

The Maoist Internationalist Movement

e.u. dando a Puerto Rico alluda económica por sus cercanos metodos imperialistas para mantener la población sin levantar armas en revolución. Aunque Puerto Rico no es tan rico como e.u. hay significantes beneficios que e.u. provée a esta colonia que no provée a sus neocolonias en todo Latino America. (Para más información sobre esto envia \$1.00 a el planfleto de RIAL sobre Puerto Rico.)

Es cierto que el pueblo de Israel lucho una larga batalla para adquirir su tierra pero contrario a la lucha de los puertorriqueños, los judios que lucharon por Israel lo hicieron a costillas de la gente Palestina. No fue una batalla contra un ocupante imperialista. De hecho ha resultado en más oppresión de los Arabes en el medio este mientras los estados unidos ha arrojado todo su peso detras de otro amigo imperialista Israel. Aunque todos los pueblos opprimidos deben aprender sobre la lucha por palestina esta no debe ser la lucha que la gente puertorriqueña aspira pelear.

¿Quieres Más en Español? So do we.

MIM's Spanish language newspaper is called Notas Rojas. One page appears in each issue of MIM Notes. But full issues of Notas Rojas are still rare and unpredictable. Get in touch if you want to help make Notas Rojas a reliable source for Maoist news for our Spanish speaking readers

MIM needs translators

You can aid the development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism internationally by translating MIM literature into Spanish, French, or any other language you can write in.

MIM's cardinal principles define proletarian politics in many of the imperialist countries. Yet many people around the world cannot read these basic principles and struggle with MIM because our literature is not translated into their languages. If you can translate MIM's work from English, please contact mim3@mim.org, or write to us at:

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La Lucha Borriqueña



The Maoist Internationalist Movement

INSIDE: History of the Puerto Rican Liberation Struggle
The Young Lords Party
The Noble Young Lords Party
The internal class structure of Puerto Rico
Independence, Statehood, Commonwealth
U\$ Out of Vieques

Produced by HC 93
2004

WHAT IS MIM?

The Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM) is the collection of existing or emerging Maoist internationalist parties in the English-speaking imperialist countries and their English-speaking internal semi-colonies, as well as the existing or emerging Maoist Internationalist parties in Belgium, France and Quebec and the existing or emerging Spanish-speaking Maoist Internationalist parties of Aztlan, Puerto Rico and other territories of the U.S. Empire.

MIM Notes is the newspaper of MIM. Notas Rojas is the newspaper of the Spanish-speaking parties or emerging parties of MIM. MIM upholds the revolutionary communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and is an internationalist organization that works from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat. MIM struggles to end the oppression of all groups over other groups: classes, genders, nations. MIM knows this is only possibly by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle. Revolution is a reality for North America as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony. MIM differs from other communist parties on three main questions: (1) MIM holds that after the proletariat seizes power in socialist revolution, the potential exists for capitalist restoration under the leadership of a new bourgeoisie within the communist party itself. In the case of the USSR, the bourgeoisie seized power after the death of Stalin in 1953; in China, it was after Mao's death and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. (2) MIM upholds the Chinese Cultural Revolution as the farthest advance of communism in humyn history. (3) As Marx, Engels and Lenin formulated and MIM has reiterated through materialist analysis, imperialism extracts super-profits from the Third World and in part uses this wealth to buy off whole populations of oppressor nation so-called workers. These so-called workers bought off by imperialism form a new petty-bourgeoisie called the labor aristocracy. These classes are not the principal vehicles to advance Maoism within those countries because their standards of living depend on imperialism. At this time, imperialist super-profits create this situation in the Canada, Quebec, the United States, England, France, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Israel, Sweden and Denmark. MIM accepts people as members who agree on these basic principles and accept democratic centralism, the system of majority rule, on other questions of party line.

"The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases, but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution."

- Mao Zedong, Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 208.

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iones de dólares que ofreció Clinton a el gov. Rosello (pequeño menudo para las riquesas que poseé Amerika) el gov. Pedro Rosello se vendió como Judas y permitio 3 años mas de bombardeo, sin importar lo que quiere el pueblo. Personas como Rosie Pérez (actris) fue arrestada junto a otras valientes mujeres Puertorriqueñas por levantar su voz frente a las naciones unidas en NY. Haci como el cantante Ricky Martin y el campeón de la WBC IBF Felix trinidad tambien perdieron su tiempo en levantar consciencia en diferentes medios por que su gobernante en Puerto Rico prefirió el dinero a los decesos de su pueblo.

En un futuro no muy lejano cuando Puerto Rico sea regalado en bandeja de plata a su captor capitalista colonialista el tiempo pasara y la identidad Borinqueña sera algo de historia haci como Yugoslavia no enciste mas tambien Boriquen perdera su nombre y con el su gente y su identidad, los refugiados Puerto Riqueños se esparcirán como hormigas cuando los colonizadores y el IRS los heche de sus casas y terrenos, cuando vivan como refugiados en tierra agena y aprendan de su error no sera facil recuperar una tierra bajo nombre estado numero 51 en la vanderá de Amerika y la guerra para recuperar lo que regalarón no sera de 6 dias como la guerra por israel sera una guerra por generaciones que quisas nunca se gane.

Este servidor que escribio supensar es un prisionero en massachusetts de no ser haci estuviera en la playa de Vieques protestando con patriotas como Ruben Berrios en el area ocupada por el navy de Amerika. Bajo mi encarcelamiento vivo a dia la otra cara de mis captores y los captores de mi tierra y sus taticas de opresión y abuso (fui juzgado y condenado por el opresor sin una defensa apropiada) pero mi educó dia a dia en especial en teoria Marxistas y mientras haiga un aliento de vida en mi. Ya sea en prision o hombre libre siguire siendo uno de las minorias de Borinqueños que no se vendio como dice la canción de Ruben Blades se ven las caras de trabajo y e sudor de gente de carne y hueso que no se vendio, de gentes trabajando y buscando un nuevo camino orgullosos de su herrencia y de ser Latino de una raza unida la que bolivar soño!

Viva Puerto Rico libre.

MIM responds:

Este compañero pone en exposicion la posicion colonial de Puerto Rico y de su gobernador imperialista Rosello. La batalla por la ocupación naval de vieques ha sido muy importante para levantar consciencia de activismo tanto en Puerto ico como en e. u. MIM no hiza tan lejos como este compañero en decir que la gente en Puerto Rico no esta luchando por su pais pero es cierto que la población de Puerto Rico por mayoría no quiere la independencia de e.u.

