

Is Peru's Amazon the next Chiapas?

Manuel Hidalgo reports on the effort to shatter the region into mini-states, no more than British-run "coca republics" and oil concessions.

Exactly as *EIR* has warned, the British-designed settlement of the border dispute between Peru and Ecuador, signed on Oct. 24, 1998, has already set into motion the next phase of the fragmentation of the nation-states of Ibero-America, shattering them into many mini-states, all under foreign control. On the very day that the border agreement was signed, a separatist movement surfaced in Peru, in the oil-rich northern department of Loreto. The movement declared its intention of splitting Loreto off from Peru, so that it can sign its own treaties with the oil multinationals and foreign mining interests.

Most Western nations appear unconcerned with the threat posed by the Peru-Ecuador border pact, preferring to prattle on about integration, peace, and prosperity. But this "peace" agreement, and the Loreto separatist operation it has spawned, cannot be viewed separately from the de facto creation, during approximately the same time span, of an independent "Coca Republic" in southern Colombia, under the control of the narco-terrorist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Under intense pressure from the international "globalization" mafia, which defends the "right" of the FARC to seize a chunk of Colombian territory, the state voluntarily withdrew its Armed Forces from the region in question. This is the same international mafia which imposed the border agreement on a reluctant Peru and Ecuador. Thus, through these two, apparently different processes, by the close of 1998, two no-man's-lands—territories officially declared beyond the control of the state—were established in South America's Andean region, on both sides of the Ecuadoran border.

The fact that the two territories are located in the heart of cocaine-trafficking territory, cannot be ignored. Despite its great successes against the drug trade, Peru continues to be the world's second largest producer of coca (the raw material from which cocaine is produced), and Loreto continues to be a major transshipment route for drugs out of Peru and into Colombia and Brazil. This traffic now threatens to resort to the waterways—the Amazon and its tributaries—to elude increasingly efficient aerial interdiction, which has been the result of Peru-U.S. cooperation. One can only wonder what

role the two tax-free enclaves along the banks of the Amazon—given to Ecuador as part of the border agreement—will play in this drug-trafficking heartland?

The separatist operation in Loreto provides a useful case study in British strategies against the nation-state. Like the Zapatista terrorist operation in the state of Chiapas in Mexico, the separatist movement in Loreto has been under preparation for years, with the direct participation of many of the same people who built up Chiapas. And just as in Chiapas, the British have coveted Loreto since the last century. Today, the separatist movement there is a microcosm of the more general actions of the British everywhere: the establishment of cross-border parks under the supranational control of ethnic-indigenist and ecologist non-government organizations (NGOs); encouragement of armed insurrection in regions dominated by the drug cartels; campaigns by foreign multinationals, seeking unrestricted access to rich raw materials reserves, such as oil and minerals.

The 'republic of Loreto'

On Oct. 24, the same day the Ecuador-Peru Border Agreement was announced, a week of violent disturbances began in Iquitos, the capital of the Amazonian department of Loreto, leading to six deaths and the burning down of the main public buildings; such incidents had never before occurred in Iquitos. Legal archives, including files on the drug trade, fell victim to the flames.

The so-called Patriotic Front of Loreto headed the opposition to the border agreement, exploiting widespread popular discontent over aspects of the accord which most directly affect local interests. One of these, to be found in the Treaties on Trade and Navigation and Border Integration appended to the accord, involves a series of concessions to Ecuador, such as the establishment of two 150-hectare "centers of manufacturing and trade" along the banks of the Amazon, with tax-exempt status for Ecuadoran companies that establish themselves there—tax exemptions, it should be noted, which the Peruvian government had recently denied to the residents of Loreto. Another was the concession of the historic site of Tiwinza, where many soldiers, including

many from Loreto, had lost their lives defending Peruvian territory.

The Patriotic Front, which includes several provincial and district mayors of Loreto, intensified its petitions in the days following the signing, demanding the status of “autonomous” or “federal” government. In a thinly veiled separatist bid, Iquitos Mayor Jorge Chávez Sibina declared on Oct. 29: “When we speak of an autonomous government, we are talking about exploiting our own resources, without having to go through the ‘bureaucratic window’ in Lima. We could make our own decisions regarding legislation and investment. The interlocutors with foreign investors would be ourselves, and not the central government.”

