Consequences against Community Development from Political Unrest: Evidenced by “La Guerra Sucia” in Lima, Perú

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Consequences against Community Development from Political Unrest: Evidenced by “La Guerra Sucia” in Lima, Perú

Abstract
La Guerra Sucia (The Dirty War) was lead by a Marxist group called Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in Perú, beginning in 1980. The goal of Sendero was to invade rural communities, gain followers (whether by choice or by force), and eventually take over the government to restore the social order. The movement was extremely violent, but the government attempted to stem the movement by committing numerous atrocities and war crimes. This caused immense distrust and fear of both sides among the inhabitants of rural Perúvean communities. As a result, refugees fled to major cities such as Lima, where they built new lives for themselves wherever there was available space. This article discusses the war and migration of the populace from rural to urban spaces, and then examines the disparities in development between resulting communities and what factors caused them.

Keywords
Lima, Sendero Luminoso, Sendero, Luminoso, Peru, Civil War, War, Community Development, Sustainable, Sustainability, Political, Organization
Consequences against Community Development from Political Unrest: Evidenced by “La Guerra Sucia” in Lima, Perú

Eleanor Dickens

Introduction

The rural communities of Perú were risky places to live, as one did not know who was and who wasn’t a part of Sendero. Oftentimes the residents would be coerced to join the rebels or face death. As initiation into the rebel group, the new ‘soldiers’ would be forced to kill or rape a member of the opposition, and sometimes a member of their own community.¹ The government would come into the communities and take into custody anyone thought to be in association with Sendero. They would often rape and kill numerous inhabitants in a desperate attempt to squash the guerillas’ forces. These dynamics caused many groups comprised of kin and close friends to move to Lima. Many people had the perception that Lima would be the safest place to live, as Sendero Luminoso seemed to be operating raids and kidnappings only in rural communities. In actuality, Sendero Luminoso had a significant presence in Lima, but this was realized only after the refugees had already moved to the city.²

After arriving in Lima, many families could not afford to live in the city,³ so they formed ‘shantytowns’ on the outskirts of the city.⁴ Some communities had leaders who organized the positioning of roads and houses, preservation of green spaces, and support of the community members, while others constructed their communities as they went with little heed to organization.

In this paper I will focus on the social and economic effects of Sendero Luminoso in Perú as they relate to the communities that developed in the outskirts of Lima. I will then analyze the differences between two communities, Villa el Salvador and Pamplona, to identify the role of organization in the development of refugee communities. Finally I will analyze the long-term effects of this organization as it relates to the current societies and economies of Perú as a whole as well as Villa el Salvador and Pamplona.

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⁴“Peruvians Protest”
Economic and Social Effects of Sendero Luminoso

Economy

Perú was in a desperate economic crisis leading up to the year 1963. At this time the military gained control of the government, and was in control from the years 1963–1980.5 During the economic reconstruction and governmental attempts to improve social rights and overall welfare for the citizens, Sendero Luminoso grew ever stronger as they perceived these changes to be a destruction of the old order. Alberto Paredes explains their strategy through the lens of broader Marxist plans for the region:

Guevara [Argentine physician, proponent of using the ‘Cuban Model’ to reform the political system], believed that the solution to poverty across Latin America lay in small, mobile vanguards trained in Marxist ideology- revolutionaries who would penetrate isolated parts of a country to educate and radicalize the rural poor. As peasants learned the causes of their oppression, they would join with the guerrillas in resisting the local authorities. The government would then be forced to respond with iron-fisted tactics of repression that would expose its true nature to the masses. As violence escalated, workers in urban areas, seeing the suffering of their comrades, would launch strikes and join the rebellion, leading to the collapse of Latin America’s dictatorships and bourgeois pseudo-democracies.6

Starting in 1963, the newly militaristic government “attempted to make substantial changes in the country’s economic and social structures”7 and was succeeding up until the year 1980. It was during this time period (1963–1980) that Sendero gained a lot of its ground, especially through its public education and rural development initiatives.8 Perú experienced massive debt in 1983 due to the emergence of Sendero Luminoso and the widespread chaos in the government. The government was so desperate to squash the opposition that they halted all efforts of maintaining a good economy. Two analysts from the University of California and Carlton University described this debt crisis as follows: “Its [Perú’s] GDP contracted by a catastrophic twelve percent in 1983. The deterioration in Perú’s terms of trade led to a commercial deficit that severely reduced Perú’s ability to generate revenue for debt repayment.”9 Perú received concessions in repaying its debt from previous agreements and Citicorp, an American bank that was stationed in Perú, decided to allow Perú to pay out its loans in eight years. This was two percent over the US rate.10 According to Robert Devlin, “The

5 Alberto Paredes, interview by Eleanor Grace Dickens, August 1, 2013.
6 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 61
10 Ibid.
terms of the agreement were extremely stiff. They were equal to the most onerous borrowing conditions recorded in previous borrowing cycles.”