Esta contradicción entre querer un poco de autonomia (no bombardeo naval o ocupación de vieques) pero mantener relaciones con e.u. es un resultado de

tonio “Camacho” Negron, Edwin Cortez, Elizam Escobar, Alicia Rodriguez, Juan Segarra Palmer, Carlos Torres, Carmen Valentin, Ida Luz Rodriguez, Adolfo Matos, and all other Puerto Rican Prisoners of War. We pray for your liberation. Also to those who have passed away fighting for the cause, you may be gone but not forgotten.

-- A Puerto Rican Prisoner, 15 March 1998

El pueblo que bendio su tierra

Como Borincano (original termino para puertorriqueño) siento el peso y la tristeza de ver la situación áctual de Boriquén y de un pueblo que a ojos bendados ha de entregar por completo su patria y sus raizes a el gobierno imperialista de los estados unidos. Puerto Rico una colonia por mas de 500 años ha sido tratado como prostituta primero violada por españa para luego ser arrebatada por un jampón más poderoso amerika (en la guerra Hispano americana 1898) aún hoy en el nuevo millenio somos un pueblo sin identidad bajo el imperialismo colonial del cual por mas que traten de asimilarizar su amerikanismo, nunca serán aceptados como americanos.

El Puertorriqueño diviese aprender de la historia del mundo y de los problemas de los refugiados residentes en tierra agena ej. Los Gipsios, Judios y mas reciente urdos. pero al menos el pueblo judio contrario al Borinqueño no seso de luchar por recuperar su tierra hasta lograr su ictoria en la guerra de 6 dies (1968). Hay quien opine abusos cometidos contra el pueblo palestino como resultado de esta guerra y el fundado estado de Israel, cullo pliege continua hasta el dia de hoy. Contrario a el pueblo Borinqueño que guiere regalar su tierra raizes y cultura a un pais imperialista los judios no se detuvieron ante nada por recuperar su tierra. Ellos vivieron la pesadilla de ser unos imigrantes en tierra agena y fueron victimas de una de las mas macabras hazañas criminales bajo el genoxido nazi en la secunda guerra mundial. El pueblo judio valora el tener su propio pueblo mientras los Borincanos ó al menos la mayoría quierier ser el estado #51 segun mostró el mas reciente plebisito.

Yo me senti animado cuando recientemente el gov. Pedro Rosello tomo un acto patriota y esigio a washington detener el bombardeo de la isla de Vieques cuya población sufré un acto numero de pasientes de cancer gracias a las bombas de uranio que uncel sam viene arrojando por decadas sobre la isla de Vieques, senti un gran orgullo al ver mi pueblo y su lider levantar su voz contra el abuso capitalista. por un momento pensé que el gobierno marioneta de Rosello habia cortado las cuerdas que lo maneja (washington) per mi ilución murio cuando vi la realidad la pura realidad que ipnotisa los Borincanos que votan por estadidad en el plebisito, el signo todo poderoso \$. Por algunos mil-

Introduction

by HC 93

In 1998, comrades from the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League assembled a pamphlet calling for the independence of Puerto Rico, while marking the 100th anniversary of the u\$ invasion of the island. Thousands of copies were quickly distributed to the masses as people took to the streets to protest this disgraceful mile marker of imperialist history. The same year, MIM passed a resolution in congress assessing the contemporary Boriqueño struggle and wrote extensively on the internal class structure of the internal semi-colonies, including Boriqueños on the island and those that have immigrated to the mainland u\$a.

After quickly running out of the pamphlet, comrades and supporters have continued to clamor for information on Boricua. Hence, the long overdue production of this pamphlet in 2004, which includes the documents from the original 1998 pamphlet as well as many articles addressing more recent developments. Most noteworthy additions have been the rising resistance to the u\$ military in Vieques and the emergence of the Noble Young Lords Party (NYLP) within the u\$a. Readers should keep an eye out for an upcoming book by the NYLP put out by MIM Distributors.

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The following is the intro to the pamphlet RAIL put together in 1998:

1998 marks the 100th anniversary of the U.\$ invasion of Puerto Rico. After 100 years Puerto Rico still remains a colony of the U.\$. Almost four million people live in Puerto Rico, and about as many Puerto Ricans live on the u.\$. mainland. Many have gone to the u.s. since 1917, when Puerto Ricans were granted a limited form of u.s. citizenship against their will, so that the u.\$. army could recruit them to fight in WWI.

The economy of Puerto Rico, where the average wage is far lower than in the u.s., suffers from high unemployment and low paying jobs. Since the Puerto Rican people have never had the opportunity to develop a self-sufficient economy, their livelihood is dependent on the many foreign (mostly Amerikan) corporations that set up shop for the cheap labor and good tax deals. As an amerikan colony, Puerto Rico has provided the u.s. a very strategic military base, a resource of cheap labor for manufacturing plants, and a vacation resort close to home. U.\$ corporations control 90% of the Puerto Rican economy.

Within u.s. borders and on the island of Puerto Rico the Puerto Rican people face economic, cultural, political and social oppression as a daily reality of life.

Uncle Sam uses the carrot and the stick to keep Puerto Rico under U.\$. rule. One important carrot is U.S. citizenship. Economic pressure in Puerto Rico only builds up so much before emigration to the U.\$.A. Puerto Ricans arrive in the U.\$. not as illegal immigrants but as citizens. U.\$. government programs also bring money to Puerto Rico. These programs dull the nationalist passion of the Puerto Rican people. Finally, there is the U.\$. dollar itself binding Puerto Rico to the U.\$.A. Since Puerto Rico does not have its own currency, it benefits fully from U.\$. imperialist manipulations of international exchange. The people of Puerto Rico enjoy the same prices for goods that mainland U.\$. residents do.

For the stick, the U.\$. puppet regime in Puerto Rico still does not allow unionization of workers and wages are lower on the island than in the u.s. This unique combination of circumstance makes Puerto Rico a microcosm of imperialism and its relationship to oppressed nations. Us-

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George Washington, John Wayne or David Duke and they will reply “correctly” within the blink of an eye.

It is sad how many are lost mentally. Especially when there are so many Latino Organizations with powerful as well as positive names such as The Family (La Familia) and the Latin King Queen Nation. Yet there is still so much violence against (amongst) our own. This lack of interest is why we continue to kill one another. Depleting our own numbers.

