

Huaycán self-managing urban community: may hope be realized

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SUMMARY: *This paper tells the story of how the settlement of Huaycán in Lima (Peru) came into existence and how, from the outset, when the land invasion which was to form the settlement was first organized, the organizers sought to achieve a democratic, self-managed community. The author, who was one of the community leaders involved in the formation and development of Huaycán, also describes the complex political struggles they faced, especially with Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) but also with other political factions and parties. The article describes how in successive people's congresses they achieved support for self-management and development and recounts the marches into Lima to demand that the politicians keep their promises. It also describes the improvements in basic infrastructure and services achieved in Huaycán with support from local, national and international sources.*

Pedro Arévalo T. gave up his studies in medicine in the 1970s to join Vanguardia Revolucionaria, a Peruvian left-wing political movement which, unlike many other such groups, was not characterized by their pro-Soviet or pro-Chinese leanings. He worked in Lima's low-income settlements and was a founder of the Federación de Pueblos Jóvenes y Urbanizaciones Populares, an umbrella organization for newly created low-income settlements in Lima. As he describes in this article, he was a founder of Huaycán, a settlement for population displaced from nearby poor settlements in Lima and was later elected to Huaycán's leadership. In 1996, he was forced to leave his family and seek exile in Norway because of threats to his life by Sendero

I. INTRODUCTION

THIS ARTICLE IS a contribution to taking stock of the significance of the great collective experiment exemplified in the construction of the self-managing urban community of Huaycán, "City of Hope". Because this is the first paper to do so, it will generate debate and will serve as a point of departure for future leaders. It is very important to forge the identity of Lima, our city, which has ancestral roots in our distant Inca past and which, within a few years, has become an example of solidarity, development and peace.

I write this personal testimony from exile. As a result of the assassination of our heroic leader, Pascuala Rosado (whose central role is described in this paper) and of the death threats we received from the *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) terrorist movement, various leaders from Huaycán have been forced to leave Peru. This paper was written to help contribute towards peace and development among our people, in opposition to the preaching of destruction and death by Shining Path.

Luminoso (Shining Path), a Maoist political movement active in Peru's rural areas and poorer urban settlements since the 1970s and known internationally for their often bloody retaliatory actions against those who oppose them. They are believed to be responsible for the murder of Huaycán's former mayor, Mrs Pascuala Rosado, to whose memory he dedicates this essay.

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1. *Izquierda Unida* (United Left) was a political alliance that developed at the beginning of the 1980s and which included the following political parties: *Partido Comunista Peruano* (pro Moscow); *Partido Socialista Revolucionario* (followers of General Juan Velasco Alvarado, President of Peru between 1965 and 1975); *Frente Obrero, Campesino y de Estudiantes del Peru* (FOCEP) - the Front of Workers, Peasants and Students; *Partido Comunista Revolucionario*; *Partido Unificado Mariateguista*; and the *Socialista no Partidarizados* (Socialists

II. HUAYCÁN BEFORE THE OCCUPATION OF THE GORGE

IN NOVEMBER 1983, Alfonso Barrantes Lingán was elected Mayor of Lima for the period January 1984-December 1986, as leader of the United Left (*Izquierda Unida*), a coalition of political parties created in the early 1980s.⁽¹⁾ For many observers, this was to be a test of whether this political grouping could prove an alternative force to the traditional parties and to Shining Path. To govern Lima, the capital city and much the largest city in Peru, was a great challenge; for the first time the Left in Peru would have ambitious social, political and economic responsibilities.

One of the great problems from which Peruvian society suffers is the shortage of housing. This is particularly acute in Lima whose population has grown tenfold since 1940. It had just 640,000 inhabitants in 1940, 4.8 million in 1981, 5.4 million in 1985 and 6.5 million by the mid-1990s. The capital has consistently been the destination of migrants from the interior of the country, particularly from the Andean regions. The poverty and the government's abandonment of these areas (for instance Ayacucho, Huancaavelica and Apurímac) have driven the inhabitants to leave their small fields of crops and their homes. With no roads, no schools and no medical care, they had to find a place with better living conditions. This situation became more acute due to the terrorist activities of Shining Path who tried to win supporters by exploiting the critical situation in the countryside. Shining Path's earliest activities date from the end of 1979. The rural population opposed its totalitarian conceptions, its "revolution". That is why Shining Path chose to assassinate its district authorities and, by force and under threat of death, swelled the ranks of its "combatants" with young rural dwellers.

Migration to Lima increased significantly in the decade 1980 to 1990. According to one estimate,⁽²⁾ there were some 600,000 persons displaced by terrorist actions in Peru and 135,000 of these went to Lima; as such, Lima was second only to Ayacucho (which had 240,000 displaced persons). With such a large-scale influx, the problems for Lima's local authority increased. The most urgent problems were the poor housing conditions and the lack of services. In the absence of government programmes providing affordable land or housing, land invasions became very common, especially in the 1980s. Families that needed a land site for housing organized themselves into housing associations or people's associations before invading the lands. Generally, a small group took the initiative, sought people to take part, and registered those who were to take part in the occupation of the chosen site. This provided the social context for the implementation of the Special Huaycán housing programme as a pilot experiment by the municipal government of Metropolitan Lima.

The Huaycán self-managing urban community is located at the 16.5 kilometre point on the Central Highway in the district of Ate-Vitarte, department of Lima (See Map 1). It is on the left

without a political party) who were not affiliated to any of the above political parties but sympathized with the Left and supported a less radical position put forward by the candidate for mayor of Lima in 1983, Dr. Alfonso Barrantes Lingán. When the United Left alliance broke, two parties were established: *La Izquierda Unida* with the radicals of the Left including the Peruvian Communist Party, PUM, FOCEP and UNIR; and the Democratic Left united as *Izquierda Socialistas* and made up of the *Partido Socialista Revolucionario*, *Partido Comunista Revolucionario*, part of the militants from PUM and by the *Socialistas no Partidarizados*.

2. Estimate by the NGO CEPRODEP (The Centre for Promotion and Development).

3. *Asociacion de Pobladores* Andrés Avelino Cáceres - named after the settlement in which they lived, *Asentamiento Humano* Andrés Avelino Cáceres. Most of the organizers of the Andres Avelino Cáceres Association were from the *Socialistas no Partidarizados*.