Alan Garcia, newly elected President of Perú, attempted to make movements towards a better economy in 1985 by the following decisions: “the fixing of the exchange rate, the switch to a new currency (Inti), and the freezing of dollar deposits. In addition, Garcia announced that no more than 10 percent of export revenues would go to the servicing of external debts.” For this reason Perú lost credibility with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as well as with the international financial community as a whole. Even after losing credibility with the IMF due to its risky decisions concerning debt payments, Perú failed to meet the requirements outlined by the IMF for them to continue to receive aid. According to the two aforementioned analysts, “The fiscal deficit rose to 9% of the GNP, rather than the agreed upon 4.2%. The growth of the deficit was not due to excessive expenditures but to falling revenue, which was perpetuated by the emergence of Sendero Luminoso.”

Despite the aid from the IMF and Citicorp, Perú’s economy collapsed in 1988. The economic crash brought the living standards back to what they were in pre-1963, and affected the government’s ability to provide for the basic needs of its citizens, including ”basic levels of social order and security.”

**Governmental Backlash**

Historian Steven Stern noted that, “45% of the 7,795 reported victims from the period of 1980-1985 were killed by the national security forces of the government, and the subversive organization (Sendero Luminoso) was responsible for 48% of the 7,795 deaths.”

Willakuy explains that after 1968, when there was a military coup by Las Fuerzas Armadas, there were great improvements in finance, production, distribution, and national economy, with a particular emphasis on the redistribution of income and on the investment of private and public businesses.

As with the case of the economy, the government had been making many improvements of the social benefits it was offering for its citizens. Las Fuerzas Armadas were trying to improve the lives of citizens and the country as a whole before the emergence of Sendero Luminoso.

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12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
19 The armed forces of Perú.
The government made a desperate attempt to stamp out the Marxist group, but Sendero Luminoso had such an integrated and complicated system of operation, that no one knew who was and who was not a part of the group in their respective communities. The government would go into a community suspected of having members of Sendero Luminoso, and upon finding no concrete evidence, would often kill, rape, and pillage the town to kill as many members of the group as they could. General Luis Cisneros Vizquerra, the secretary of war at the time said, “there are no human rights in war.” This shows that the armed forces knowingly put aside the rights of citizens to accomplish their goal. The abuse of authority, murders, kidnapping, and unrightful detention is why the government is responsible for so many victims and why they spent over twelve years in breaking down the insurgency.

Due to these dynamics, trust for the government at this time was ruined. The community members formed close-knit family groups to protect themselves not only from Sendero Luminoso, but also from the government. The Sendero Luminoso were the ones to start the war, but the armed forces committed almost an equal number of atrocities.

Conclusions

The economic crisis that began in 1983 crippled the economy of Perú. It was at this time that Sendero Luminoso grabbed hold of the cocaine trade in northern Perú, which eventually accounted for a third of the national gross domestic product. The government could not adequately fight the increase in the drug trade, as it aided the growth in their economy. The United States had (and still has) strict regulations concerning the drug trade which were enforced by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Perú during this time. According to David Palmer, the crop eradication crews that were called in by the United States destroyed many cocaine fields and production sites, which in turn raised more political support for Sendero Luminoso.

The problems that Perú had with its economy caused opposition and distrust of the government due to its foreign policy but also due to its decline in fulfilling the basic needs of its citizens. When governments of low-income countries cannot provide for the basic care of their citizens, citizens are forced to compensate for the lack of the governmental support by building their own communities without city planning, collecting water/food from potentially contaminated sources, and forming close-knit family groups to protect themselves from political unrest.

