

Peru's Fujimori wins election, but not freedom from foreign pressure

by Gretchen Small

Despite the combined opposition of the Shining Path terrorists and the three political parties that formerly were Peru's largest, elections for a Constituent Assembly were held on Nov. 22 without a hitch. Peruvian voters turned out to give President Alberto Fujimori's supporters a solid majority in the new Assembly—providing the President with a clear mandate to continue his strategy of total war against the Shining Path terrorists, even in the face of vicious opposition by the U.S. government, the Organization of American States (OAS), Japan, and Europe.

Since April 5, when President Fujimori pushed aside cowardly politicians who refused to allow a war on terrorism, the Anglo-American Establishment has used Peru as its test case, along with Haiti, for imposing the doctrine of limited sovereignty on the Americas, transforming the OAS in the process into a policing mechanism for supranational rule carried out in the name of "democracy." The fact that Fujimori now enjoys a *democratic* mandate has not stopped the supranational schemers, however. U.S. officials and Clinton advisers have already announced that economic sanctions and OAS "supervision" of Peru's political life will continue.

There was almost a tone of disappointment in the recognition that Fujimori had won, fair and square. Predictions by Peru's APRA party and the Venezuelan government, that the Peruvian government planned to win the election through fraud, were proven false. The 250 foreign observers brought in by the OAS to oversee the vote, said it was free of all but minor irregularities.

Fujimori's slate won an easy 43-seat majority of the 80-man Assembly, with the Popular Christian Party coming in a distant second at eight seats, and the rest divided among some seven new coalitions and parties. Voters ignored appeals by the three big opponents—the APRA, led by former President Alan García, former President Fernando Belaúnde Terry's Popular Action party, and Mario Vargas Llosa's Liberty Movement—to boycott the elections or leave their ballots blank or spoiled; the percentage of invalid ballots and abstentionism was only 4% higher than it had been in previous elections.

Likewise, Shining Path proved unable to sustain a major offensive to disrupt the elections as threatened. Although five people died in a car bombing in Lima on Nov. 17, the capture several days before the election of eight members of the Lima Metropolitan Committee with plans for election day bombing

attacks in hand, helped keep terrorism to a relative minimum. Nothing demonstrates better that the Fujimori government has reestablished the authority of the Peruvian state where Shining Path used to reign supreme, than the vote in Ayacucho, the province where Shining Path began operations and which it had dominated for years. This year, voter turnout was high, despite Shining Path's threats to kill any who voted.

Like Iraq, are sanctions to be permanent?

The Fujimori government organized the elections for the new Assembly last May, after the Bush administration arm-twisted the OAS, Europe, and Japan into joining the United States in an economic boycott of Peru until it "restored democracy." The United States imposed the sanctions after Fujimori closed Congress and ordered the judiciary cleaned out because those institutions refused to allow measures of war to be taken against Shining Path. The Peruvian government has since proven in spades that those drastic measures were necessary, putting the murderous killers on the run for the first time and arresting top leaders.

Thinking it could placate Washington by holding elections, especially if the OAS was invited to monitor them, the Fujimori government made clear it now expects these nations to normalize relations with Peru. "We call upon the international community" to drop the economic sanctions after the elections, "because the world can see . . . real democracy," President Fujimori stated in an interview broadcast by Cable News Network the day before the election. He reminded viewers that his government has done more to clean up human rights abuses inside Peru than any previous government, by its campaign to crush Shining Path—the greatest violator of human rights in Peru.

The day after the election, the answer came back from U.S. officials and Clinton advisers alike: Good work, boys, but not enough. *Promises* of aid have been renewed, but with new conditions that must be met first, including acceptance of *increased* supranational controls over Peruvian affairs.

In Washington, a senior State Department official, identified by the *Washington Times* as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South America Phillip McLean, gave a background briefing on Peru on Nov. 23. He called the elections "an important first step back toward fully constitutional government," and promised that the United States "will now look at the next steps in the economic . . . assistance that is

needed." But not right away, he quickly added. He specified that "President Fujimori must follow through on his guarantees that the congress will be autonomous and . . . independent," and that new "institutions" must be established to "guarantee" that the Peruvian government does not violate human rights.