4. The architects Eduardo Figari, Miguel Angel Llona, Jorge Ruiz de Somocurcio and Hildebrando Castro Pozo. Eduardo Figari was later to become executive secretary of Huaycán's management committee.

5. *Comunidad Campesina de Llanavilla*.

6. *Partido Unificado Mariateguista* - PUM.

7. *Patria Roja*.

bank of the River Rimac. The Huaycán gorge marks the start of the foothills of the Andes, crossed by the Central Highway which links Lima on the coast with the Andes and the central forests. Huaycán owes its name to the fact that, in Peru, the avalanches of water, stone and mud which descend from the steep hills and rocks are called *huaicos* (alluvium). This gorge had once been an area of alluvia and hence the name Huaycán. The area contains an Inca archaeological cultural centre which, under the Inca Empire (thirteenth to sixteenth centuries A.D.), had been a food store supplying the administrative hierarchy which lived in the palaces of the neighbouring areas.

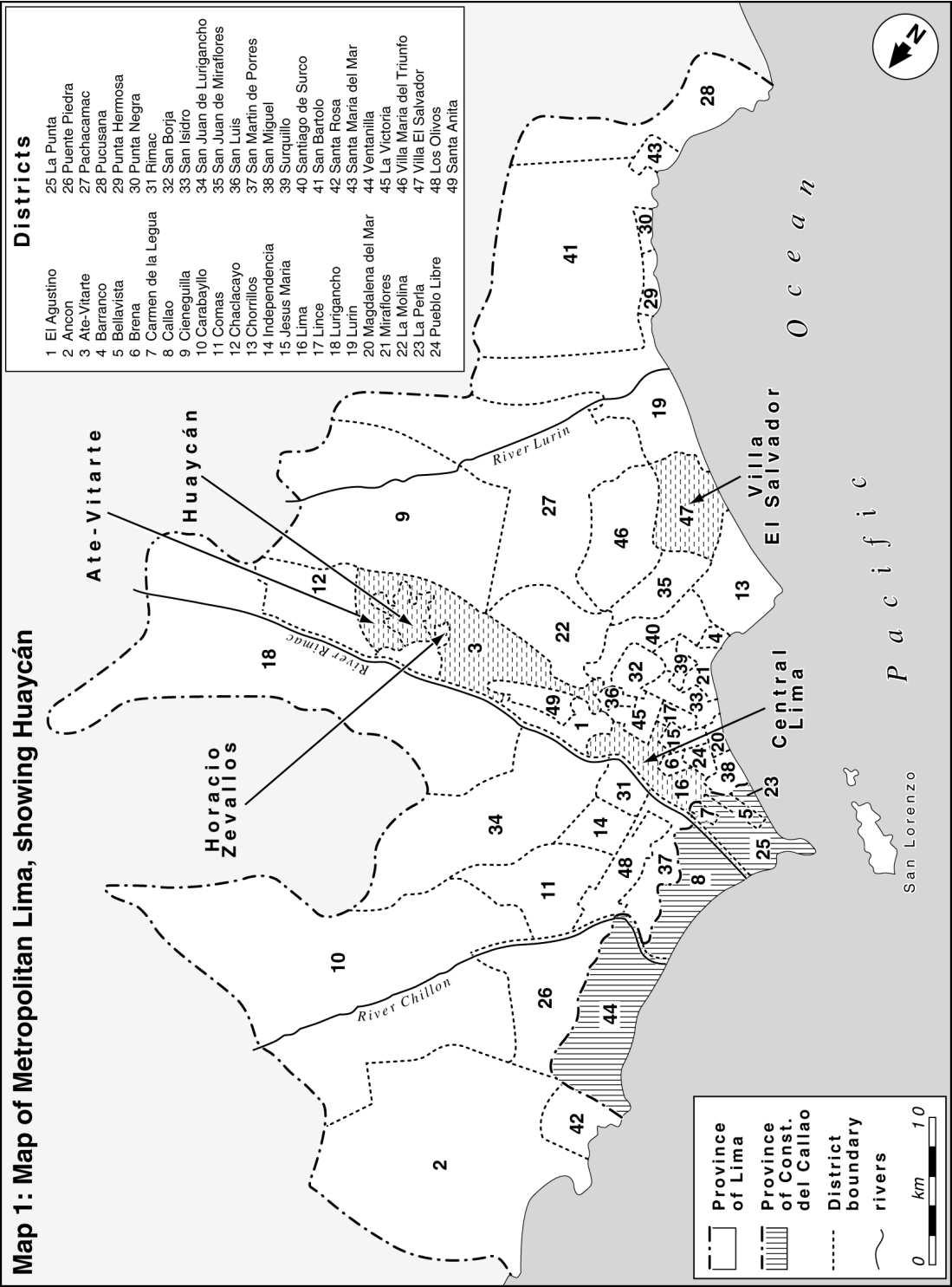
Like many other low-income settlements in Lima's poorer districts, Huaycán was the result of the desperate need for land and accommodation by a group of poor families. These families came together in the Andrés Avelino Cáceres association⁽³⁾ which was charged with identifying a suitable vacant land site, finding and registering additional families who wanted to take part and organizing the process of taking over the land.

The design and execution of the special Huaycán housing programme was to be carried out at two levels: by the municipal authority and by grassroots organizations. At the municipal level, the elected mayor entrusted the technical and social preparation of this programme to his closest colleagues,⁽⁴⁾ with backing from IDEAS, a non-government organization specializing in architectural design and town planning. "Homes for the People with Technological Innovation" was the slogan of the first and only pamphlet circulated about the programme. The most important political decision was the one taken with regard to the associations and cooperatives which, for years, had been managing their lands in this gorge and which were made up of mainly middle-class members.

At grassroots level, the most important aspect for the execution of the project was the work organized by the United Left militants of the Ate Vitarte district who were the driving force behind the shaping of the Andrés Avelino Cáceres association, beginning in the first half of 1983. With a main office in Vitarte, registration of future programme members began. In between, there existed the legal guarantee of the handing over of lands since the municipality of Metropolitan Lima was managing the awarding of these.

On July 15, 1984, members from the association assembled. But there was one obstacle: the unfounded claims of land ownership by the Poppe family, important landowners in the area and the Mafia-style leaders of the Llanavilla rural community.⁽⁵⁾ The core leadership of the association told applicants about possible international support to provide infrastructure for the gorge. Alfonso Gutiérrez C. was the member who headed this organization and which enrolled more than 5,000 inhabitants and organized them into sectors according to the district from which they came. Most came from Ate Vitarte.