This is seen in the effects of the economic and social welfare crisis in Perú, where citizens moved from rural areas towards the city (namely Lima) to attempt an escape from the threats of violence. In the rocky terrain of the outskirts of Lima, the only place to go due to the large population was further up the mountain, away from established

21 Febres, Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, 17.
22 Stern, Shining and other paths, 320.
23 Ibid.
25 Alberto Paredes, interview by Eleanor Grace Dickens, August 1, 2013.
26 Palmer, The Shining Path of Perú, 161.
water and electricity lines, as well as from safe waste depositories. These mountainside communities (sometimes called “shantytowns”) were often made without any city planning, due to the lack of governmental support. According to Lillian Kanashiro, a political scientist from Pontificia Católica Universidad de Perú (PCUP), widespread terror was perpetuated by the possibility that one’s teacher, doctor, neighbor, etc., was a member of Sendero Luminoso. According to Willakuy, “The social order was so disrupted that habitually safe places like houses, local communities, schools, and churches became dangerous.” Therefore, citizens built tight-knit communities to protect themselves from betrayal by a possible member of Sendero Luminoso.

Case Study: Effects on Communities in the Outskirts of Perú

Families and entire communities left their hometowns in order to escape the hostility and violence and to find a place of inhabitance that was less hostile. Their small towns were left empty. Personal testimonies described in La Versión Abreviada del Informe Final de la Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación use the words “bleak, empty, unoccupied, silent, a ‘no man’s land’, solitary” to describe their towns after many people had abandoned them. “If we didn’t join them they would have threatened us with death. If we had stayed there, fixed in place, they would have killed us, if we didn’t escape to the hills to live. In the hills is where we lived, leaving our things. We didn’t take anything, not our animals; if for nothing else, we left for our lives.”

Willakuy explained that the majority of the people who moved from these small towns were young people, teachers, and authorities. The young people could not continue their education due to the dangerous atmosphere surrounding public gathering spaces. Schools were extremely dangerous as teachers were objects of persecution—the leaders of Sendero Luminoso would come into the classroom, beat the teachers and take the children. The children did not want to study any more, and for this reason there was much movement of young scholars and teachers to larger cities. The authorities left because they had the resources to leave and could foresee the violence that was to come due to their past experiences with politics. Often the people who were left behind were the women, children, and the elderly. The women and children were left by the men in their family to fend for themselves while they escaped for better education and work opportunities, and the elderly felt a sense of attachment to the towns they had grown up in. They were much more hesitant to move away, also out of hopes that the violence would end quickly. Another personal account recorded by Willakuy reads: “Well, the community after that day they moved away was left totally destroyed; there was no authority, there were no men; and those who were left behind eventually moved away. They left us behind for Lima, for Huamanga, and for many others.”

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27 Lillian Kanashiro, interview by Eleanor Grace Dickens, July 22, 2013.
28 Willakuy, Versión Abreviada, 54.
30 Willakuy, Versión Abreviada, 53.
31 Ibid., 54.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., 55.
Furthermore, stated Willakuy, these losses, that could have less significance in other contexts, should be seen as the destruction of an economy and a culture where the principle form of living is dependent on the earth and how the population used it. Their alliances were in line with a connection to their hometown and to their ancestors. This is a tradition that goes back to their Incan ancestors.

According to Marta Alfonso-Durruty, Incan social order was constructed by respect for ancestors. There were many rituals and ceremonies made to honor the ancestors in the Incan societies and those of their contemporaries. Alfonso-Durruty states that there was no difference between space and time—they were bonded as one. Therefore, all monumental events in one’s life were associated with a certain form of nature in their community, and a certain ancestor. The connection that those who are descendant from the Andean people feel to the earth and to their ancestors is very similar. In this reason that uprooting themselves and their communities was so difficult and painful.

When moving, the refugees had to abandon most of their resources. They came to the new cities with no means of supporting themselves, as many of the refugees had all of their wealth in the livestock that they had been forced to leave behind. In the city, there was no way to buy new animals (as they had no wealth), and there was no space to grow and harvest them. This led to an increase in the poverty level. As there was no way to earn money or get a job in the already economically unstable country, the immigrants had trouble finding food, shelter, and other basic needs. It is for this reason that many communities (close-knit groups formed together for security and support) moved to the outskirts of the city and formed areas such as Pamplona and Villa el Salvador.