If individuals were aware of their history and the past struggles, sacrifices and true revolutionary figures, maybe there would be a lot more respect and less violence. It’s bad enough we have to watch our backs against the machine. Why do we have to continue to watch our backs from our own brothers and sisters in the struggle as well? I sincerely hope that individuals awaken from this madness before it’s too late.

Right now as it stands, there are fifteen Puerto Rican Prisoners of War (mothers and fathers) incarcerated under hellish conditions in Amerikan Gulags because of their political beliefs; and love of their people and Island. Fighting this Hundred Year War of Liberation against these Devil Imperialists.

One hundred years later these people [Amerikkka] are not satisfied with their exploitation of our Island. They are still in the mix of things trying to make Puerto Rico a state. Unfortunately with all the people who have been brainwashed and/or made dependent on the United Snakes, it may happen. If it does happen all will be lost.

Rise up brothers and sisters. Unite for the rights of your people before our Island becomes another permanent fixture of Amerikan Imperialism.

Personal respects to: Oscar Lopez Rivera, Alejandrina Torres, An-

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you potential revolutionaries (like Comrade Nafi) to help us spread the Party and become Noble Young Lords. By the way we perceive the word "Lord" as gender neutral so all you Lord-Sista's help us in this fight as well.

To reach NYLP/LNNA's spokespersons Maldito Green Eyes write to: NYLP/MIM, PO Box 40799, San Francisco, CA 94140. E-mail NYLP@mim.org attn: M.G.E.

One Hundred Years of Resistance

...I would like to comment on a couple of articles printed in MIM Notes (February 1, 1998 issue): "Amerikan COINTELPRO Continues, Puerto Rican Independence Movement Under Attack" and "Freedom and Amnesty for Puerto Rican Independence Leaders". Thank you for shedding light on these topics. Those were great articles, which will hopefully open some eyes on this ongoing struggle.

...The administration where I am incarcerated at seems to be very biased toward not only the Puerto Rican Independence Movement but to Puerto Rico as a whole. I have been mailed letter, pictures and literature pertaining to Puerto Rico and it never reaches my cell. In the past I have had literature as well as flags confiscated from my cell numerous times.

I am a proud Puerto Rican brother with strong beliefs. I have always been for Independence of our Island. ...I carry my flag up high proudly as do many other Boricuas. We were all United Snakes born but this did not deter us from searching for our roots studying up on our history and its struggles (both Spanish and Amerikan) to overcome oppression and seek liberation of its inhabitants from Colonial rule. But for every one Boricua who has studied their history there are five who haven't. You ask the majority of United Snakes born Puerto Ricans who Emertrio Betances, Don Pedro Albizu Campos, Blanca Canoles, or Lolita Lebron are and they will not have a clue. But ask them if they ever heard of

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ing the carrot more than in most oppressed nations, U.S. imperialism has created a "split in the working class" in Puerto Rico. The workers are not all sub-minimum wage proletarians and they are not all labor aristocracy. As an island, Puerto Rico would be the poorest U.\$ state, but there are parts that certainly resemble the Mainland states, especially in the urban and suburban areas where living conditions are very similar to those in the Mainland U\$A.

When the people rise up against colonialism, the U.S. Government cracks down with killings and imprisonment. Even though Puerto Rico is not the 51st state, the U.S. Government calls some actions of the Puerto Rican patriots "sedition" and convicts Puerto Rican patriots in U.S. courts. RAIL calls for the unconditional release of all Puerto Rican prisoners of war. As of yet, the same U.\$ government founded by George Washington has yet to uphold international treaties and recognize the prisoner of war status of the anti-colonial freedom-fighters in Puerto Rico. RAIL joins in the struggle for true self-determination for the Puerto Rican people. We demand that the Puerto Rican people be given immediate independence from u.s. colonialism and we will not stop fighting the U.\$ imperialist occupation of Puerto Rico until independence has been won.

QUE VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE!

Puerto Rico's relationship to U.\$ imperialism and Puerto's Rico class structure

by MC5 March 22, 1998

The highest question on the agenda in Puerto Rico in this 100th anniversary of the Yankee imperialist invasion of Puerto Rico is what should Puerto Rico do about its culture and relationship to the United States. The question is known as "status" in Puerto Rico.

The popular press paints the question as one of three choices: 1) status quo 2) statehood 3) independence. The problem with the status quo is that it continues 100 years of colonialism.

Before the Yankee imperialists there were Spanish imperialists in Puerto Rico. When the Yankees took over in Puerto Rico, the economy revolved around

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agriculture. As in Cuba, sugar was a focal point.

Examining Puerto Rican history this past century, it turns out that we cannot separate the status question from the question of the class structure. For example, much of the initial move out of agriculture in Puerto Rico came from boosting government employment. For politicians to come quickly upon a large sum of money to hire state employees with, a relationship with the United States was necessary.

As of 1993, the 1.2 million workers were only 17 percent in manufacturing, six percent in construction and another five percent in communications and transport. A separate statistic shows that agriculture is now only one percent of the Puerto Rican economy and three percent of the national economy counting exports. Hence, what we Marxists call the “productive sector” is a small minority of the Puerto Rican economy. In this way, Puerto Rico already mirrors its Yankee master. Most employment is services. Government by itself is 22 percent of employment and trade is another 20 percent.

As late as 1950, Puerto Rico was still dominated by agriculture. 36 percent of workers were in agriculture and another 9 percent in manufacturing, thus giving Puerto Rico a hefty productive sector. In 1956, manufacturing surpassed agriculture,⁽¹⁾ but today Puerto Rico sports an economy with 20 or 25 percent of workers in the productive sector, much like the U.S. economy.

Status: colonial, independent or 51st state

According to Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, the Puerto Ricans should not receive \$1 billion in foodstamps, because they do not pay federal taxes. President Nixon and Congress had approved putting Puerto Rico and other island colonies on the foodstamp list in 1971. Since then redneck conservatives like Helms and some liberal colonialists paint Puerto Rico as a country of mooching sponges. Helms says he cannot explain the foodstamps hand-out to Puerto Ricans to his constituents.

We agree that Helms has labor-aristocracy constituents. They have proved to be motivated by racism before. Hence no amount of reasoning about Puerto Rico would help them on issues related to taxes and appropriation of labor.