As it was possible to enrol new local organizations, in order to be considered for the first 15,000 building sites in the first stage, two other political parties, the Mariateguista Unified Party⁽⁶⁾ and the Red Fatherland,⁽⁷⁾ hurried to ensure the registration of their



8. *Acción Popular Revolucionaria Americana* (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance; APRA). APRA won the national elections in 1985 and formed the government under President Alan García until 1990.

own members into the programme, although they operated along the lines of traditional political patronage. Both were members of the United Left Alliance, with backing from their respective district municipalities which they controlled. Their objective was to block possible political control of the new Andrés Avelino Cáceres association by the independent socialists or the supporters of Alfonso Barrantes, the Mayor of Lima.

Another party, APRA,⁽⁸⁾ chose to infiltrate these organizations and exploited the little control that had been exercised. In contrast, the Shining Path played a double game. On the one hand it presented the registration of its own local organization and, on the other, its members infiltrated the organization. This was a practice which it would implement in other community associations. In the United Left, we were aware of the penetration by Shining Path but we sought a conciliation among different ideologies; our definition was weak and we managed only to rate them as "childish" and, at that time, to consider them as strategic allies.

Faced with the desire for control by some of the parties of the United Left, the leaders of the Andrés Avelino Cáceres association decided to occupy the uncultivated gorge of Huaycán, to protect it from what would probably be anarchic invasions. This task was taken on by an élite security group from the association who would eventually gain official support from Lima's metropolitan authority. The latter came up with the idea of informing the other associations and cooperatives so that they would also cooperate in the task. A few days before the date set for the invasion, the José Carlos Mariátegui association (which also grouped together homeless families), controlled by the Mariateguista Unified Party, would also be told of the agreement that had been formed.

III. ESTABLISHING THE SETTLEMENT AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF A SINGLE LOCAL ORGANIZATION

THOSE OF US who were founder-leaders feel great nostalgia when we recall the moments when the settlement was formed - moments that were lived so intensely. For many political cadres, the construction of the nucleus of a socialist society within the capitalist state was becoming a reality. For the experts from the urban programme, the settlement offered the possibility of experimenting with new concepts of urban development and planning and new construction techniques. However, these aspirations did not amount to a well-defined political project: among the young officials of the Left, the old theses of authoritarian communism still predominated. The positions of democratic and renewed socialism were still to find fertile ground.

Only two parties had a clear vision. The first was APRA, whose hidden cadres gradually began to emerge and whose objective was to win the presidential elections of 1985, after 60 years of frustrated attempts. The second was Shining Path, which was advancing in its strategy to surround Lima. Its aim was to pro-

voke a military confrontation with popular support. Its double game was to appear publicly as a class based movement and to infiltrate the United Left to win over the most radical and up-right officials with what they were proclaiming ("... power is born from the gun") and this was proving successful.

The party in power at the time (*Acción Popular* - Popular Action [1980-85]) and the armed forces kept in place the archaic anti-subversive strategy used in 1965 against the guerillas of the time based on the thesis that all those in the popular sectors were communists and subversives. No attention was given to intelligence work and corruption was widespread.

IV. THE FOUNDATION OF A TOWN

ON 15 JULY 1984, the seizure of the gorge of Huaycán took place. The area consists of 456 hectares of waste land situated in the lower part of a chain of hills which rise as high as 1,200 metres above sea level. The land located at an altitude of 537-820 metres above sea level is suitable for urban development but elsewhere the slopes are too steep. With the occupation of the lands began an unforgettable stage of intense activity for the leadership. The objective was to ensure people's ordered entry onto what the newspapers of the day described as "the future promised land". Organizing the subsistence of thousands of settlers on a stony site was an enormous task.

The discipline and solidarity inherited from our ancestors was obvious. The security committees carefully controlled the land occupation. A soup kitchen was set up for each sector and the family took possession of their building sites, day after day. The attempt at control by the Red Fatherland Party was a great danger to the organized seizure of the lands. This was aggravated by the control which the most recalcitrant section of the United Left, the Bolshevik UNIR,⁽⁹⁾ exercised over the leadership of the Zeballos Township,⁽¹⁰⁾ located only 500 metres away to the west of Huaycán. The efforts at all levels to install the members of this township within the gorge in an orderly way were exhausted. The inevitable confrontation occurred about one month after the land seizure. Tragically, it was a confrontation of people against people. Stones, small firearms and home-made weapons, even pellets, sticks of dynamite and Molotov cocktails were used everywhere.

The neighbouring settlement of Zeballos obtained reinforcements from the "shock force" employed and controlled by Red Fatherland and drawn from the universities and got logistical support from the neighbouring municipality of Chaclacayo, whose Mayor and municipal council were present at the confrontation. Huaycán had not planned to bring in any reinforcements since it trusted its numerical superiority and strategic location. However, faced with such a deployment it had no alternative but to resort to the military support of the "class warfare" party, Shining Path, who exploited the moment to initiate their training programme.

In the end, the attack was repelled and people from the neigh-

9. *Union Nacional de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (National Union of the Revolutionary Left).

10. A.J. Horacio Zeballos.

11. Jaime Zubieta and Pipa Toscano.

bouring settlement sited themselves in an adjoining gorge. Shortly after that, these people would suffer, as in the saying "Whoever takes the sword shall perish by the sword". To this day, the people of A.H. Horacio Zeballos have been divided by political conflicts under two leaderships. The first tragic outcome of this internal conflict was the assassination of the two general secretaries involved in the dispute;⁽¹¹⁾ the second was that the Bolshevik UNIR faction joined the Shining Path.

V. THE WORK OF HUAYCÁN'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

a. The First Congress of Huaycán

CREATED BY A mayoral resolution of the municipality of Lima in May 1984, Huaycán's management committee was a joint management body, bringing together the executive secretary of this programme, Eduardo Figari, and the principal leaders of the townships, associations and cooperatives. Once its regulations were approved, its management board was constituted, chaired by the member David Porras who represented the most vigorous association, Andrés Avelino Cáceres.

The topographical and geomorphological studies, and the establishment of the town were financed through programme membership fees and a grant from the municipality of Lima. The production of cut stone for the paving of streets, the manufacture of cement blocks and the construction of model houses were among the other activities that were initiated.

