

by the white coastal government. Reacting to US charges that Peru was soft on drugs for not accepting the aid, Fujimori replied unequivocally,

For us, narco-trafficking is a cancer and we want to eradicate it. But we want the law enforcement aspect to be approached in a global context, taking into consideration the concrete possibilities of the farmers in the present coca zones and the potential to develop economic alternatives.

FUJIMORI TOOK THE INITIATIVE, WEAVING TOGETHER THREE STRAINS OF experience into the "Fujimori doctrine." He was closely advised by Hernando de Soto, the flamboyant director of the private Institute for Liberty and Democracy, and author of a best-seller, *The Other Path*, an analysis of Peru's vast informal, grey-market economy.

First, the coca farmers would no longer be regarded as criminals for growing coca, they would have legal title to the land – an idea well-received in Washington. The second element recognizes the need to get better prices for producers of legal crops by clearing away bureaucratic hassles, as well as the state and oligarchical monopolies on export markets.

This emphasis on the *campesinos* right to participate in crop-substitution came from Iban De Rementaria, an idiosyncratic, shaggy, grey-haired Frenchman, who worked with the United Nations crop-substitution programme in the Upper Huallaga valley. The UN programme encourages *campesinos* to form grassroots organizations based on community production committees. Such organization makes agricultural technical help easier to administer and, more importantly, gives uneducated farmers in a virtually lawless area the strength to defend themselves from unscrupulous leaders of the cooperatives which market their crops.

The third and most influential part of Fujimori's programme comes from General Alberto Arciniega, a full-speed ahead army officer, appointed by Alan Garcia in March 1989 to clean up subversion in the valley. Arciniega settled his headquarters in what he labelled "the worst of the worst," the town of Uchiza, a major hub of subversion and narco-distribution, where he lived in a bare room in a small army post. "If it can be done in Uchiza, it can be done anywhere," he said.

His was a classic counterinsurgency policy. He hit the guerrillas hard, based on intelligence provided by a populace won over to his side in part because he stopped the eradication of coca plants. But he also preached that the *campesinos* had to look to their future. "Coke is a fad," he said; they needed to switch over. He persuaded the UN to do a soil study with some 5,000 farmers and convinced them that cash crops and agro-industry would offset the gradual loss of coca. He also made it clear that when there was an economically viable alternative to coca, the coca fields of those those who did not switch would be subject to eradication.

THE BRAIN TRUST FOR FUJIMORI'S DOCTRINE IS THE INDEPENDENT AUTONOMOUS Commission for Alternative Development charged with designing a drug policy from which to negotiate with the US and other countries interested in contributing to the drug fight. Creating the right mix of economic development, anti-drug and anti-subversion elements in the integrated policy will be a major challenge if Peru hopes for US funding. While the Bush administration has come around to accepting the need for development to offset the coca, most US officials are still dubious about working with the *cocaleros* (coca farmers) on crop substitution for fear of being tainted by association with "criminals" who only want to get the DEA off their backs.

The *cocaleros*, for their part, say they are not against interdiction, but they resent the anti-drug police who they assert steal dollars in house-to-

house searches. The head of the Uchiza *cocaleros*, twenty-three year old Cesar Valdizan, says, "We aren't against [the police] fighting narco-trafficking, but let them fight the *firmas* [the narco-trafficking organizations] ... not the people who produce the coca." An agronomist who has worked with the *cocaleros* agrees; there must be a stick along with the carrot. "You have to have serious, selective, effective law enforcement [against the narcos] parallel to any alternative development."

The *campesinos* also say they are willing to switch crops because they are fed up with the violence. The majority of the long-time residents and the new "coca-rush" immigrants from all over Peru, endure pressures from a bewildering mix of "interests." Where there is coca (and narcos), there are guerrillas – and common thieves posing as guerrillas, as police and as soldiers – US-funded anti-drug police, US-trained anti-subversion police, miserably-paid and corrupt military officers, and perhaps those most abhorred by *campesinos*, national investigative police who routinely rob them, they say.

Corruption may well be the Achilles heel of any drug strategy in Peru. An anti-corruption campaign is set to begin in March to unblock bureaucratic bottlenecks which frustrate people into offering bribes to get through the system. The question is whether the campaign will be able to reach into the security forces. At least one US official has issued a veiled threat to a military officer that the defoliators will

have their way in Peru if nothing is done about the army letting Colombian planes land at municipal airports and protecting them at clandestine airstrips in the valley. At the time of this writing, US participation in a Support Group² to help Peru pay its IMF obligations, was in effect being held hostage to Peru's acting concretely to control the drug traffic at legal airfields.

In the emergency zones awash with coca dollars, the meagre salaries of the police and military literally force them to steal in order to live. The going "bail" for a captured guerrilla in the Huallaga is \$1,000, half goes to the head of the police and the rest to the prosecuting attorney. A top army general makes only \$230 a month, and commanders receive the price of a beer in town to feed one soldier for a day. A few honest military men are deeply concerned about the extent of corruption, "If we do something about corruption, I think we could wage a very effective war against *Sendero*," said one.

FUJIMORI HAS SHOWN HIS GOOD INTENTIONS TO REINSERT PERU INTO THE international financial system, and to insist on a realistic, integrated fight against terrorism and drugs – one that will be expensive by any measure. In July 1989, the Group of Seven Declaration of Paris urged greater emphasis on bilateral and United Nations programmes for the conversion of illicit cultivation in the producing countries. In February 1990, at the meeting of Andean presidents in Cartagena, Colombia, George Bush agreed that developing economic alternatives to coca was important. But virtually nothing has been done to help coca farmers.

The international community will have to summon its own political will to look honestly at the complexity of Peru's symbiotic scourges of coca, subversion and corruption and decide whether it is worth the risk to go beyond symbolism and lend a significant hand – in time. □

2. According to the Peruvian embassy in Ottawa, industrialized countries are coming together to raise the \$800 million bridge loan necessary for Peru's eligibility for further IMF loans. The US, Canada, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Spain are said to be part of this incipient group, the UK having withdrawn.



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