterated their demand that all jailed MRTA members be released. They also issued a statement calling upon "progressive men and women of the world" to pressure the Peruvian government to yield to their demands. Since then, nine more hostages have been released, leaving 74 still captive.

London pulls the strings of Peru's narco-terrorists

London has served as a base of operations for the terrorism against Peru since the 1980s. Repeated official requests by the Peruvian government that these operations, in support of both the MRTA and its sister organization Shining Path, be shut down, have been rejected by the British government, and directly by the royal family itself. At the same time, British agencies and NGOs have orchestrated an international campaign against the Peruvian government and security forces, equating their operations to stop terrorism as, *ipso facto*, violations of human rights.

Great Britain has been the world headquarters for the Revolutionary International Movement (RIM), an international network of narco-terrorist groups centered around Peru's Shining Path, from its founding in 1984. For years, its headquarters and publishing operations were located in the Russell House in Nottingham, named for the late Lord Bertrand Russell; its journal, *A World To Win*, published by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation's Russell Press. The RIM today runs a global campaign from its London headquarters to free jailed Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán, and has established operational ties with the MRTA's "mother," the São Paulo Forum.

Olaechea: Shining Path's man in London

Shining Path maintained separate operational headquarters in London as well, headed by a Peruvian, Adolfo Héctor Olaechea. Olaechea still serves as an official spokesman for Shining Path. At the height of the terrorist war against Peru, he ran international support operations out of London, including generating propaganda and funds.

British government agencies coordinated support for Shining Path with Olaechea. This included the work of the so-called Peru Support Group, identified in 1992 by the Peruvian government as a part of the Shining Path international support network. The Peru Support Group was sponsored by Lord Avebury, president of the British Parliament's Human Rights Commission, and a group of British clerics,

including Michael Campbell-Johnston, England's Jesuit Provincial.

In 1992, London's Channel 4, of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, a dependency of the British Home Office, prepared a "documentary" film supportive of the Shining Path. In an operation facilitated by Olaechea, Channel 4 sent two journalists to Peru, to accompany terrorists in the jungle. Channel 4 broadcast the film on July 10, 1992, despite an official request from the Peruvian government that this not be done. The RIM affiliate in the United States, the Revolutionary Communist Party, then used British Channel 4's propaganda film to raise funds in the United States, in support of Shining Path.

The Peruvian government requested that Olaechea's operations be shut down, and that he be extradited to face terrorist charges in Peru. The British Foreign Office refused, on the grounds of protecting freedom of speech. Olaechea had appealed directly to the British Crown for protection; Shining Path's London representative then began using a note from Buckingham Palace as his letter of introduction. Dated July 25, 1992, it read: "The private secretary is commanded by Her Majesty the Queen to acknowledge the receipt of the letter from Mr. Olaechea, and to say that it has been passed on to the Home Office."

BBC-terrorist link

The British embassy in Peru likewise maintained "unofficial" contacts with Shining Path. One such contact was established by Nicholas Shakespeare, the son of the British ambassador to Peru during 1984-89. Shakespeare, working out of the embassy, prepared several films for British Broadcasting Corp. on Peru during that period, featuring "indigenous" ethnic conflicts and rituals. In 1992, Shakespeare collaborated with BBC foreign affairs editor John Simpson, on a plan to interview Shining Path head Abimael Guzmán, from "clandestinity." The BBC team's contacts with the terrorists were such, that they had secured a commitment for the interview, for Sept. 13, 1992. BBC's plans were foiled, when Peruvian authorities captured Guzmán on Sept. 12, 1992.

Simpson then prepared a "devastating televised report on Peru," broadcast by BBC in December 1992, which attacked Peru's Armed Forces for alleged "corruption" and "violation of human rights" in shutting down the narco-terrorists, after which Lord Avebury called Simpson to testify against Peru, before hearings of the Human Rights Commission of Parliament. Lord Avebury there denounced the military for acting with "impunity," and conducting "witch-hunts" against the Shining Path networks abroad.

An international campaign

Similarly, the human rights organizations, including the British intelligence-created Amnesty International, and George Soros's Human Rights Watch, supported the terrorist offensive against Peru since it began in 1980, by directing