The development of the township was organized around "communal housing groups" (*Unidades Comunes de Vivienda* - UCV) which, on average, measured one hectare. Each had 60 housing plots of 90 square metres situated and the design made provision for streets, parks and jointly owned communal premises. An average of 20 communal housing groups made up one zone, each zone thus comprising around 1,200 housing plots. At present, Huaycán has 20 such zones. These zones became the core of local organization and they are retained as the democratic axis and the institution within which community leaders emerge.

The management committee met each week with representatives from the communal housing groups and delegates from the founding institutions to review progress and to take measures in accordance with the previously agreed work plan. There was also a support commission which included non-governmental organizations, university staff and other experts. Their work was supportive although it had its deficiencies and limitations. Instead of providing continuous support, it was weakened and skilfully cut short by two interested parties: APRA and Shining Path who assisted each other in heading the organizing committee of the First Congress of the Inhabitants of Huaycán Township. The slogan of the First Congress was to achieve local autonomy against the so-called "decrepit bourgeois state". The United Left proved incapable of promoting a programme to de-

mocratize the existing bourgeois state which included the transfer of municipal functions to local organizations.

"Local law, municipal law" was the slogan. It was time to debate the creation of a municipal agency for Huaycán with autonomy and its own budget. We managed to obtain approval for this from the First Congress, where the election of a municipal agent by secret universal ballot was considered. However, the resolution was not acted upon and we lost an historic opportunity despite having the agreement of the municipality of Ate Vitarte.

Although the First Congress in July 1985 maintained local unity on the basis of the communal housing groups and zones, it proved to be a political triumph for those who organized it: Shining Path. They used the opportunity to deploy a large military operation with 100 armed men. Huaycán was taken over for some hours and the Congress was suddenly interrupted by Shining Path to allow them to launch their revolutionary harangues and ask for "voluntary" contributions. Everyone, from the most senior project leaders to the last delegate, had to collaborate. In contrast, a few hours previously, the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) had been present, very respectfully, to ask permission to distribute its pamphlets.

Under pressure from Shining Path, a markedly "class warfare" Declaration of Principles was approved. However, the democratic spirit of the delegates could not be defeated and they called for general elections by direct, secret ballot. Soon afterwards, the newly elected electoral committee called for general elections to be held in August. However, the usual divisions within the United Left enabled APRA to win the first local elections in Huaycán in September 1985. For this purpose, they had mobilized representatives from the Federico Villareal National University and a group of thugs (known as "buffaloes") to be used as a shock force in their support.

The United Left had presented a unitary list of candidates with all the forces which belonged to it, except the PUM which put forward a list which fell apart days before the elections. But this list included Shining Path candidates. The APRA candidate, Raúl Rodríguez Valle, emerged as the elected first general secretary. Control of the central supervisory council (which oversees the activities of the general secretary) went to the three attorneys on the United Left's list, Jaime Lastra, Javier Gutiérrez and Pedro Arévalo.

In the 1985 national elections, APRA came to power under President Alan García and remained in power until 1990. It is a period remembered for its demagoguery. In Huaycán, the APRA governing body began to dismantle everything that had been put in place by the management committee. There were many irregularities and unethical actions which were constantly denounced by the central supervisory council. The governing body also became beneficiaries of the Temporary Assistance Programme (PAIT) which ensured them a regular income for little or no work and allowed them to hire bodyguards who were simply a bunch of delinquents.

At a municipal level, with APRA's triumph in the electoral proc-

ess for the mayoralty of Lima (period 1987-89), a new municipal executive secretary for the Huaycán urban programme was nominated, namely architect Bascones, professor at the Federico Villareal University (which APRA controlled). Shortly afterwards, they appointed a renowned “buffalo”, Carlos Fonken, who enjoyed dealing with the inhabitants, sporting his handgun at his side.

Shining Path was beginning its selective assassinations. For instance, it killed the zonal leader of the APRA initiated PAIT who was also APRA’s local general secretary.⁽¹²⁾ They justified their action as a reaction to the widespread corruption. In response to this, the zones and the communal housing groups summoned the Second People’s Congress in August 1986, before the statutory date, where a new central executive council was elected.

VI. THE FIGHT FOR LOCAL DEMANDS

WHEN, IN OCTOBER 1986, the recently elected governing body was sworn in at a well-attended meeting, its first task was to legitimize itself with the authorities of the APRA central government and the municipality of Lima. They had the support of the re-elected mayor of Ate Vitarte⁽¹³⁾ who was from the United Left. So began the slow and arduous task of informing the population, of attending the different democratic assemblies, and of calling on the outgoing APRA governing body to hand over its responsibilities.

Faced with the complete lack of development in Huaycán, a new campaign was prepared demanding two central services: light (electricity) and water. In a People’s Plenary Assembly, ordinary members approved the organization of the first great march to the government palace on 17th February 1987, to demand the fulfilment of the promises made by President Alan García. On that day, Lima witnessed a massive mobilization. First, we assembled in the Plaza del Hospital Dos de Mayo where the police forced us to disperse. Subsequently, we moved to the Plaza de Armas de Lima where each zone from Huaycán was responsible for entering simultaneously from the four sides. The police had large forces to keep it cordoned off. Many people were detained by the police and unfortunately an anti-demonstration vehicle knocked down and killed member Rafael Flores Echevarria. Another member⁽¹⁴⁾ was also left badly injured. Meanwhile, Shining Path had infiltrated the mobilization to distribute its pamphlets and throw explosive devices containing dynamite at the very centre of Lima; these produced general panic.

Finally, we moved to the site of the Congress of the Republic, where our central leaders were received by the leaders of the Legislative Chambers. At the request of various parliamentarians who received our statements, a compromise was achieved for the release of the detainees and for consideration of the demands of Huaycán. The march was a success, since it brought about the extension of the primary electrification network to the

12. Andrés Tapia.

13. Franklin Acosta del Pozo.

14. Clímaco Condori.

whole gorge including the zones that were still uninhabited. Zone B capitalized on this extension and obtained finance through a loan from the National Housing Bank for extending the electricity cables to each house. Zone A, which was under the control of a Shining Path faction, became ensnared in a debate about non-payment for this service and lost out on the offer - the final payment became a symbolic amount because of high inflation.

