

Andean Report by Valerie Rush

García battles the banking oligarchy

Peru's President strives to develop an educated citizenry to defeat the terrorists and the drug bankers.

The narco-bankers have escalated their offensive against Peruvian President Alan García's bank nationalization campaign, with the Aug. 29 murder of Rodrigo Franco, the 30-year-old friend of the President and head of the state agency for food purchasing and distribution, ENCI. Franco was to have been named the head of the central bank of Peru, a post vacant since June, and would have played a key role in García's battle with the narco-banks.

At Franco's funeral, García declared, "I feel like I have aged 10 years in a single day." He lamented the loss of the man he viewed as "a younger brother." But he also blasted those traitors inside the Congress and his own APRA party who have favored an amnesty for jailed terrorists, currently under debate in the Peruvian legislature: "Those votes which defend death and violence are blood-stained. There is no difference between the person who recruits terrorists, and the terrorists who kill."

Franco's murder follows the attempted assassination Aug. 6 of one of García's closest advisers, Daniel Carbonetto. Carbonetto said at the time that he had received many death threats accusing him of being "the father of the nationalization," and that "those who tried to assassinate me at my residence are rightist terrorist groups which are obeying minority interests . . . affected by the recent economic measures."

There has also been an assassina-

tion attempt against the head of Minero Peru, aborted by security guards. The nephew of Communications Minister Mercedes Cabanillas was murdered, reportedly for his family connections. While most of these terrorist acts have been attributed to the "leftist" guerrillas, it is clear that the "right" narco-bankers and the "left" narco-terrorists have joined forces—were they ever separate.

But García has escalated too. The President's efforts to mobilize the Peruvian population have featured mass rallies around the country, in which García has appealed to each Peruvian to defend the nation.

In the small city of Tacna, on the Chilean border, the President developed the paradigms of Christianity and patriotism, which "are contained in the single criterion of giving and sacrifice. While the hero decides at a moment to give his life, the patriot decides throughout his life to live giving."

In an address to a mass demonstration in the Lima district of Comas, García answered those who asked him why he tolerated the insults of the enemy: "I allow this to test you, to find out your degree of awareness, so you can hear other voices and opinions, so you will learn to think for yourself, so you will not follow someone just because of his good looks or support a party because of its members. . . .

"I want to teach; I want to educate. Making a revolution is not only changing bank owners. Making a rev-

olution is creating something in the mind of each Peruvian. But this must be done freely. . . . People must hear what the bankers, lawyers, and writers have to say . . . listen and decide on their own. . . . That is what this revolution is all about."

In an address in the northern port of Chimbote, García declared, "I cannot be satisfied with the usual works, improvements, or expansions. I cannot be satisfied with resolving problems . . . through mere growth, because Peru would be growing without change. We want Peru to grow with transformation. . . . Revolution is not only to become independent from abroad. . . . We must also carry out a domestic revolution. . . . We need an aware people with a great destiny who will write their real history."

García also ridiculed the narco-bankers: "They say this is an attack on property, and I ask: What property? The majority of Peru's people do not have property. . . . The bankers also say this is totalitarianism, and there is a lack of freedom. . . . What freedom do the unemployed have? What freedom does the resident of the poor districts of Chimbote have? What freedom from misery does the unemployed mother have? What freedom are we discussing? . . .

"There are other countries where the banks were also nationalized and the wealth better distributed, but they did so without a free press, political parties, communications media, and free unions. That doesn't count. We want justice without sacrificing freedom. . . . This can be achieved by raising the people's awareness. They have their millions and their television campaigns. I have the plazas, the people. . . . Because we have the conscience of the people—which is what frightens the powerful the most—we can afford the luxury of carrying out this revolution in democracy."