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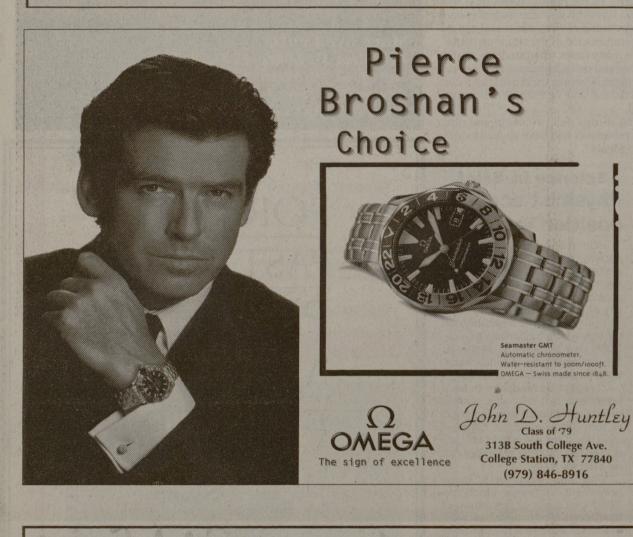
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# Peru's Fujimori resign country caught off guar

NEWS

THE BATTALION

LIMA, Peru (AP) — President Alberto Fujimori resigned in a letter to Congress on Monday, ending a 10year reign in which he crushed leftist insurgents and tamed runaway inflation — but also bullied the country's democracy to fit his iron-fisted rule.

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Fujimori's resignation caught the country's leadership by surprise and left a trail of confusion over who would succeed him. The president was on a visit to his ancestral homeland Japan and stepped down in a letter to Congress President Valentin Paniagua.

"I submit to you, Mr. President of Congress, my formal resignation as president of the republic," Fujimori wrote in the two-page letter, a copy of which was faxed to the Associated Press by the Government Palace.

"I am the first to recognize that there is a new politi-cal scenario in the country," said Fujimori in the letter.

It was not clear when — or if — Fujimori would return to Peru. Japanese officials said Fujimori had not requested political asylum. But Mary Ellen Countryman, a spokeswoman for the U.S. National Security Council, said Monday that Peruvian officials have informed the U.S. government that Fujimori would stay in Japan indefinitely.

Paniagua said Congress would be called into session Tuesday to take up the resignation. Fujimori's letter spoke of a "new correlation of

forces." It was an apparent reference to the fact that opposition lawmakers won control of Congress last week

The letter did not elaborate, but a motion had been placed before the 120-seat legislature to remove Fuji-

mori as president on constitutional grounds of incapacity.

Fujimori acknowledged "errors" during his of rule but insisted he had always acted in Perus terests. He said he was stepping aside for the gov

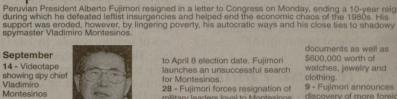
Fujimori had announced in a written staten er Monday that he would resign within 48 hours

Fujimori was initially popular for defeating erful Marxist Shining Path and Tupac Amaru tionary Movement guerrillas - which controlle of Peru's countryside and shantytowns, and entit nual inflation that topped 7,000 percent when office in 1990.

But his popular support was eroded by lim poverty, weariness with his autocratic waysure close ties to his shadowy spymaster Vladiminian tesinos, who critics charge with corruption and enough

The signature moment of his autocratic, here leadership style came in 1996 when he person rected the rescue of 74 hostages held by Tupatr, rebels in the Japanese ambassador's residence. The siege ended with commandoes storming taing, killing all 14 rebels.

Fujimori and Montesinos had controlled alman pects of Peruvian society - from congress to the to television stations - and his resignation has power struggle to fill the vacuum he leaves.



A president's fall

November

#### money to join bloc is leaked to

16 - Fujimori deactivates the feared National Intelligence Service run by Montesinos. Fujimori will cut short his third five-year term and convene new

elections.
21 - Peru's armed forces support Fujimori's call for new elections.
23 - Montesinos flees the country.
26 - Peru's judiciary shelves criminal investigation against Montesinos.

#### October

paying opposit congressman

20 - Fujimori's government insists on amnesty for officials accused of human rights abuses. Opposition leaders accuse Fujimori of trying to grant Montesinos and his military allies

Montesinos returns to Peru 25 - Peru's opposition groups agree

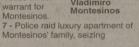
compiled from AP wire report

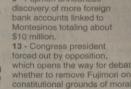
to April 8 election date. Fujimori \$600,000 worth of watches, jewelry and launches an unsuccessful search for Montesinos. 28 - Fujimori forces resignation of military leaders loyal to Montesinos. othing. 9 - Fujimori announces

2 - Justice minister announces request from Switzerland for help investigating alleged money laundering by Montesinos involving Swiss bank accounts totaling more han \$48 million 3 - Attorney general loyal to Montesihos quits. 4 - Criminal complaints filed

Montesinos for

6 - Judge issues arres warrant for Police raid luxury apartr





constitutional grounds of moral incapacity. Fujimori attends summit in Brunei of Pacific Rim nations. 16 - Political moderate elected Congress president, giving the opposition legislative control of Peru for first time since 1992; threat of Fujimori' ouster increases.

17 - Fujimori heads to his ancestra homeland of Japan unexpectedly, supposedly to obtain loans for Per 18 - Japanese Foreign Ministry says Fujimori will remain in Tokyo longer than planned. Speculation increases that Fujimori plans to resign and might not return to Peru.



PERU





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