The Front called a regional strike on Nov. 26 and 27, and announced that it would sabotage the border agreement, among other things, by preventing Ecuadoran installations from being erected. At the same time, the Front announced a department-wide referendum to annul the agreement, and to approve the establishment of an Autonomous Federal State. The illegal referendum took place on Dec. 7, with 97% of the Loreto population rejecting the peace accord with Ecuador. Nearly 98% of the “votes” were in favor of the “immediate installation of an autonomous regional government of Loreto.”

Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori denounced these proponents of separatism as “traitors,” but the newspaper linked to the narco-terrorist São Paulo Forum, *La República*, as well as the São Paulo Forum leader, Congressman Javier Diez Canseco, came out in support of a regional strike, something not seen in the Amazon since the Shining Path and MRTA terrorists used similar “strikes” a decade ago in Huallaga Valley, as a weapon to halt the eradication of coca.

The ‘Samuel Ruiz’ of the Amazon

Although Loreto’s rejection of the border agreement, and the way it was imposed, was no surprise—60% of all Peruvians oppose the accord—what is notable, is how the separatist strategists used the referendum to activate their long-term project, which had been prepared over decades. The key individual in this operation is Father Joaquín García, in many ways the “Samuel Ruiz” of Peru.

On Aug. 26-28, 1992, a conference in Lima co-sponsored by Peru’s Bartoloméa de las Casas Institute, run by Theology of Liberation theoretician Gustavo Gutiérrez, and Mexico’s Diocese of San Cristóbal de las Casas in Chiapas, brought together two key individuals: Zapatista “Commander” Bishop Samuel Ruiz of San Cristóbal, and the Spanish priest from the Augustinian order, Joaquín García, director since the 1970s of the Center for Theological Studies of the Amazon (CETA), headquartered in Iquitos. Joining them, were the principal Peruvian agents trained at London’s psychological warfare center, the Tavistock Institute, led by the Peruvian

psychiatrist Max Hernández.

“The jungle has passed from hand to hand: from Spain, to Great Britain, from Great Britain to centralist and despotic Peru,” Garcí declared in his presentation to the conference, which he titled, “History of a Plundering.” He declared, “Only by assuming this ethno-diversity . . . could the Church feel effectively prophetic in this immense sea of pressures, both from the developed countries and from that which, in the interior of each country, is its herald and ally, the centralism of the ill-named ‘nation-states,’ exclusive and excluding, which through neo-liberalism, seek to homogenize at all cost every kind of difference and to reform a colonial past with a varnish of modernity.”

García has been in charge of providing the historical context and of promoting separatist movements in Loreto for years, along with a variety of communal and social movements, efforts upon which a good part of the Patriotic Front’s autonomist program is now based. García controls nearly all “cultural” activity in the Amazon, because his CETA organization is the main, and possibly the only, publishing house, whose activity includes printing weeklies and complete collections of Amazon history. He also heads the Amazon History Museum, through which a large part of international aid is channeled to the NGOs. García, among others, was named by the Peruvian Foreign Ministry, months before the border agreement with Ecuador was signed, as one of the Loreto representatives privy to the details of the peace talks.

CETA was founded in 1972. From that time, it has been publishing Liberation Theology propaganda, including works by Gustavo Gutiérrez, Leonardo Boff, Pedro Casaldáliga, and other promoters of the São Paulo Forum’s narco-guerrillas.

The main work of CETA and of its twin NGO, the Amazon Center of Anthropology and Practical Application (CAAAP), has been to profile Indian tribes, and thereby create their own “identity,” by synthesizing various dialects into “national languages.” In addition, CETA and CAAAP determined “ethnic territories” based on oral tradition (whose only valid interpreters are the anthropologists of CETA and CAAAP, of course), setting up native communal organizations represented by the so-called Inter-Ethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Jungle (ADESEP).

Since its founding, CETA has worked very closely with the Peruvian networks of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF, né World Wildlife Fund) of Great Britain’s Prince Philip. This has included the publication of the ecological schemes of Mark Dourojeanni, a key WWF figure in Peru and founder of the Peruvian Foundation for Conservation of Nature (FPCN), today called the Nature Foundation. In the 1980s, CETA and CAAAP, in collaboration with WWF networks and with the radical left in Peru, succeeded in creating a climate in which it was impossible for the state

oil company, Petroperú, and its concession-holders, to carry out oil exploration. Curiously enough, in the 1990s, the operations of Royal Dutch Shell, Arco, Occidental and other multinationals, encountered no such obstacles.