Rather than endure charges of colonialism, the U.S. government granted Puerto Rico second-class U.S. citizenship. This means the Puerto Rican men have to serve in the U.S. military forces. 60,000 did so in World War I. Hence, maybe Jesse Helms should explain to his constituents that Puerto Rican men die for the U.S.A., but they cannot vote for their commander-in-chief or the

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products. If I had to use an analogy, I'd say it was an all terrain military vehicle. We're not putting a priority on looks or speed; we're more concerned with steadiness, durability, and effectiveness.

WB: My point is as the author...

PP: I'm not the author, I was the editor and project director. I was entrusted by the NCC and membership to write most of the laws, legislation, and protocols but I was also aided by Allah's Panther, G. Good, Kulcan, Beto Puñala, MIM and Don Pacho. MIM, ALKQN and NAIM served as models as well as the YLP and BPP.

WB: I don't think a corporate primer could have done better.

PP: You keep comparing us to capitalist products or orgs. No cool, Bro.

WB: My bad, as you know I'm not a socialist, just anti-pig, so my studies aren't tight in this field.

PP: I can dig it, no issue. I'll be writing Willas' (letters) from up here to remind you every so often that every person's cora (heart) pumps “red”... and yours should too, carnal. But I see where you're going with that. You're not alone in that opinion. I think most people don't expect inmigrantes and caribenos to get too logical with their reasoning. So when they see a manual like this dug up from the muddy streets and the living cemetery we call lockdown, they're impressed. But to us this is all normal shit we talk about all the time. We just weren't aware that people like Mao and Lenin were making scientific theories from our experiences. Once we became aware, we knew we had to lay it down in black and white and hope that the seed spreads. The Political Compendium Manual is no major theoretical work but to us and hopefully to those who buy it it will serve to be the backbone supporting the body as it functions, entiendes? We're not pushing a defective item.

WB: Well, Pueblo I appreciate your time. With revolutionaries like yourself in the mix, I'm sure the movement will be all the better for it.

PP: Thanks, Bear. Listen, before I go, I wanna' send my appreciation to a few people whose support has been a breath of fresh air. It'll be in Spanish, you mind?

WB: Go ahead.

PP: Quiero enviarle saludos y gracias por su apoyo a Dona Carmen, a nuestro hermano C. Maroma el amante de las turistas de Machu Piccu, Keila la heroína de los hermanos condenados, Ailene la Sabrosa, y Denise A.; sangre de mi sangre. Saludos especial van para Gloria, madre de un general. We invite all you college rebels, all you comrades in lockdown who need “one mike,” and all

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100% dedicated to serving and learning by the masses for the long term. WB :
That was deep; you've got charisma.

PP: I've been here before Bear, so let me set it straight. This ain't about "me." I've no desire to engineer a "cult of personality." I'm speaking for myself, Beto Puñala (our National Minister of Defense), and the rest of the National Central Committee, as well as the membership. Being the front man for this party is just a function, a cog in the immense communal wheel that's being constructed on an international scale. The NYLP is a small piece of the larger puzzle of resistance. If I can utilize my "charisma" to further the party's goals then so be it, but a leader must get it straight that s/he is just a function. S/he is not the revolution, just part of it. Give me a 3rd World farmer or a 'Maquiladora' (factory) laborer and I'll show you men and wimmin we should praise. Next to them, who the f*@@ am I?

WB: See what I mean?

PP: F!@* you, man! (laughs)

WB: No, f!@! you, you da' man! (laughs)

PP: Aww, so now you tryin' to keep me up by callin' me "the man"? (smiles)

WB: Listen, as you know, I'm Native American. You might have people reading this who are feeling this movement but they aren't Mexica, Boricua, or Latino in any way. Where does the NYLP stand in relation to other trampled nations such as what you call the First Nations (Native American)?

PP: Well, we don't care about your problems (uncomfortable silence, then smiles). On the serious tip, the Party is in unity with Mao Tse Tung when he said that nationalism is applied internationalism. We want to concentrate on the Latino Nations so that the full effect of our efforts and resources can actually succeed on making a concentrated wedge on enemy lines. If we spread our efforts and resources through various single issues from a larger array of national interests, this early in the game, our effectiveness would be more bland. Once we gain a steady networking apparatus, we can act as a solid foundation for future international interests within other oppressed nations. We've seriously discussed strengthening our base ASAP in order to catalyze sibling bases, i.e. NYLP/First Nations North America and the like. We mention that in the PCM. WB : The Political Compendium Manual (PCM) - you see that as your primer or manifesto, right?

PP: It's the engine without the gas. It's getting' picked up for publishing.

WB: Would you call it a Volvo or a Ferrari?

PP: Ain't no socialist gonna' compare revolutionary literature to imperialist

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Congress that declares war. Maybe his constituents would give him a different response if the educated leader so framed the question. It's not taxation without representation. It's conscription without representation. Helms should also examine the fact that profits repatriated from Puerto Rico equal or exceed the welfare payments to Puerto Rico.(2) By 1978, pharmaceutical companies alone in Puerto Rico repatriated \$1.1 billion in profits. (3)

Beyond the fact that Puerto Ricans have served in all the U.\$ wars this century and continue to serve in the ongoing occupation of Korea and have unfortunately earned their imperialist citizenship with blood, the Puerto Ricans also receive foodstamps, because otherwise they would all move to the U\$A, and the ruling class does not want that to happen. The junior ruling partner known as the labor aristocracy especially does not want all the Puerto Ricans to move to the United States. As it is, Puerto Rico loses a net of over 6 out of 1000 Puerto Ricans to emigration each year. Since the Puerto Ricans do have U.S. citizenship, they would just move to the Mainland U\$A if they endured too much economic difficulty at home in Puerto Rico. It is this dynamic that has undercut the movement for independence for Puerto Rico at a political economy level of causation. Majorities of Puerto Ricans have always expressed economic fear of leaving the U.S.A. as an independent country. However, if Helms did manage to cut the foodstamps or the tax advantage for U.\$ companies operating in Puerto Rico, we at MIM would still say right on! The revolution will only speed up. The choice in Puerto Rico is assimilation, colonial social-democracy or revolutionary communist independence. The more big mouths like Helms we can find, the better for our cause. He will cut out the statehood and colonial social-democratic options.

