

**Hugh Sheridan Plunkett
Memorial Service
July 30, 2022**

Sher was a good friend and colleague. We worked together in Peru from 1998 to 2002. Sher's ability to dispassionately assess a problem, develop an array of possible courses of action and then bring our team together to have a common goal was a such a critical factor in the success of our program.

We were working in a difficult area of Peru – inhabited by bad characters in the form of Marxist guerilla movements (Shining Path and MRTA) and drug traffickers. It was not an easy task to design and implement programs that could help Peruvian farmers turn away from coca production. Sher's analytical skills and easy manner calmed the waters as we went through the ups and downs of working on the USAID Alternative Development program.

People say that it is not what someone says that you remember but rather how they made you feel. Sher's presence brought a sense of calm and steadiness to our efforts. Sher was never flustered – of course, he had his opinions about the bureaucracy and how things could

be improved but invariably Sher brought solutions to the fight.

That was critical – anybody could identify problems, but Sher highlighted ways we could move forward whether it was building a stone paving road system that he contended was only second to the Appian Way in ancient Rome. This building project provided access to markets, gave employment to local residents and imparted a sense of hope. All the things that Sher believed were necessary elements of a sustainable development program. I learned a lot from Sher.

We stayed in touch after our time in Peru. I prepared a video for his retirement celebration in 2003 that included Kris Kristofferson's song, "The Pilgrim" which while not a description of Sher in a real sense, did remind me of his journey and the things he worked to accomplish. Sher was in his own way a poet and in other ways a prophet and in the end, I believe he would agree, that the going up was worth the coming down.

Rest in peace, friend.