British have always coveted the Amazon

The Amazon encompasses 743,094 square kilometers, 61% of that in Peruvian territory, with a population of 2,650,000 (scarcely 10.6% of the total population), and with a population density of only 4 inhabitants per square kilometer. It is made up of the so-called “edge of the jungle”—the eastern slope of the Andes—and the “lower jungle,” or Amazon plain. The Amazon includes Loreto, the departments of Madre de Dios, Amazonas, Ucayali, San Martín, and part of Puno, Cuzco, Pasco, Junín, and Huánuco. Loreto occupies a large part of the lower jungle, an area fed by the Amazon River and its tributaries. Iquitos, on the Amazon River, is Peru’s main river port.

Loreto contains immense oil and forest wealth. It is significantly isolated from the rest of the country: There is not a single highway or railway that joins Iquitos with Lima or other cities on the coast. This is the result of British sabotage of the plans of assassinated Peruvian President Manuel Pardo (1834–1878), and his predecessors, to build inter-oceanic railroads, and to turn the Amazon into the economic “frontier” of the country, with colonization programs backed by the state, similar to failed efforts of the Franciscans in the 18th century.

When the British destroyed the nationalist Peruvian elite through the War of the Pacific (1879), part of the booty handed to the British-owned Peruvian Corporation, was 1 million hectares in the edge-of-the-jungle region where the Perene Colony, a plantation of tea, coffee, and cacao, was founded. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Peruvian Amazon was the “rubber dispensary of British imperialism.” British greed for the Amazon during this period led it to encourage border conflicts between Colombia and Peru over the Putumayo River basin, then in Peruvian territory. Suddenly, a pious outcry was heard in the British Parliament against Peruvian rubber plantation owners, for imposing slavery and exterminating the Indians (first practiced and perfected by the British suppliers).

Between 1896 and 1921, various separatist efforts erupted in Loreto, at a point when the British consul in Iquitos was more influential than the weakened state presence. Historically, British consuls were the promoters of separatist movements in Peru. As one Peruvian historian attests,¹ British consul Belford Hinton Wilson asserted in 1835 that “the best solution would be if Peru were to simply

be divided into two separate republics.” He informed the Duke of Wellington of “the existence of a strong party that favored the division of Peru into two independent republics, that is, the separation of the southern departments of Cuzco, Puno, and Arequipa.”

These were not just Wilson’s opinions: The Peruvian nationalists of the era accused Wilson of controlling President Santa Cruz during the Peru-Bolivia Confederation. Santa Cruz, in fact, had divided Peru into the North and the South states, a situation that was corrected with Santa Cruz’s overthrow. Wilson further secured from Santa Cruz a Free Trade Treaty, which granted the British most favored nation status, thereby delivering the final blow to the incipient Peruvian manufacturing of that time.