The belief in the economic necessity of maintaining a strong business interaction with the U\$A led a politician originally for independence toward forming the relationship widely condemned by Puerto Ricans and global anti-imperialists as "colonialism." This colonialism is called "commonwealth" or sometimes "free association." Commonwealth supporters claim Puerto Rico chose its relationship with the U\$A of its own free will.

Today, the U.S. military occupies 13 percent of Puerto Rican land.(4) The U.S. Government also makes decisions for Puerto Rico about shipping, insurance, foreign affairs, defense etc. Boston is the district court for Puerto Rico. Since Puerto Rico is literally administered by the Mainland, it is a colony. We recommend Ronald Fernandez's book "The Disenchanted Island" as the best history of the island. It exposes at length the U.S. imposition of colonialism and the collaborators within Puerto Rico who saw to its continuation. Research uncovered in this book is unknown to other authors we read.

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One of the key acts that determined the shape of the current struggle besides unabated military occupation since 1898 was the president's coming out for free trade in 1899. That means he favored treating Puerto Rico as another state and not charging it tariffs on its exports to the United States. President McKinley recognized that the U.S. war with Spain deprived Puerto Rico of its old trading partner and now Puerto Rico would need a new one, lest it suffer instead of the Spanish.

In a compromise with the U.S. Congress McKinley imposed small tariffs for two years, refused citizenship and reserved the right to proclaim free trade. His legislation became law in 1900. Monies gathered from such tax collection were turned over to Puerto Rico. (5) Ever since then, the fear of losing preferential trade agreements with the US has been a major factor to keep Puerto Rico from going independent.

As Uncle Sam thought about Puerto Rico and what to do with it, the War Department came to an alliance with the island socialists, not unlike the alliances seen of the Kautskyites and others to his right with European imperialism during World War I. The War Department believed it was crucial to hold on to Puerto Rico as a naval base to cork up the Caribbean and it sided with socialists who wanted statehood for Puerto Rico. (6) Hence there has been some steady military reasoning that making Puerto Rico a state was the easiest and surest way to secure military bases in the Caribbean. It was exactly this reasoning that Reagan and Bush applied in speaking for statehood and supporting a Puerto Rican party in favor of a larger welfare state. The first calculation of the ruling class that the Puerto Ricans could use to their advantage was that class struggle might threaten the stability of Puerto Rico and hence make the military bases less secure.

The next advantage of the Puerto Ricans as is often the case was inter-imperialist rivalry. When the Germans and USA were at war, the imperialists decided amongst themselves that the Danish better sell the West Indies to Uncle Sam, because Uncle Sam could protect them better from the Germans. Wanting not to take care of the mess that such a transition would entail, Denmark insisted that all islanders be granted U.S. citizenship. With the aid of a ruling class figure named Arthur Yager, Congress passed a similar bill in 1917 for Puerto Rico to show the world that the USA was more liberal and democratic than Germany. (7) Of course, it also helped that Puerto Ricans were being conscripted for the war!

The leaders of the Union Party that dominated Puerto Rican politics the first 20 years of Yankee invasion opposed accepting U.S. citizenship if it meant that

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able to work on ways to solve the problem. Who is most responsible for the gender oppression at this time? The imperialist! So the NYLP targets the imperialists and makes them the principal contradiction that we fight against. We've got a LOT to learn on this front, but we know that we're beginning on the right path, because our analysis is on point. We thank MIM for aiding us in our studies with respect to this and other topics. WB : How important is MIM's affiliation with the NYLP?

PP: We'd say that they've been INTEGRAL to our development. Many of us became enlightened about dialectic materialism and democratic centralism because of MIM. I've known them since my college days, and I've always respected their flow. Let me change the subject up on you to make a point about something you said earlier.

WB: Go ahead.

PP: You equated the NYLP/LNNA to other LO's (Lumpen Orgs). We should make it clear that while the NYLP/LNNA has a primarily lumpen proletariat element, we're certainly beyond any current collective rockin' the streets right now. We make a distinction between an LO and a vanguard party (VP). MIM is a VP and so are we. The difference is 100% political commitment. The difference is not ego - it's practice.

WB: Speaking of "LO's", do you think that your previous involvement in another controversial org will affect your creds as a legitimate socialist leader?

PP: There was a point before the NYLP when I felt that to create another org would be a betrayal to my former affiliations. But as I matured in this, I recognized this as a psychological subterfuge. If my proclaimed loyalty is first and foremost to the oppressed 3rd World people then it is my duty and my right to serve them in the most advanced form possible. This means that if I am currently in one org which is irrevocably fulfilling half-measures or has become sectarian, and I refuse to join my practice with a cadre or org that is clearly more advanced in their service to the Oppressed Nation Comrades and the 3rd World's oppressed, then clearly THAT IS GENUINE BETRAYAL to our people. No revolutionary should ever allow an identity to be more important than 'La Lucha.' We know what we're doing is right. As for controversy, I owe reparations to my people for tragic crimes based on ignorance and neo-colonial mentality, so part of my dedication comes from redemption. The streets can get you twisted up. But the lionshare of why I'm doing this, why we're doing this, is a love for the Brown Force and our hope to one day see it free from its imperialist chains. The f*!@! up thing about this is there are people more educated and with more resources than we have and we're still waitin' on them to lead the struggle. What the f*!@! we gonna' do, wait till we're 50? Hell no! In this respect we remain hardcore. We'll make ourselves prepared to do the job 'most of the actually prepared' refused to do. That's what we did. We made it happen. Our minds and hearts are

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social, and military oppression (a.k.a. patriarchy). We began by “de- genderizing” language, wherever possible.

WB: I did some research and found some Manifestos, Charters, and Policy books in the `Net. I found some similarity in some of the literature in comparison with the PCM. However, even at their best (namely the Latin King’s Nation manifesto and a similar east coast charter), there is a sense of objectification that positions wimmin as a secondary entity in their respective orgs. Some will deify them while others “protect” them. This is a popular school of thought from Lumpen orgs like yours. Yet the NYLP has a more advanced vision with respect to wimmin - though certainly not new. Why haven’t we seen this before in the Lumpen arena, and how was the NYLP able to overcome that backwards school of thought?

PP: Sh*@, Bear, you caught me sleepin’ on that one, can you repeat that again?

WB: You can’t sleep on me, Pueblo, I’m quick like the crow. (smile)

PP: No SH*@, I thought you were gonna’ be easy (laughs).

WB: Let me put it short. The NYLP represents `revolutionary feminism,’ something lumpen orgs don’t represent effectively. You guys come from the same mold, why are you guys “on point” in this respect while the majority of lumpen orgs aren’t?