However, a central point of the campaign, water, had still not been resolved. For this reason, the central executive council organized the Second People's March to the government palace in March 1988. Given the experience with the previous mobilization, this time permission from the prefecture was arranged for a peaceful march and ordinary members were very firm in not allowing their struggle to be used for provocative actions by Shining Path. Many parliamentarians from different political tendencies, such as the mayor of Ate Vitarte, accompanied us on our route through the centre of Lima to the Plaza San Martín. Here we held a meeting with the authorities. There were no major incidents.

As a result of this action, Lima's Municipal Water Supply and Sanitation Service (SEDAPAL) restarted laying pipes for the primary drinking water systems and preparing a reservoir to bring the system into operation. The municipality of Ate Vitarte arranged a water pump to supply the tanker lorries at the entry to Huaycán.

VII. THE DEBATE ON THE CREATION OF THE SELF-MANAGING URBAN COMMUNITY OF HUAYCÁN

PEOPLE MAKE HISTORY with democracy. This is the proposition which we, who headed the ideological confrontation with Shining Path, supported. With this, the Left prospered electorally, so much so that in the opinion polls at the end of 1989 it was presumed that the Left would assume the national presidency in 1990. We had to learn to be a government. We took as the starting point the experience of Villa El Salvador.⁽¹⁵⁾ We sought to improve on it and we proposed self-management. We understood it as the capacity which the people have for self-government not simply for protests seeking solutions from external sources. We had the ability to propose alternatives for development and peace-making.

These proposals were contrary to those of Shining Path which established authoritarian socialism, a personality cult of its leader "President Gonzalo" and a senseless use of terror as a form of winning over the masses. In the trade union leadership, this debate had its practical consequences. In Zones A and E, where Shining Path were present, the development and implementation of services was opposed because they were considered mere palliative measures to "...extinguish the great revolution" which Shining Path saw as being imminent. They also constantly preached morality - and with some good reason, since the public institutions were very corrupt.

15. Editors' note: Villa El Salvador is a large township in Lima that is well-known for developing its own development plan. A paper by Lisa Peattie in Vol.2, No.1 of *Environment and Urbanization* (1990) entitled "Participation: a case study of how invaders organize, negotiate and interact with government in Lima, Peru" told the story of the invasion that led to the formation of Villa El Salvador.

The First Statutory Congress was called in 1987 with the aim of amending the statutes and approving the self-governing nature of Huaycán. This was widely supported by the majority of ordinary members. There were continuous ideological debates. Our slogan was "The people united will never be conquered"; that of Shining Path was "Fight and Resist". These were popular slogans which were chorused at every public event. For instance, when travelling through the streets of Lima on the way to the funeral of Rafael Flores Echevarria who had been killed during the first march, we chanted these slogans one against the other.

The army and the police appeared in the gorge. The army were heavily armed and saw everyone as their enemy. Police action was largely confined to resolving domestic disputes and checking lorry drivers and maize liquor parties demanding money.

When the United Left democratic forces triumphed in the First Statutory Congress, the congress was abruptly interrupted by Shining Path. With an armed detachment, it humiliated the leaders' table of the Congress, burnt the minutes and voiced their inflammatory harangues.

In June 1988, the Third People's Congress was called to reaffirm the agreements of the statutory congress which had been cut short and to assess the actions of the central governing board. This was an opportunity for us to preside at the leaders' table. I chaired the congress and, to avoid more interruptions, asked for appropriate police protection.

After the central executive council, chaired by Walter Ortega, completed its two-year mandate, the need arose to elect a new one. The electoral committee conducted the proceedings and responsibility for managing Huaycán was in the hands of member Juan Lara Casabona, as general secretary of the community. It so happened that, by proclaiming himself independent of the United Left, he obtained the majority support of that force. It fell to the elected governing body to officially register with the relevant authorities the statutes of the urban self-managing community of Huaycán.

VIII. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMES TO A STANDSTILL

WE WERE ALL surprised when the general secretary of the community turned out to be a militant of UDP.⁽¹⁶⁾ This group operated very closely with the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, another subversive group inspired by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro but less radical than Shining Path. A few months after the swearing-in, Juan Lara Casabona was detained for sheltering a member of these ranks in his home.

Because of their youth and inexperience, other leaders were bullied by Shining Path who persevered in their tactics of seeking to provoke massive official repression against Huaycán. They forced the central leadership to convene a people's plenary meeting to approve the summons to the Third People's March to the

16. *Unidad Democrática Popular* (Popular Democratic Unity).

presidential palace. This plenary meeting was held in March 1989 and there was intense debate on the objective conditions for promoting this measure. For Shining Path, this provided a great opportunity. For the democratic forces, there was no central demand that united all.

Our argument was that Zone A was advancing well with its connection of housing to the electricity network, and the mayor-ess of Ate Vitarte had promised to finance the materials for the connection of houses to the drinking water networks. The new zones, higher up the slopes, were in the middle of the process of physical cleaning up. Furthermore, we argued that we should wait for the next municipal and presidential elections (in 1990).

The agreement from this plenary meeting was that we could not launch ourselves into an adventure; this meant another political defeat for Shining Path. As the detention of the general secretary continued, the Fourth People's Congress was summoned for the end of 1989. Its most important agreement was the approval for a return to direct democracy, for the election of the central leaders against opposition from those who preferred what was negotiated ("agreements") in private. The electoral committee called elections and member Juan Huapaya from Zone B won. He represented the list supported by APRA militants, who remained critical for APRA's national governing body. However, the United Left, which controlled the electoral committee with a majority, refused to recognize the mayor's election. This was a petty and unfair move. There was considerable confusion locally since there was no central governing body officially recognized by the ordinary members. During various consultations in the zones, it was decided at a people's plenary meeting to appoint a provisional central executive council. Responsibility was devolved to member Luis López Fernández, as general secretary.

IX. PRESENCE OF THE FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY INSTITUTE AND OF THE FRENCH FRIENDS

DURING THE PERIOD of office of the mayors of Lima, Alfonso Barrantes Lingán (1984-86) and Jorge del Castillo (1987-89), hundreds of property titles were issued in Huaycán. Although they served as proof of land ownership, these documents were not legally valid as they had not been entered into the public registers. To achieve this, we had to go to a notary and a lawyer to establish a public deed - in so-doing, we lost a lot of time and paid a high price. Because of the troublesome nature of the procedure, almost nobody had done anything and disputes for the possession of lands kept the lawyers, justices of the peace and the police busy.