Depopulation of the Peruvian Amazon

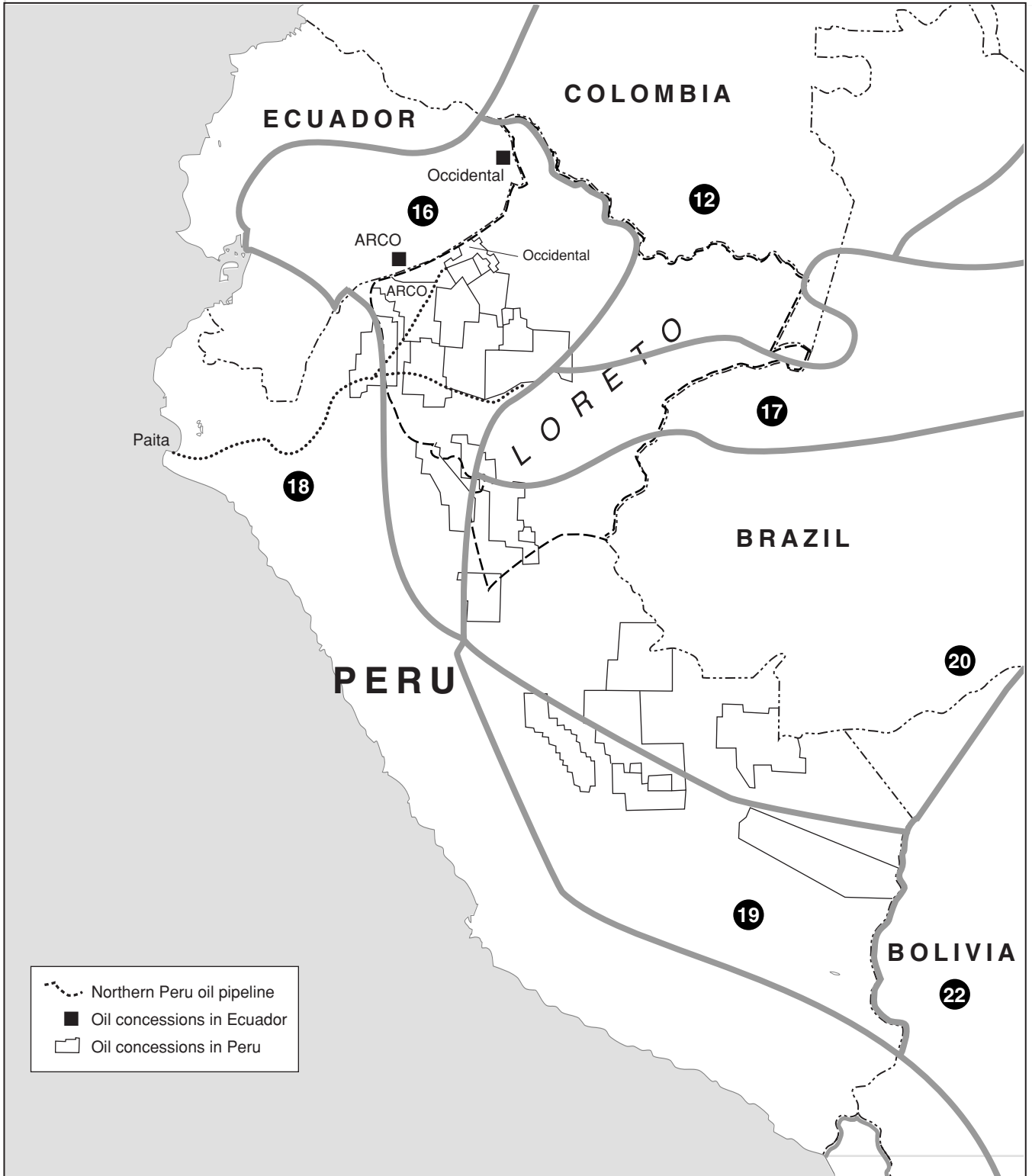
But the British coveted the Amazon for itself—and empty. Thus, after World War II, to prevent Peruvian nationalists from succeeding in reviving the plans of Pardo and his collaborators to populate the Amazon region, London sent Royal Army Maj. Ian R. Grimwood to Peru in 1962. Under the sponsorship of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the recently founded WWF, Grimwood was to design an operation for the creation of strategically situated ecological reserves in both the edge of the jungle and lower Amazon jungle. These reserves—where Peruvians were denied the right to carry out economic activity, or even to establish themselves in the region—led to only two results: to guarantee extensive areas for the cultivation of coca leaf, and to serve as “sanctuaries” where the two vicious narco-terrorist forces which nearly destroyed Peru in the 1980s, Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), built up their forces from the end of the 1970s onward.

In 1974, the networks of the WWF and Cultural Survival (a related international association of anthropologists) imposed brutal depopulation legislation, the so-called Law of Native Communities of the Amazon, which “reserved” vast areas of the Amazon for Indians who still lived in Stone-Age conditions, on the condition that the Indians would not change their “lifestyle,” and thus condemning any who wanted to introduce modern methods. Marc Dourojeanni and anthropologist Stefano Varese, the high-level bureaucrats and driving force behind the law, travelled throughout the Amazon, threatening all opponents.

In 1980, the Peruvian government won the support of the Agency for International Development, an agency of the U.S. State Department, to undertake the colonization of the edge of the jungle, under the Pichis-Palcazu Project, which included construction of another branch of the “Marginal de la Selva” highway (which runs along the edge of the jungle on the eastern flanks of the Andes), part of a route intended to unite Santa Cruz, Bolivia, with the Colombian-Venezuelan border.