PP: A’ight, I’m a put it down now.

WB: Lay it on us, playa’ (smiles).

PP: Dig, we’re all a product of our environment. I truly believe that. Thing is, though that’s the case, we also have the ability to transcend our environment. The lumpen crews reflect their society, so their social laws, rules, opinions on the wimmin’s struggle aren’t taken as important as their own perception of “survival” - real shit a muhf*!@!a’ has to endure comin’ from the inner cities or `doing time.’ What most lumpen fail to realize is that it’s their lack of socio- political and economic analysis that keeps them in the same circle of oppression. Most of the time we’re so busy REACTING to our own individual situations that we fail to focus on the CAUSES of our situation.

WB: Which is why the NYLP keeps `politics in command.’ You all feel that the political arena is responsible for the major points of oppression including how wimmin are perceived.

PP: Exactly! In the instance of the wimmin’s struggle, the problem is patriarchy. This is a major political problem and having identified the problem, we’re

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statehood and independence were ruled out. Yet despite their political voice, the Yankees imposed the hand-picked choice of the U.S. president for governor on the island even after 1917. They also forced citizenship on the Puerto Ricans by threatening military force and by making it practically impossible to get a job without being a U.S. citizen in Puerto Rico. Only 288 Puerto Ricans out of 1.2 million stood up to formally reject U.S. citizenship in 1917.(8)

The original motivation of Commonwealth

Like capitulators everywhere, Luis Munoz Marin despaired of his people’s abilities. He didn’t think Puerto Rico could make it as a nation. Originally Munoz Marin was a Liberal with some Marxist ideas for independence. When he saw the chance though, he got on-board for colonial social-democracy. While we criticize the individual as a political leader, it was inevitable that someone like Munoz Marin would arise given the opportunities that existed in the U.S.-Puerto Rico relationship at the time.

In 1930 he said, “The Puerto Rican masses. . . are as poor today as they were before the United States took over the island. . . . The American tariff compels Puerto Rico to buy necessities in the American market at monopoly prices. . . . It is this flow of wealth out of the island and the high cost of living imposed by the monopoly market that keeps the bulk of the Puerto Rican population in the same economic state of thirty-one years ago.”(9)

>From the 1930s till 1968, Munoz Marin monopolized Puerto Rican politics. However, he changed his position from that of 1930. In essence, he was impressed with the Democratic Party in the U\$A and sought to bring Puerto Rico under the aegis of the New Deal. He told voters that commonwealth, independence or statehood did not matter relative to bread and butter. Although the New Deal had yet to do anything for Puerto Rico, already Teddy Roosevelt Jr. was saying that Puerto Rico should be a “show window looking south.”(10) Munoz Marin correctly understood that Puerto Rico was in for a special deal from the imperialists that could not be offered to all Third World countries. While the imperialist system has no hope of solving the whole world’s economic problems the favored few selected by Washington can become rich.

In salivating for a special deal with the imperialists, Munoz Marin only took up the economism of a social-democratic leader named Santiago Iglesias who came before Munoz Marin. Iglesias had organized Puerto Rico’s first union, but he was in prison when the Yankees landed. The Yankee army let him form a union in 1899. From then until his death in 1939, Iglesias sought to follow the AFL in the U\$A. This meant taking advantage of civil liberties to organize for bread and butter and it meant being pro-statehood.(11) The Socialist Party dis-

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solved after the death of Iglesias, but others were to take up his politics.

The political basis of colonial social-democracy for a generation was machine-politics pure and simple. Those who obtained government sector jobs were expected to contribute to and vote for the PPD--the "Populares." Always the PPD looked ahead for some source of money to hire civil servants to support the party. As late as 1974, the PPD was borrowing money in New York in order to pay for public sector jobs.(12) Beyond the narrow support of the employed in the public sector, the PPD also gains brownie points from the public for increasing employment, no matter on what basis with whatever economic soundness of strategy.

The first 40 years of Yankee invasion, sugar ruled the economy. In 1929, U.S. companies owned or rented 68 percent of the sugar-cane land which was one-third of all Puerto Rico's cultivated land. It was the same story in tobacco and fruit.(13) The first hint of instant money for a PPD political machine were various promises made of providing \$150 million (or less in subsequent promises) to Puerto Rico based on monies collected from the Sugar Act of 1934.(14) Between 1935 and 1938, New Deal relief organizations set up in Puerto Rico did employ 60,000 people and paid \$1 million per month in salaries-- all under the administration of Luis Munoz Marin.(15)

Nothing came of the original promises of the New Deal for a sugar tax for Puerto Rico but revolutionary nationalist unrest at the time continued to worry the imperialists. In 1936 after violence against U.S. colonial officials, the U.S. government proposed independence for Puerto Rico in four years! Colonial "socialist" Santiago Iglesias opposed it and it was dead on arrival in Congress.

Luis Munoz Marin made a classic statement on why he also rejected the proposal for independence and abstained from elections for his Liberal Party. "You can't impale me on that have your cake and eat it too. That is just what I do want."(16) He wanted New Deal money and professed to want independence too; although he would later drop that profession. Thus in 1936, Munoz Marin was salivating for New Deal money to such a degree that he decided he would not support independence when offered on a silver platter. He abandoned his party which won 46 percent of the vote with "independence now!" as a slogan. Had the "socialists" of the social-democratic variety supported independence, there would have been a clear victory.

In 1938, Munoz Marin founded his PPD which won elections till 1968. The New Deal Democrats on the Mainland never did bail out Munoz Marin despite his similarity to them. Rather the New Dealers gave Munoz Marin just a large enough taste of largesse to whet his appetite and create a political machine.

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emulate the original Young Lords Party (YLP) out of Harlem, Brooklyn, Bronx, NY and the ones from Bridgeport, CT. Tho' props must be given to the Young Lords Organization out of Chicago, IL, who originated the Young Lords' political activity. We felt that the original YLP's demise was premature, and we felt it was right to resurrect a more advanced party along these same lines. For us keeping politics in command is keeping the socialist principles in command.

WB: So the NYLP is socialist?

PP: Without a doubt.

WB : And you find this a realistic endeavor?

PP: There can be no doubt that Latino Nations by the millions are looking for revolutionary change. We intend to further that change along as best we can.

WB: With regards to its development, how far has the NYLP evolved from its conception.