The *Instituto Libertad y Democracia* (Freedom and Democracy Institute [ILD]), which had been proposing a series of reforms in the legal and democratic order in Peru, adopted our community as a pilot experiment in developing the implementation of the legal establishment of the property register. The construction

17. Editors' note: this institute was founded by Hernando de Soto, author of the book *The Other Path* where he advocates an end to the excessive regulation of the informal sector, less control by government and greater reliance on market forces.

of settlements such as Huaycán, where local people construct their own homes, invest their time and energies but have no legal rights was analyzed in the book "The Other Path", written by the President of this Institute, Hernando de Soto.⁽¹⁷⁾

A new pilot public body had to be created, to achieve virtually automatic and speedy registration of the landed property in the townships. Thousands of inhabitants availed themselves of the new system. Of the 12,000 building plots in Huaycán, 3,000 had a duly guaranteed title. Despite high inflation at the time, four small entrepreneurs from Huaycán managed to raise a mortgage on their homes and seek a loan from a private bank, as they already had a capital asset which would guarantee their borrowing.

As a result, Huaycán managed to break out of its isolation, as it had been characterized as an extremely dangerous "red zone", and we managed to acquire prestige as an area open to structural reforms. However, Shining Path began to sharpen its aim against supporters of this Institute in Huaycán, namely the members Leonidas Centeno Pacheco and Pedro Arévalo Torres.

During this period, a group of French citizens from the city of Toulouse came to our gorge and agreed to construct a polyclinic which was to bear the name of Toulouse-Huaycán. They did this because of the inadequate care provided by Peru's Ministry of Health's medical post. Showing an example of solidarity, the French friends personally built this structure which was inaugurated by the provisional central executive council. This showed our enormous potential for channelling international aid.

X. A STAGE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF MODERN HUAYCÁN: THE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

THE FIRST ROUND of Peru's general elections on 8 April 1990 failed to elect a clear winner for the post of President for the period 1990-1995. This resulted in a second round shortly after, won by engineer Alberto Fujimori. Fujimori had begun what was to be his successful campaign for the presidency in Huaycán. This was on his tractor, which was used as a symbol of political renewal, of change, of the end of power for a conservative élite on the Right as much as on the Left. His presidency brought a profound process of structural reforms of a neo-liberal kind, supported by the International Monetary Fund.

Fujimori took up the development of Huaycán as a challenge for his future government. Internally, the election of the central executive council had to be resolved democratically and the Second Statutory Congress was called at the end of March 1991. At this event, the standing rules were debated and a new electoral process was called for 5 May 1991. Shining Path continued with its activities of agitation. The changes taking place internationally (for instance *perestroika*, the fall of the Berlin Wall) were something they claimed was "expected" and the development of their strategic and tactical plans was not changed. They took the decision to boycott the electoral process and fo-

cused their attention on the non-governmental bodies which had supported the progress of Huaycán. They concentrated their threats mainly on the IDEAS, CEPRODEP and EDAPROSPONGO centres. Within these circumstances, they assassinated an exemplary member of our community, a worker at the IDEAS centre, Zacarias Magallanes, whom we remember as one of the first promoters of small-scale enterprises.

The electoral committee suffered from constant threats and a strong counter-campaign among the grassroots members. The press secretary for this committee, member Walter Rojas Montoya, began an open debate using loudspeakers located in his home. He set out his reasons against the boycott and invited a public debate between the lists of candidates. The population responded to the call and turned up to vote in large numbers. There was support from the army and the police to safeguard the process from possible attacks (one of the sensible actions of the forces of law and order). The count was carried out normally and list number four, "Huaycán United for Change", headed by member Pascuala Rosado from Zone A was elected by a large majority for the period May 1991 to May 1993. All the participating lists realized that, in addition to the triumph of one list, it was the triumph of democracy over terror. So, in the hours of the night, a spontaneous and very happy party was arranged.

The basic alliance of *Cambio 90* (Change) and *Izquierda Socialista* (Socialist Left) had constituted this list but both had given up their claims to lead it for the sake of enabling a leader from Huaycán to take on this task. Pascuala Rosado's prestige was very great due to her role against the "Fujishock", the economic package whereby thousands of Peruvians could have died from hunger had it not been for the organizational and devoted work of the people's soup kitchens, mothers' clubs and "glass of milk" committees.⁽¹⁸⁾

18. Editors' note: see for instance Barrig, Maruja (1991), "Women and development in Peru: old models, new actors", *Environment and Urbanization* Vol.3, No.2, October, pages 66-70.

XI. THE PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

THE PLAN WAS designed as a proposal that the main works in Huaycán should be carried out as soon as possible so that they would signify a political defeat for Shining Path. We had to put an end to conciliation and fight to change the image of Huaycán. Due to the press's search for sensationalism, our community was nearly always in the news because of bloody deeds. There was the idea that it had been controlled from the start by Shining Path and that no-one wanted to give their address as Huaycán because this would prevent them getting work.

There is a saying that "Silence gives consent". So the central leaders took on the role of shaking off the bad habits of centrally controlled decision-making processes which predominated in the assemblies and congresses (a legacy of communist activism). For some people this was to provoke retaliation from Shining Path but we believed there was an urgent need for change. The response to our plan was not long in coming and in the editions of *El Diario of Marka* of April 1991 and 1992, Shining

Path threatened to kill the principal central leaders.

We obtained international support and promises from the central government following working meetings with President Fujimori and his First Vice President, Máximo San Román. The municipality of Lima also did not fail to answer our call and the mayor of Lima, Ricardo Belmont Casinelli, visited us several times to encourage the work planned by the municipality's Public Works Department (paved areas for sports, the entry road etc.).

At the international level, we managed to establish closer links with the United States of America through the staff of its Embassy and the Secretariat for Political Affairs. They all showed an interest in the progress of our community and became very much involved with our problem. The significant aid which we received from the US government, through several different programmes, should be emphasized. Advice both in laying the foundations and in the application of the plan came from NGOs such as CEPRODEP (Centre for Promotion and Development) and the Moray Institute, which were not frightened off by the threats and gave us significant support.

XII. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ARMY AND THE POLICE

WE HAVE TO recognize that a change in the anti-subversive strategy began with Fujimori's government. The generals with whom we coordinated actions recognized this change. It was essential for them to combine with the civil population to defeat Shining Path. However, like any change, it takes time and effort to adjust to it.