1. Celia Wu Brading, *Generales y diplomáticos. Gran Bretaña y el Perú. (1820-1840)* (Lima, Perú: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Fondo Editorial. 1993)

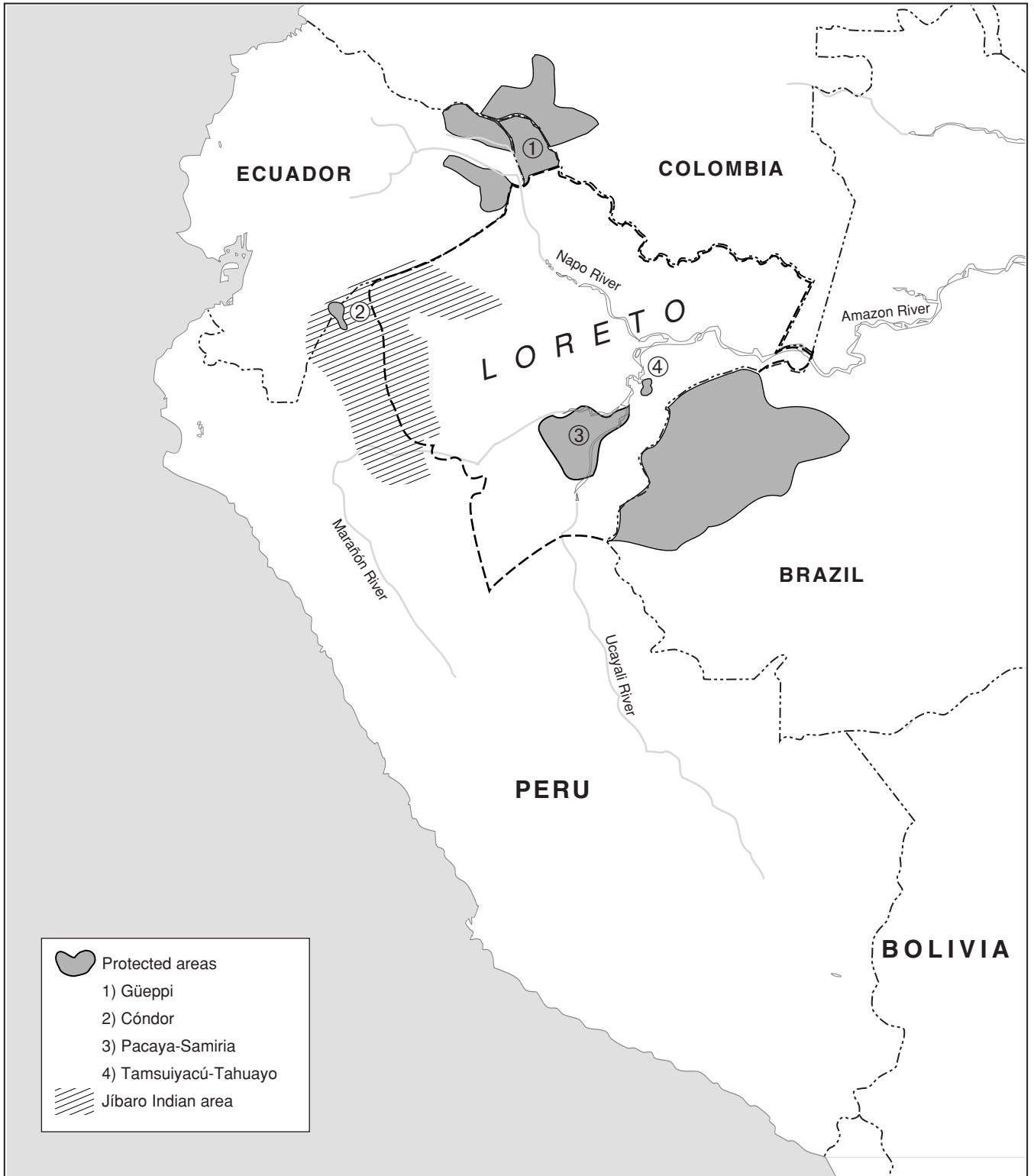
FIGURE 1
Peru's Loreto department: oil and 'Indian nations'



Sources: PeruPetro; EIR.

FIGURE 2

Peru's Loreto department: protected areas



Sources: El Comercio. Lima, Peru; *EIR*.

FIGURE 3

'31 Nations' of the Americas



The new branch of the highway would connect to the national roadway system, and would put a million hectares into cattle and agricultural production, by settling 150,000 people in the area.

Immediately, an international coalition against the project was formed, made up of all the major anthropological-indigenist associations, Cultural Survival, Survival International, and the Gesellschaft für Bedrohte Völker (GfBV, Society for Endangered Peoples), as well as the networks of García's CETA (AIDSESP, CAAAP, and so on).

The project was slashed and rendered useless. Fourteen years later, a local newspaper summed up the result: "Pichis-Palcazu, New Cocaine Paradise."