PP: Well, let's put it like this, the "Young Lords" name has a long history. In the beginning there was a gang. The 60s brought political growth to the Young Lords and they began to understand and act against the oppressor on behalf of the oppressed. Cha-Cha Jimenez led Chicago in that respect. In New York the Young Lords Party understood that socialism was the key to social and economic freedom from super-exploitation by government and corporate entities. And though they were on the right path they allowed unnecessary dividing lines to hurt the progress of their political awareness. Of course counter-intelligence programs by the FBI pigs played a huge role in their disruption, but they also lacked a complete analysis as it pertained to dialectical studies. This was why the Nationalist and Feminist questions became increasingly difficult to reconcile. One of their major errors was to call the u.\$ working force a working class proletariat. The NYLP has advanced from the YLP's theories by acknowledging that there is little to no proletariat in the u.\$ and also that fighting patriarchy is best done by keeping imperialism as the #1 enemy. Nevertheless we couldn't have gotten this far without them. As to structure, we're doing well, though we are in need of key elements such as more qualified leaders and functional materials/funds. We have a good leadership cadre but we're still looking for more. We have National Minister of Wimmin's Affairs and National Minister of Information seats open in the National Central Committee (NCC).

WB: When I read the NYLP's Political Compendium Manual (PCM)--and I'll go more in depth on that later--I noticed a strong emphasis on the importance of the W-O-M-Y-N's (singular) or W-I-M- M-I-N's (plural) struggle. That's how you spell it, right?

PP: Yeah, it's just a declaration of the right for wimmin to stand as equal and independent humyn beings (spelling intended) and not subject to economic.

The rebirth of an old revolutionary legacy Noble Young Lords Party speaks

MIM welcomes the opportunity to print this interview with Pablo Pueblo, a leader of the Noble Young Lords Party (NYLP). We have worked with the founders of this organization for many years and know the strength of revolutionary theory and practice behind their work. The formation of the NYLP is a step forward for the revolutionary movement within US borders and a culmination of years of hard work and struggle on the part of Pablo Pueblo and other leaders.

We consider the NYLP a fraternal organization that correctly recognizes that the majority of Euro-American workers are petit bourgeois and not objectively allied with proletarian revolution, upholds the Cultural Revolution in China, and opposes post-Stalin Soviet revisionism. Currently MIM is a multinational party. However, MIM recognizes that there are times when vanguard forces from the oppressed nationalities believe they must have separate, single nationality vanguard parties. MIM recognizes their right to form separate parties as a part of oppressed nations' struggle for the self-determination. We believe the validity of single - nationality organizing has been proved in communist history.

Watching Bear: Many of us were surprised. You pulled a lot of influence as a leader of a National Lumpen Organization, one of the biggest Latino organizations (orgs) in the u.\$. After 20 years of involvement you up and leave to found the NYLP/LNNA (NYLP for short)?

Pablo Pueblo: See now how'd you get those details?

WB: Research.

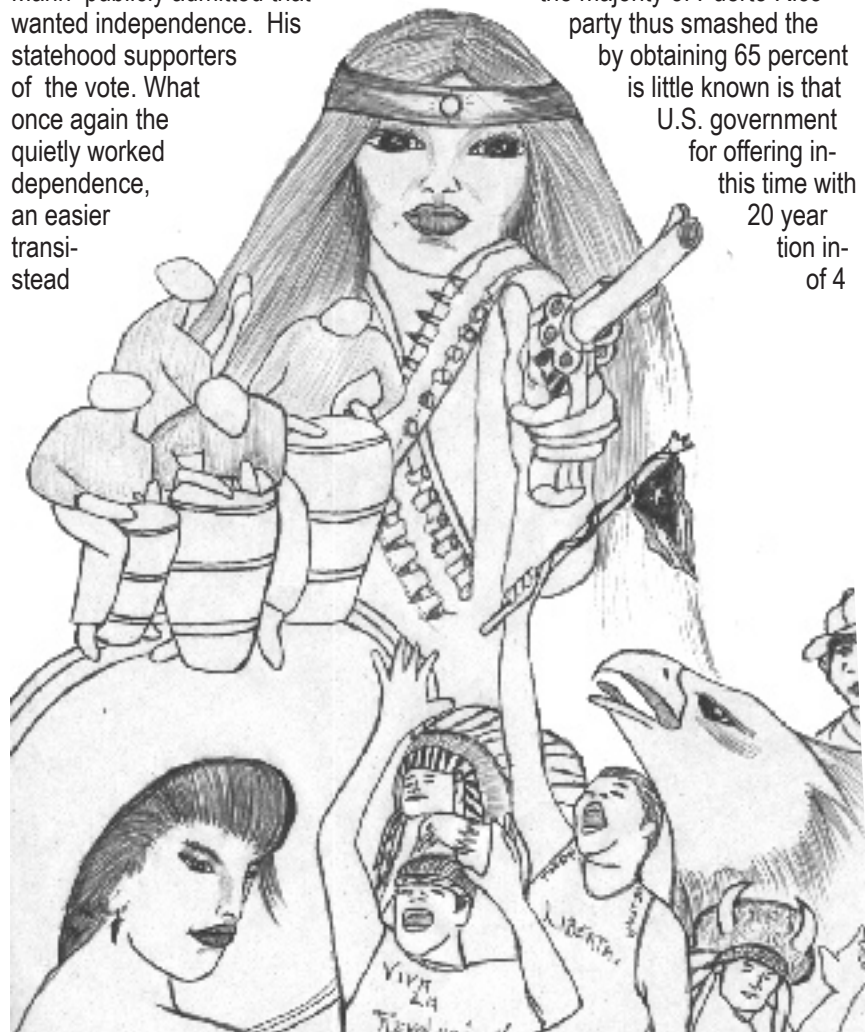
PP: Hmmm (smiles suspiciously), it ain't no secret. As for influence, that's all relative to who's opposing you or supporting you at the time, and that's not a game I wish to pursue. It took me a while to grow up politically, but when I did, I felt that a Latino Nations vanguard was necessary in the u.\$., one that kept "Politics in Command," which is the ONLY way to represent the Third World struggle.

WB: "Politics in Command"?