General Luis Pérez Documet, who was in charge of Lima's Eastern District and, at the same time, of the Special Forces Division of the Army, tried to transfer to Lima the experience he had had in the rural areas of the Andes, and he made mistakes. As he needed to take part in political activity to be recognized by the population, it was he, together with President Fujimori who laid the first stone of the Mother and Child Hospital in Huaycán. He was also present at the delivery of food from PRONAA (National Programme for Food Support), as part of the army's civic activities.

The central executive council had different views from those of General Documet on the role of the self-defence committees. This was basically a debate on the role taken by local leaders in the struggle against Shining Path. Far from understanding how this body helped to prevent crimes, the General tried to impose a paramilitary character on it. The result has been that, since the President's public administering of the oath on 15 July 1991, three local members of the committee⁽¹⁹⁾ have been assassinated. Various members of the self-defence committees have been severely wounded and five dynamite attacks have taken place on the headquarters during 1992 and the first part of 1993.

We also began to cooperate with the police forces to establish the Huaycán police station. A group of colonels, in conjunction with certain institutions, carried out a study to establish a pilot

19. Miguel Galindo, Raúl Flores and Hernán Gómez.

civil safety programme in our community. We were assured that the station would have suitable staff of high morale.

XIII. THE WORKS COMPLETED

THE POLITICAL WILL of the governments of the day was not enough. Managerial capacity or ability was needed to show initiative and constancy. Inevitably, the leaders of Huaycán and of other progressive community associations must learn this. Our main obstacles were the lack of projects and the state bureaucracy. For this reason, in the first year of our management we had to devote ourselves to resolving these problems. The municipality of Ate Vitarte, which was the local authority, not only did not support our actions during 1992-93 but the mayor-ess was keen to get re-elected and did not want to be overshadowed.

It would take too long to list the episodes which we lived through in order to complete the work which we have done. What is important is to recognize that it was collective work. Each leader took on a package of works and it was Pascuala Rosado who was called on to oversee the work as a whole and represent us at the most important meetings. Her leadership was never in question. She put her life and that of her family at stake.

At both difficult and happy moments, we had spiritual and moral support from Father Adriano Pacifico Tomasi. Those who know him bear witness to his tireless strength in serving the most needy and his cooperation in the development of Huaycán was decisive. May God allow him to continue his educational and social work in our community.

A complete drainage system for all of Huaycán, the Higher Technological Institute, the Mother and Child Centre and the People's Business Centre are the four principal works which symbolize our four principal demands: environmental drainage, education, health and work. These works would not have been achieved without the help of the Moray Institute, an institution which took over the preparation of the projects for the first two works mentioned (1991-92), then made more specific proposals of communal importance. It achieved this objective thanks to the support, among others, from one of the best social scientists in terms of urban development for the people, the architect Father Jorge Anzorena SJ who visited our community in 1986 to find out about its problems and then became an important support in channelling international aid to our community.

The governing body, chaired by Pascuala Rosado, went on working and promoting projects of importance to the community: the Zonal hospital; the asphaltting of tracks and pavements; educational centres, etc. President Fujimori and the government as a whole also gave us strong support.

Shining Path and the opposition - militants of the disintegrating political parties - as always, said that the work before the construction works (preparation of the projects) was pure demagoguery. Taking advantage of an error we made in relation to the

handling of the administration and maintenance of the local sports and cultural complex (Complex for Peace), sited by agreement on the lands of the National Institute of Culture, Shining Path called the Fifth People's Congress, in order to ignore the people's will and elect a new central executive council behind the people's back. But no-one took any notice of them and we continued to carry out our duties normally.

At our customary grassroots meetings, we received the unanimous support of the inhabitants. In Zone G, for example, we met with all the members to propose the construction of what is now the People's Republic of China Technical Secondary Education Centre. This work had the support of the Chinese community in Peru, promoted by Father Adriano Pacifico. We had the support of all the zones with the works in progress.

We devoted the second year of our management to completing what had been started and celebrating its inauguration: the access road to Huaycán up to Avenida 15 de Julio; the 16 sports pitches (one for each zone); the four public baths; two tube wells and six drinking water reservoirs; and the primary collector for drainage waters.

The settled zones advanced with their electrification work and with the construction of classrooms for primary and early education. An open bid was made for the construction of the Technological Institute during our period and construction began in the year following the end of our management.

We had to go on providing continuity for the democratic organization and we called the Sixth Ordinary Congress to present our balance-sheet and call general elections. Pascuala Rosado had a premonition that she could no longer be there and with her head held high presented her report, which was unchallengeable. Certain groups maintained that they had evidence against her but they did not have the courage to say anything and went on muttering.

After her first election, Shining Path had invited her to join their ranks and "abandon the corrupt and incorrigible members of her executive council". When she refused, this developed into verbal and written intimidation, and finally two attempts were made on her life. The first happened when her security personnel found an explosive device in the community van. The second occurred when they fired shots against her precarious home but the attackers were repelled by the same personnel. For these reasons, immediately after accepting an invitation from the American Embassy to visit that country for one month, she went into exile in Chile with assistance from the Coordinator of Human Rights and the UN High Commission for Refugees.

The underestimation of the leading role which we the people's leaders played in the struggle against Shining Path became clear with the publication of a dishonest item of information from the Army's Intelligence Service. When the leader of the Shining Path, Abimael Guzmán, was detained on 12 September 1992, this was an important triumph against terrorism. Many of us leaders, as we told the press, could sleep peacefully without the danger which had threatened us day after day. However, for

some sectors of the armed forces, they were the only victors. We, the people's leaders, were suspect because of our socialist or communist past. Proof of this was, according to them, the finding in Guzmán's computer of a list of supposed minor Shining Path leaders in the townships. Pascuala and all the governing body of Huaycán headed the list. This news seriously affected the image of Huaycán. Forceful denials had to be made. Why were our names there? Everyone asked this question. The answer: We were targets for future selective assassinations by Shining Path.

With the help of the serious press, such as Channel Four TV's Sunday Review, and the unconditional support of political leaders such as Edmundo Murrugarra, we managed to mount a counter-campaign. Shortly afterwards, the army withdrew the protection which it had given to Pascuala and the national police said it had no resources to continue protecting her.

