

# People of the Shining Path

The economic and political systems in Peru benefit a tiny minority while the majority suffers extreme poverty and violent repression. Over 76,000 Peruvian infants died from malnutrition in 1990 while a large part of country's fish harvest went to the United States to become *cat food*. Opponents of the current regime are harassed or "disappeared." The right to habeas corpus has been suspended, and thousands of political prisoners languish in Peru's prisons.

The Communist Party of Peru, commonly called Sendero Luminoso or Shining Path in the mainstream press, has led a protracted people's war since 1980 in order to fundamentally change Peruvian society — to do away with the violence of poverty and starvation, to give the land to those who till it, to end the oppression of women. The documentary *People of the Shining Path* was made in 1992, and is one of a small handful of Western media pieces which lets members and supporters of the Communist Party speak for themselves. At the time, ruling circles in the United States and Peru thought the victory of the Communists was imminent, and publicly slandered the Communists as "terrorists." But behind closed doors, counterinsurgency experts cautioned them not to believe their own rhetoric, and pointed out that the strength of the Communist movement lay in the work it did organizing the masses towards true self-rule.



Come see *People of the Shining Path* and make up your own mind. Are peasants caught between a repressive central government and the 'terrorists?' Or do they make up the bulk of the revolutionary movement, which is meeting their basic demand for land? Does the Communist Party exploit women, or are they playing a dynamic and leading role in the revolution? Is people's war an oxymoron? Or is it true that — because the current regime uses limitless force to defend poverty and starvation — without a people's army, the people have nothing?

UMass Campus Center Rm 911  
Thursday March 9, 7pm

Sponsored by the Friends of the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League (RAIL), and the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM). For more info write: RAIL PO Box 712 Amherst MA 01004-0712  
mim5@mim.org <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/ma> (413) 582 3934