Pamplona

Pamplona is a district of Lima, Perú that is populated by refugees from war against Sendero Luminoso. Lima itself is submerged in a cloud of fog during the winter months (from May until November) due to its position on the coast and the effects from the ‘Cordillera’ mountains (two mountain ranges of the Andes in Perú). Pamplona is located in the highlands on the mountains of the Cordillera Negra, therefore highly affected by the fog. Due to the elevation of Pamplona, the fog rarely dissipates in the winter months. On the worst days it is difficult to see more than three feet ahead. Due to the climate, it can take days for clothes to dry, and susceptibility for illnesses increases, especially as it relates to children, the sick, and the elderly. Children must be wrapped in multiple layers of clothing to prevent their getting pneumonia, bronchitis, etc. If they were to catch such a disease, the parents would not have enough money to buy medicine for their child—increasing the risk of death. Figure 1 on the next page shows Pamplona on a day with a typical amount of fog, and it is nearly impossible to see anything beyond the house. On the worst days, one could not see the house from the position where the photographer is standing.

35 Willakuy, Versión Abreviada, 60.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid., 61.
Due to its location on the Cordillera Negra, the terrain in Pamplona is very difficult to maneuver in. It is common for people to fall down the steep hills whilst carrying buckets of water (due to the lack of running water lines), for pregnant women to fall and have a miscarriage, for children to fall, and for the elderly to fall. All of these groups of people are ones who already need support to walk due to balance issues, and many injuries have come from attempting to walk up the mountainside. During rainfall it is almost impossible to travel down or up the mountain due to the amount of mud and the increased risk of falling. It’s also extremely difficult to build roads, because of the lack of city planning when Pamplona was first established. The dirt paths leading up the mountain are too narrow and insecure for a cement truck to pass through. The lack of roads makes it very difficult to obtain clean water, as the city-funded water trucks cannot reach high areas. Bringing electrical lines to the high parts of the mountain is nearly impossible, and doing so increases the danger even more for the elderly, the sick, the pregnant and the children. Figure 2 shows the terrain of Pamplona.
At the top of this region in the Cordillera Negra lies a barbed wire lined wall called “El Muro de la Vergüenza,” meaning “The Wall of Shame”. On one side of the wall live millionaires and on the other, the severely impoverished. This wall was constructed by the wealthy to restrict the growing low-income communities from encroaching onto their land. In this way they were able to sharply define social classes and maintain a sense of hierarchy within their society. Figure 3 shows the area of El Muro de la Vergüenza, which lies at the top of the mountain range (obscured by fog in this picture).
The citizens lower down the mountainside have closer access to roads, water sources (sometimes running water) and electricity. As they are closer to the areas of Lima that have had more city planning (and away from the areas that were hastily thrown together to accommodate the refugees), they have access to the resources mentioned above. The people on the base of the mountains charge those who live on higher ground to use the electricity and sometimes a portion of the water. This charge can often be 100-200% over the charge that the residents pay to receive it from the municipality. It is extremely difficult to acquire these resources for themselves using other means. Additionally, there are no established sewage lines in Pamplona, resulting in open sewage in the streets. In figure 4, the division of the streetlamps is easily visible in the evening light. The portions of the mountain that are not lit by streetlamps are the areas that must buy a portion of the electricity and running water, and the portion that does have streetlamps has enough electricity at a fixed, normal price to enable them to have streetlamps. These areas are also those that can allow trucks to come construct the lamps. Open sewage is also visible in the street shown in figure 4.

Figure 4. those with streetlamps are at the base, and those without are higher up, open sewage in the street.
Photo by Eleanor Dickens, July 2013

All of these situations in Pamplona are due to one major theme - lack of organization. If these communities had had leadership, trust, and fiscal aid from the government, there would have been urban planning. This could have taken all of the above concerns into consideration and would have led to the construction of property lines, roads, electrical lines, sewage lines, and other infrastructure. Refugees were on their own in unfamiliar terrain and were left to singlehandedly construct their community when they ran from Sendero Luminoso in the 1970s-1990s. Due to the atrocities

committed by the government during the war, the community members did not ask for help from the municipality as they had experienced gross manipulation and had witnessed such atrocities in their home communities. As characterized above, communities were forced to create close, tight-knit groups to protect themselves from possible betrayal by neighbors. This also contributed to lack of city planning as communities, when left on their own, had been taught not to trust their neighbors. They could not rely on the government; they could not rely on their community. There has been no growth in the interest of the government in Pamplona, and so the community in 2013 very much resembles the community in the 1970s-1980s.