In Lima, U.S. Ambassador to the OAS Luigi Einaudi told the press that President Bush wants to renew aid based on democracy, but cautioned that "democracy is not like electricity, you don't just turn it on and there it is. We are talking about a long process."

Einaudi, in Lima with the OAS election team, is both the Bush administration's pointman for the OAS "reform" project, and an old "Peru hand," going back to his days as the Rand Corporation's expert on the Peruvian military. Einaudi flaunted how he had used his junket to Peru to meddle in military affairs—less than one week after a failed coup attempt against the government. Pressed by journalists if he had met with any military involved in the coup, Einaudi answered, "a good embassy speaks with many people in periods of conflict," adding that he had used the elections to contact military officers "from the rank of cadets, majors, captains to commanders. . . . I have a certain history and interest in the military institutions of this country," he reminded people.

The OAS game

Back in Washington, Clinton adviser Richard Feinberg and Peter Hakim, both leading officials of the Trilateral Commission-run Inter-American Dialogue, began a drumbeat for escalated OAS controls over Peru. In an opinion column published in the *Christian Science Monitor* on Nov. 24, Feinberg and Hakim argued that Clinton must make every effort to make the OAS "an effective instrument for the collective defense of democratic government," and the Peru and Haiti crises are how to accomplish this. They called for the OAS to keep a mission in Peru long after the elections are over, "to monitor the government's respect for political freedom and human rights, and its handling of upcoming municipal and provincial elections." They specified that "the mission should not be a passive observer of events," and suggested a variety of ways it should intervene in Peruvian affairs.

The core of the revamped OAS should be the creation of a "Inter-American Commission on Democracy, modeled after the Commission on Human Rights," with a mandate for action, the Dialogue spokesmen argued. That is exactly the formula put forward by Clinton adviser Robert Pastor in the latest issue of *Foreign Policy*. The article by Pastor—who gained notoriety during the Carter administration as the official most to blame, as head of the Latin America desk at the National Security Council, for putting the Sandinistas in power in Nicaragua—provides one of the most explicit outlines of the supranational OAS project behind the war on Peru yet published.

Documentation

The following are excerpts from the article "The Latin American Option" authored by Robert A. Pastor. It was published in the Fall 1992 edition of Foreign Policy.

In recent years, the OAS and ad hoc groups like the Contadora Group have sought answers to individual problems. A more coherent strategy—multilateral in approach, but with strong U.S. leadership—will be essential to further progress. . . .

A new energized approach should aim first to negotiate general principles: to ensure the security of individual countries and the region; to guarantee democracy and defend human rights. . . . Then, each member state must accept specific operational goals and a mechanism for monitoring compliance. . . .

Sending military advisers to the Andes, however, has not been productive, and it could be self-defeating if it provokes a nationalistic reaction. What is needed is an OAS drug force. The OAS must overcome its reluctance to consider military options, even those against drug traffickers or in supervision of a cease-fire. The U.N. should be used when the OAS hesitates. . . .

A second security initiative should aim to reduce arms purchases and the size of the militaries in all countries in the Americas. . . . Robert McNamara, former president of the World Bank, has proposed an across-the-board 50% reduction in arms purchases by all developing countries by the year 2000. . . .

To begin the process, an independent center should be established with the authority to compile detailed information on all arms sales and militaries throughout the hemisphere. . . . The OAS would then review each government's plan, monitor reductions, and institute sanctions against violators. . . .

Using the human rights model, private, nonpartisan National Committees for Democracy should be established, made of distinguished leaders from each country. Such committees would connect through an international nongovernmental network to issue warnings when democracy seemed in jeopardy. . . .

On the international level, the OAS should legislate an automatic, escalatory sequence of sanctions, beginning with diplomatic isolation and moving to the cessation of bilateral and multilateral aid programs, the freezing of financial assets, a trade embargo enforced by the navies of OAS members, and, finally, after an appropriate period of time, bringing in an inter-American peace force to restore democracy and give it some stability during a dangerous transition. . . .

Democracy, security and development . . . all pose the same awkward questions for the hemisphere. Will countries continue to pursue those goals solely within the bounds of a narrow definition of their sovereignty, even at the cost of chronic failure, or will they define a new system of collective obligations and responsibilities?