When elections were called to elect the new central executive council of Huaycán in May 1993, Shining Path managed to influence and manipulate the electoral committee politically. At these elections the great favourite was the "Change and Works for Huaycán" list which was an alliance of all the democratic forces including APRA and the United Left. Shining Path, for its part, tried to create confusion and divide the members of the alliance. However, the unquestionable triumph of the list headed by the member María Rosa Estrada Mena was not recognized by the electoral committee which raised objections to the electoral process that had taken place. The "Change and Works" list was in a dilemma: whether to legitimize itself by its measures placing at risk the unity of the local organization or to withdraw and allow a second election to be held. It opted, collectively, for the second option but part of this list, headed by Jaime Pérez Cabanillas, appeared at the elections in a new form. The alliance won the elections again but the changes to the list left some grassroots members unhappy. The new list was headed by a militant from the PUM of the United Left who would try to forge his own profile and detach himself from any relationship with the former governing body of Pascuala Rosado.

After spending some time in exile in Chile, Pascuala Rosado decided to return to Peru and, after living for a while in the district of Magdalena, she eventually returned to Huaycán because of her family and economic circumstances. At 7:15 am on the 6th of March 1996, as she was leaving her house to go to work, she was attacked by a Shining Path commando. She died from bullet wounds and injuries received from a small explosive device.

XIV. THE WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

THE WORK OF the Christian Community deserves a separate chapter. From the first moment of the founding of Huaycán, we all had the opportunity to rely on the invaluable support of Fr. Tadeo Pasini who is today the Parish priest of Huaycán. Not

only did he become the spiritual guide of his flock but he assumed leadership in the community. He noticed a gap in the Huaycán special urban programme: the lack of a physical space for the construction of the parade ground and the local cultural and sports complex. In conjunction with the central governing body of that time, he initiated negotiations for the site with the National Institute of Culture, to transfer to us part of the 40 hectares which had been reserved to protect the archaeological ruins, instead of keeping it as a great rubbish dump.

The Christian community secured the financing to carry out the archaeological study which would free this area of probable pre-Columbian vestiges. The Moray Institute would then carry out the topographical study and the preparation of the project for the complex but, due to the contradictions between the present governing body (1993-94) and the retiring one, it modified part of this project, losing the opportunity to have a complex which would contain education, recreation, culture and a tourist attraction. Father Tadeo has also channelled substantial aid from his Monfort congregation and has always been an important channel by which the Italian government, through its ambassador, could always maintain an interest in our community.

The Evangelical Church is also carrying on important Christian work and has channelled development projects. The main ones are the projects which ADROFASA carried out in the sphere of infant nutrition, the promotion of small businesses, the construction of food stores and health programmes. Traditionally, one can see them parade on the anniversary of Huaycán's founding.

XV. REFLECTIONS FOR DEBATE

TO CONCLUDE, I would like to offer some reflections borne from over a decade of involvement in the project to build a self-governing community in Lima, Peru's largest city.

1. The founding and construction of a town are based on the force and perseverance of the organized population itself. The society is responsible for its own development.
2. The unmet demand for housing continues to be a social problem of enormous size in Peru. But today we understand that the occupation of lands without minimal services represents a heavy burden for the population whose families are affected by the lack of health care, education and jobs.
3. The defeat of poverty presupposes a strategy of decentralized economic development to halt the uncontrolled migration from the countryside to the cities, especially to the coastal areas of Peru. An integral project for the promotion of decentralized productive organization is required. The defeat of Shining Path is part of this strategy.

4. The disintegration of the political parties, on both the Right and the Left, became clear on 5 April 1992, the date on which President Fujimori dissolved the National Congress against the Constitutional Law of the State (but undoubtedly with popular support). This proves the need for the establishment of new institutions: modern, democratic and efficient. Shining Path can be permanently defeated if these new political institutions are constructed, be they called parties or movements, with democratic functions protected in the hoped-for Political Parties Law. The new generation lack these channels to stimulate their ideals, to overcome marginalization. And while poverty, which is a difficult obstacle to overcome in the short term, subsists, many young people will be tempted by the alternative of political violence - which is an ill-directed form of protest.

5. Peru's United Left political alliance came to an end in 1989 because of the differences in programmes between the organizations which comprised it. The construction of a new free, democratic, jointly liable, productive society continues to be debated. But without doubt, the elimination of poverty requires economic and social policies which will stimulate the creation of productive wealth.

6. The important advances achieved in dividing Shining Path between those who favour the peace agreement favoured by "President Gonzalo" (Abimael Guzmán) and those who persist in the armed struggle under the command of Oscar Ramírez Durán (Comrade "Feliciano") may eventually come to a halt since there are no discrepancies in their programmes and the two factions could co-exist. This is even more so when it appears that these pacts and the application for amnesty for those who denounce the terrorist criminals were made by Fujimori's government behind the backs of civil society.

7. We must enter the ideological and political debate, with clear separation from the terrorist movements. Political work by Shining Path exists even in its traditional bases of support. Like any disciplined organization, it is trying to obtain benefit in favour of its preaching. In Huaycán, we cannot continue to oppose the traditional national political figures unless we develop political organizations with ideals, programmes and new paradigms.

8. We, the community leaders, are second-class citizens. First, because parliamentary elections favour national candidates at the expense of local constituencies; generally, national candidates are from the wealthy districts of Lima where the power to inform is concentrated. Second, because those who fund political campaigns are able to impose candidates of their liking, the rest of us are there only to work as labourers. In the municipality of Ate Vitarte, for example, Huaycán has no elected municipal councillor despite the fact that, as a marginal seat, it secured victory for the current mayor, Enrique Pajuelo.

9. In Huaycán, the local organization is already exhausted. It is impossible to govern a town of 60,000 inhabitants by the simple will of the local inhabitants. Nor is it a matter of continuing to increase bureaucracy and reduce the size of districts with the creation of a new municipality.

It is a question of considering in the New Law of Municipalities the need to decentralize the decisions of the mayor and to delegate executive functions to the democratically elected local governing bodies. At present, the central executive council of Huaycán is at the mercy of the good political will of the mayor. This has to change to give continuity to the tenacious work of the new local leaders. We have to go further in the debate than the name of the project, whether it be called municipal agency or small township. What is important is to set up a new local authority which will have executive functions and a budget approved by the local municipality.

10. The security of the population is still a topic on the agenda. The civil population lacks confidence in the national police. There is a gap which separates them because of the poor behaviour of some of its members. But it also has to be emphasized again that there are excellent officials and subordinate staff who are examples to be followed. One possibility for police-citizen reconciliation is the creation of compulsory civilian service with functions of pacification and civil defence under the command of the national police.