Villa el Salvador

Villa el Salvador is a district in Lima, Perú that is south of Pamplona, and southwest of the major tourist and shopping area in Lima (Miraflores). Villa el Salvador grew by an influx of refugees from the danger zones during the war against Sendero Luminoso and was recognized as a district of Lima in 1983. Villa el Salvador has an established municipality, a health center, communal areas, parks, and a technological district, which exports goods internationally. It is also the site for many social reform initiatives such as a reduction in domestic abuse, reduction in sexual abuse, and emergence of preventative medicine. Figure 5 shows their locations in relation to the rest of the country, and figure 6 shows their locations in relation to Lima.

Figure 5 (left). Pamplona, Miraflores and Villa el Salvador, all of which are very close to the Cordillera Negra

Figure 6 (right). Miraflores is northwest near the ocean, Pamplona is northeast near the Cordillera, and villa el Salvador is the southernmost district.
Maps provided by GoogleMaps

Villa el Salvador has straight, defined streets, with spaces wide enough for vehicles and trucks to pass through. The houses are placed in defined plots so that when
one looks down a road in Villa el Salvador, it is clearly organized into plots and streets. The houses are very close to each other, but they nonetheless possess a defined space. Within these spaces, preservation of green areas and nature has been made a priority. There are plants surrounding houses, parks in the district, and medians along the road that have trees and fields. In figure 7, one can see the shape of the streets, the plants that were planted around the houses, and an organized streetlamp network.

![Figure 7. Street in Villa el Salvador](image)

Figure 7. Street in Villa el Salvador
Photo by Eleanor Dickens, July 2013

There are defined zones in the district for different types of establishment: municipalities, housing, parks, markets, technological district, and production areas. Upon entering the main municipality building, there are receptionists to assure that visitors find the right office, patriotically decorated offices, and people to network between offices to help solve any problems. When I visited, I observed a young baby being neglected by its parents. I saw a group of concerned individuals report this to the municipality. The whole process took around 20 minutes. It included a form and a brief interview and was very organized. To reserve a park or communal meeting space, one can set an appointment at the municipality and reserve it through an easy process. Preventative medicine and social reform initiatives are promoted by the municipalities to raise awareness and decrease the amount of abuses that occur in the district. Figure 8 shows a poster that raises awareness for sexual abuse, and figure 9 shows a poster that
raises awareness for domestic abuse, both of which are displayed in the municipality. Figure 10 shows a typical office in the municipality.

Figure 8 (left). “Dile alto a la explotación sexual. Forma parte de nuestro equipo,” meaning, “Say no to sexual abuse. Become part of our team.”

Figure 9 (right). “Amo a mi hija y a mi hijo. Nunca los dañaré. Un hombre que daña a sus hijos no es hombre,” meaning, “I love my children. I would never hurt them. A man who hurts his children is not a man.”

Photos by Eleanor Dickens, August 2013

Figure 10: a typical office in the municipality, complete with desks, computers, printers, decorations, chairs for guests, etc.

Photo by Eleanor Dickens, August 2013
Villa el Salvador has a technological district where individuals and families produce and sell goods including: shoes, purses, paintings, dishes, desks, beds, couches, and carved wooden furniture. Refugees brought these trades with them when they fled areas in jeopardy from the Sendero Luminoso, and soon began to work in their area of expertise after arriving in Villa el Salvador. Eventually, this led to mass-production of goods and warehouses full of those goods. They welcome patrons to buy their goods, but their warehouses of goods are mostly sold by being exported nationally or internationally. Members of this working community began to realize in the early 2000s that their businesses would be more competitive if their children went to university. The recognized that business degrees could be used to export and sell more effectively and engineering degrees could be used to improve the efficiency of their production. These parents (who began the businesses in the 70s and 80s during their younger years) began sending their children to school. Figures 11-13 show warehouses that sell and export furniture and fabric.

![Figure 11 (left). warehouse with children’s room furniture](image1)

![Figure 12 (top right). warehouse with furniture including couches, dining tables and cabinets](image2)

![Figure 13 (bottom left). warehouse with large fabric spools to sell in bulk domestically or to export](image3)

Photos by Eleanor Dickens, August 2013

Conclusions

Despite similar beginnings, the manifestations of the community in Villa el Salvador starkly contrasts that of Pamplona. Most importantly, there were community leaders in Villa el Salvador to guide the development of the area, plan the urban spaces, begin the tradition of preserving wildlife and organizing the streets. The base that the leaders of Villa el Salvador created has propelled the community drastically further than
Pamplona from a developmental standpoint. Pamplona is still struggling to establish this base, while Villa el Salvador has had over 20 years to develop after forming this base.

