

P A R T 4

Peru's Shining Path and Agrarian-Based Movements

Although the Greens and Solidarity emerged in very different political contexts—a liberal democracy and a communist party-state—both movements appeared in urban societies and in countries in which agricultural production was largely mechanized. These environmental facts affected the resources available to (as well as the tactics and strategies, and goals adopted by) Germany's Greens and Poland's Solidarity—so much so that it is difficult to imagine the Greens independent of university towns and nuclear reactors or Solidarity without shipyards, factories, and large working-class neighborhoods. Each movement was informed and shaped by its country's mechanized mode of production and urban hubs. This pattern corroborates arguments advanced by Barry Adam (1987), Sidney Tarrow (1994), and Charles Tilly (1978) that urban settings, industrialization, and modern mass media facilitate the emergence of social movements.

Social movements, however, sometimes appear in countries with relatively small industrialized sectors, and sometimes involve large numbers of geographically dispersed, rural folk. For example, Peru's Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) was contemporaneous with the Greens and Solidarity. Unlike them, its initial theater of action was an impoverished region—the southern Andes—where paved roads were novelties, where few households had indoor plumbing (much less television), where literacy was uncommon, and where tiny villages often viewed one other antagonistically as territorial expansionists.

Let us look more closely at this initially and primarily nonurban movement and for clues as to how social movements emerge and develop in countries with limited urban development and industrialization.