The result of the anthropologist-indigenist policy was the disappearance of the native populations, victims of malnutrition and diseases like malaria, yellow fever, and dengue; the spread of the drug trade and terrorism, epitomized by Shining Path's enslavement and genocide against the Ashaninka Indians in the Apurímac ecological reserve. The total population of Loreto increased from 294,000 in 1940, when it was primarily rural, to only 736,000 in 1993, when it was largely urban. That is, its population increased two and a half times, during a period when Peru's total population increased 3.22 times.

In the beginning of the 1970s, Petroperú discovered oil in a vast area along the northern bank of the Amazon River, adjacent to the oil reserves in Ecuador which made that country one of South America's leading oil exporters. Shortly thereafter, Peru built the Nor-Peruano oil pipeline along the northern banks of the Amazon and of one of its tributaries, the Marañón River—a pipeline which ended at the Pacific port of Paita. In 1989, a group of Peruvian patriots and associates Lyndon LaRouche proposed construction of a nuclear project at Olmos-Marañón which, had it been carried out, would have allowed for a real peace based on shared and sovereign development of both Peru and Ecuador.

Although incomplete, the Nor-Peruano pipeline was virtually the last serious effort by the Peruvian state to exercise effective sovereignty over the Amazon. In later years, after the foreign debt crisis, Peru abandoned oil exploration.

Together with Petroperú, Occidental Petroleum also became involved in oil exploration north of the Amazon. Since 1992, after the decision to open up the oil industry, and to privatize Petroperú piece by piece, other oil companies from the British Commonwealth, headed by Royal Dutch Shell, and their U.S. partners, took control of oil exploration in the Amazon region (see **Figure 1**). In the fields on the border with Ecuador, north of the Amazon River, one now finds Occidental, Arco, Ranger Oil (Canada), Great Western Ltd., and the British company Enterprise. In the fields they control, Shell, its partner Mobil, and other oil companies have agreed to follow the same policies of depopulation, under the pretext of "respecting" the "rights" of the natives to live in the

Stone Age.²

In November 1996, Survival International and Mobil Oil went so far as to grant an "ethnic territory" to the "unknown tribe," which Lyndon LaRouche characterized at the time as "an act of Anglo-American warfare against Peru." The oil companies offered "direct treaties" to various native communities and "ethnicities," alleging that the oil royalties paid to the "centralist state" were taking too long to make it to the regions. The companies further insisted that they would not build a single highway for the natives in areas under exploration, so as to avoid damaging the environment!

Final phase, the 'Peace Agreement'

As can be seen on the map of "The '31 Nations' of the Americas" (**Figure 3**), the combined maps of Royal Dutch Shell-financed Joel Garreau and Yale University's *Encyclopedia of World Cultures*, British plans entail dividing Peru into three pieces, called Del Perú, Montaña, and Loreto, while another three pieces would pass into the hands of other "nations": Del Caquetá, Amazonas, and Jurua-Purus. The map shows just how far these British separatist plans have already advanced.

This strategy to erase borders and national sovereignty, has been accepted with the Ecuador-Peru Agreement, which, in practice, establishes a demilitarized bi-national park (the so-called "cross-border protected area") in which the Indian populations have no obligation to respect borders, because they are allowed to cross them without any controls whatever (see **Figure 2**). Further, the recently created Reserve Zone of Güeppi, adjacent to the borders with Ecuador and Colombia, and adjacent to two protected zones, one in each country, de facto constitutes a tri-national park.

The bi-national park established in the Condor Mountain range begins to erase the border, ensuring that the immense territory, empty of people but full of oil and other resources, will remain in British hands, administered jointly by Royal Dutch Shell, the WWF, Survival International, etc. Many of the oil exploration and exploitation fields are located along the border with Ecuador. The same situation applies on the Ecuadoran side; one can see the oil fields of the Anglo-American Arco and Occidental in both countries practically adjoining each other. Will there be transborder oil fields also?

In addition to Arco and Occidental, the oil companies BHP (Australia), Elf (France), Murphy (U.S.), and YPF (Argentina) operate in both Ecuador and Peru. Further, the oil pipelines of both countries—through a connection established in the border agreement—could be used, without distinction, by the oil companies located on each side of the border.

2. With regard to Shell's separatist policy in areas under its exploration, see *EIR*, Nov. 29, 1996, "British Oligarchy Makes a Grab for an 'Ashaninka Territory' in Peru," by Manuel Hidalgo.