Another important theme to notice while comparing the two communities is awareness and care for the environment and community. Community members will not care for their community if they do not feel a social bond with community members outside of their close-knit groups. This feeling of expanding one’s circle of trust comes with organization. If a community is organized, each member in the community has a job and a role. Community members get to know the each others’ character whilst working together, which builds trust. Care for the environment and the community is represented by the planting of trees and flowers around the houses because the community members take pride in their community and want to enhance it. The close relations that the leaders in the municipality have with each other help the community to run very smoothly, both inside and outside the office. Again, this dynamic would not be present without a social bond with others in the community. On a similar note, the importance that the community places on social reform initiatives (raising awareness of domestic abuse and sexual abuse) shows the care they have for their community. Pamplona has never had the chance to create these social bonds, as there is no organization. They know the members of their respective group, but there is no unification of the society in Pamplona, further contributing to the problem of a lack of organization.

The last difference to note between Villa el Salvador and Pamplona is the source of revenue for the communities. Pamplona does not have any trade or production base from which the inhabitants could gain capital for their community’s economy. Villa el Salvador, however, has gone through several stages of trade and production. It started with the practice of one’s trade, then the expansion towards mass production (facilitated through molds and stamps for ceramics, the use of templates for the creation of furniture, and other means), finally influencing workers to send their children to a university. Pamplona is still struggling to establish its economy. The situation in Villa el Salvador reflects a manner of thinking in which people think towards the future. They begin to plan for the next month, year, two years, ten years, or more; which also comes from community organization. When people work together to organize and develop their community, they are training themselves to think about their community and where it will be in ten or more years. If they had not, they would not have seen the importance for urban planning (e.g., establishing electrical and sewage lines, influx of vehicles passing through.). This is represented most recently by the tendency of workers to send their children to a university. They have been subconsciously trained to think forward five or ten years into the future and have realized that their business will be better in the future if they spend the money now to send their child to school. Unfortunately, in Pamplona, this dynamic is not as clearly present. The community members are forced to think about life in a ‘day-by-day’ mindset, so that they can feed their family, buy electricity, buy water, and obtain other necessities. Their under-developed community has crippled them by not providing the necessary services to aid them in learning to plan ahead. Without the ability to plan ahead, a community has no hope of propelling itself out of poverty.

The effects of Sendero Luminoso are profoundly represented here. As characterized above, the economy took a drastic downward turn during the time of Sendero Luminoso. The government exploited their people, and the government was no longer able to provide for the basic needs of its citizens. This created a distrust of the
government and a mindset that the communities had to take care of their needs outside of
the help from the government. The community members have a legacy of needing to
provide for themselves while staying away from the government to avoid exploitation or
empty promises. In the minds of the community members, they are better off to think that
“los trapos sucios se lavan en casa”, meaning “dirty clothes are washed at home.” This is
a common phrase in the Latin American community, meaning that if one has problems
within one’s ‘circle’ (e.g., spouse, family, community), it is better to take care of it
themselves because it is more predictable and in a controlled environment. Distrust and
fear of the government crippled the development of Pamplona.

Long-term Effects

Societal long-term effects

Municipalities similar to Pamplona are in almost the same situation they were in
when they originally formed into communities. Due to the lack of governmental support,
organization, and resources, these communities have not been able to create well-
developed areas that encourage futuristic-thinking among its members. This is a vicious
cycle that often characterizes poverty. The impoverished cannot typically develop the
habit of thinking and planning ahead (e.g., setting aside money for higher education for
their children to use in five to ten years, forming leadership groups in communities to
plan a petition for a water source that takes six months to implement, building large
enough roads so that in a number of months or years large vehicles can visit the
community to bring supplies and goods) because they are living on a ‘paycheck-to-
paycheck’ schedule. If they can hardly pay for food for the next day, it is extremely
difficult to think and plan ahead for six months or ten years down the road. If nothing
else, the marginalization imposed on them by society and by the government for being
impoverished crushes the morale of the people. The combination of these two factors
restricts the communities from being empowered to develop the ability to think and plan
ahead. This cripples them further, because the way out of poverty is to think and plan for
ways to get out. The cycle repeats for years and generations past the origins of the
communities. Willakuy explained:

The violent armed forces produced alterations in the productive organization of
the families and communities, generated large problems in the adequacy of the
circulation of products and resources, and dampened the hops of personal and
communal development. The disorganization... created problems with the
leadership of the administration. They failed in resolving intra- and inter-
communal conflicts.39

According to this author, there has been a ‘paralysis of efforts for the development of
communities.’40

39 Willakuy, Versión Abreviada, 55.
40 Ibid., 62.
Humans have a high degree of plasticity, so we are able to grow and change to accommodate for a changing environment. It is cruel to assume that the impoverished are not capable of developing this way of thinking and that they are of lesser ability than those of higher income. This assumption is a form of cultural hegemony. It is not that the impoverished are inferior for the barriers they face to think ahead; it is that they have not had the chance to train their minds to do so because of the very nature of what impoverished them.

Sendero Luminoso is what drove the citizens away from their home, which stripped them of the intense bond they felt to the place of their ancestors towards the city. In the city they could not thrive, and this drove them to the outskirts of the city. They attempted to form their own communities with no organization, which has crippled them for decades. Due to the lack of organization and urban planning in the origins of the communities, the vicious cycle of poverty remains in action, as it will take a complete reconstruction of the communities to solve. This is extremely difficult in Perú, due to the effects of Sendero Luminoso on the government.

**Governmental long-term effects**

Pre-1983, the government was making strides towards a better economy, a decrease in the corruption of the government, and an improvement of social welfare. When Sendero Luminoso began fighting, the government abandoned its policies and made a desperate attempt to snuff out the rebel groups. Due to the nature of the Marxist group, one of secrecy and of a formation of an ‘underground series of lattices’, the government could not analyze and effectively shut down the group. The group was so developed and complex that it blindsided the government. In its desperate attempt, the government destroyed its relationships with the communities as well as the well-being of the communities in three ways: (1) it exploited, plundered, and abused its own people, (2) it halted its efforts in the improvement in social welfare, and (3) it did not aid its people in their resettlement as they moved away from the influence of the rebel groups.

The government has not made many strides to lessen the amount of corruption or to improve the social welfare of its community members. In August of 2013 the doctors and nurses working in hospitals located in Lima and the surrounding areas began a strike to call upon the government to build more hospitals and to increase the amount of monetary support for the hospitals to aid in improvement of materials for the patients. In many parts of the city and the outskirts there is one hospital to serve districts of over a million people. Patients are not getting the healthcare they need due to the government’s lack of interest in social welfare.

Corruption is rampant in Perú. Reporter Mitra Taj writes in 2013 that, “Government institutions remain weak, poverty persists, and corruption and crime are still rampant. President Ollanta Humala was elected on promises to ensure all Peruvians benefit from economic growth. But two years into his government, he's been unable to implement key reforms in health care, education or policing.”

Much of this corruption is due to the drug trade, but it is also represented in the lack of care for the citizens by the elected officials. In order to get elected, politicians make promises of reform for the impoverished areas, and once elected make no strides to

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do so. One politician in particular photographed a staircase leading up rocky terrain. MEDLIFE, a Non Governmental Organization (NGO), had built the staircase to lessen the risk of injury. He used this photograph in his campaign and claimed that he had built it to benefit the communities so that he would get elected. The legacy of Sendero Luminoso has been detrimental to the wellbeing of the society.

Conclusion

The situation with Sendero Luminoso drastically influenced the political, economic, and social situations present in Perú at that time. Some communities, like Pamplona, were crippled by lack of governmental support, distrust of the government, and lack of organization, and they are still trying to recover today. Others, such as Villa el Salvador, were able to pull through the political situation by organizing themselves with the long-term effects of a developed district with preventative health care, established leadership, and urban planning. The long-term effects of organization are shown in the stark contrast between the two societies. Due to the political situation with Sendero Luminoso and the Peruvian government as well as the tendency to form tight-knit social groups, Pamplona and other communities like it were unable to build their communities around organization and sustainability.

In short, political unrest causes a unique political and socio-economic situation in which the poor are forced to be refugees in their own country. They do not receive help from the government. If they are organized they will thrive. If not they will remain helpless until drastic actions are taken. These actions cannot be taken under a regime that has not fully recovered from the war due to corruption and lack of care for social welfare.
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