PP: Yeah, what I mean is an org that claims to represent the people has to establish a CLEAR line of identity. Do you ACT and REACT like a gang, criminal syndicate, social club, progressive social org, or a vanguard party? I've led the gang life and the progressive social org life and I'm not satisfied with either of these. The former is unchannelled rebellion, granted, but still poison to my people. The latter doesn't do enough to work for national self-determination. The NYLP plans to step up the game so that other orgs who claim to represent the oppressed and 3rd World will either step up their revolutionary practice or be repudiated for misrepresentation. We have a political line: Marxism. We chose to

Instead, World War II bailed out the PPD. Cut off from European liquor supplies, the United States suddenly increased Puerto Rican rum consumption. Rum taxes skyrocketed from under \$2 million in 1939 to over \$65 million in 1944 and Puerto Rico managed to get a hold of 70 percent of them.(17) In addition, U.\$ war expenditures coursed through the Puerto Rican economy as well, providing 18.2 percent of that economy in 1945.(18) With money to spend, the PPD bought parcels of land for land reform thus further expanding its popularity.

In 1944 the independence movement surged forward and even Munoz Marin publicly admitted that the majority of Puerto Rico wanted independence. His party thus smashed the statehood supporters by obtaining 65 percent of the vote. What is little known is that once again the U.S. government quietly worked for offering in- this time with an easier 20 year transi- tion in- stead of 4



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years and once again Munoz Marin turned down the bill for independence of 1945.(19)

Although Munoz Marin opposed independence, even his political cronies put up by his party in elections signed petitions for independence in 1945. 11 out of 19 senators, 22 out of 39 representatives and 42 out of 73 PPD mayors supported independence. Ronald Fernandez said this amounted to 57 percent of all elected officials.(20)

Munoz managed to maneuver to an extent at that juncture though intensely criticized for it. Eventually President Truman killed the idea of a plebiscite to determine the will of Puerto Ricans. It is not surprising in the aftermath of Truman's colonial impositions in the face of popular demand, armed struggle arose.

Apart from a nationalist revolt, which we will cover in another article on Pedro Albizu Campos, the next challenge came with regard to international public opinion. To persuade the UN to remove Puerto Rico from the colonies list or non-self-governing territories list as it was called, President Eisenhower promised to grant independence for Puerto Rico any time it asked. So it was that in 1953, President Eisenhower offered independence to Puerto Rico and once again the PPD ignored the offer.(21)

In 1956, major U.S. ruling circles led by Henry Cabot Lodge again raised the idea of independence for Puerto Rico, thanks to criticism at the UN. On this question, we learn that despite our admiration for his book, even Ronald Fernandez believes that a simple principled position of independence for Puerto Rico was not sustainable. Since 67 percent of Puerto Ricans had just approved Commonwealth in 1952 elections and thereby finally achieved formal colonialism through Munoz Marin's leadership, Fernandez again raises that it was wrong for Uncle Sam to raise the idea of setting Puerto Rico free. MIM disagrees with Fernandez on this point: achieving independence through non-violent means however imperfect is still preferable to having to launch People's War. Puerto Rico's rejection through its leadership of independence and the discourse concerning it raise picayune issues in the face of the general principle of independence. It is a measure of the reality of the annexationist position, that Puerto Rican and Amerikan authors both perceive that independence is impractical for this or that reason.

In 1964, Munoz Marin finally retired. 85,000 jobs had been created between 1960 and 1965.(22) The job growth was long overdue, because by 1963 there were still 28,000 fewer total jobs than in 1948.(23)

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communism,
true freedom,
& Third World
proletariat. If
blood needs
to be spilled in
order to save
more blood in the
future, so be it!

But for now,
all I can say
is that if P.R.
becomes a state,
I really don't
know what I will
do. I really don't
know what my
reaction will be,
knowing that I have
no country, flag of
my own. I will truly
be a shamed to
be called a Puerto
Rican. I will deny
my race if I have
to...No, I don't think
I have the cour-
age to do that, I will
always be what I am:
a Boricua revolution-
ary Maoist! Not even
U.S. Imperialism will
change that. But I will
make it a life mission
to destroy Imperial-
ism, even if it takes
5, 10, 15 or even 20,
30 years. I will dream
& think of only de-
stroying our enemy:
Imperialism.

**Boricuan revolutionary Maoist:
“Life mission to destroy imperialism!”**

Dear comrades, P.R. is being forced by Violence to accept statehood. So far, 2 days ago, everyone has voted for the [none of the above ballot option], which means that the people are not sure what they want. No one in the U.S. were informed of how the elections were going. Everything was being censored from the very beginning.

Our people are being fed this big lie that being a state is the best thing for us. I have met a lot of people that believe that Puerto Rico should stay the way it is.

But the funny thing about this bullshit is that the people that want P.R. to stay the way it is (commonwealth) are the very people that want Imperialism to keep on plundering Third World Countries. They want to benefit from the superexploitation, alienation, & oppression; because to these people, in which I am ashamed to say that they are my fellow countrymen, that means more jobs, security, privilege, status, prestige & more hand-outs.

Personally again, I cannot stand a person or a group that wants P.R. to become a state or, to continue it's present course into hell! As a Maoist, I know that these kind people are brainwashed &, that they are also cowards for not being able to come to their own senses. For years, as far as I can remember, we (MIM, RAIL & I speak for those that feels the same way as me & the nationalists) have been trying endlessly to educate, organize, politically mobilize the Latino nations within the U.S.; Puerto Ricans in particular.

For more that 500 years, the P.R. people have been up-rooted from our original existence, reshaped & molded to fit a specific purpose & reason. No consideration has been given concerning our interests. Could it be that we as a people, don't know what we want, what our interests are &, that we need U.S. imperialism to guide us? Bullshit! Only we can know what we want if we only had the courage to do so. We don't need Imperialism to guide anyone because they have always guided us into war, poverty, international oppression & starvation. They have always cared about their own interests, which is to continue being a tyranny, a monster, an enemy of humanity, international proletariat &, the world it self!

Only a true Maoist political revolutionary organization, such as MIM, can led us out of the capitalist wilderness & into the promise land!!! If worse comes to worse & P.R. becomes a state, I hope that there will be bloodshed, civil war, revolution; because if it becomes a state, we as a people will have no flag of our own, our culture, history & language will vanish forever... I know &, I speak for everyone that feels that same way I do, concerning P.R., that we have a duty, an inescapable, sacred duty that cannot be neglected -- for the sake of

Since 1968, there has been a see-saw battle between the statehood supporters of the PNP (New Progressive Party) and the commonwealth continuation of colonialism in the PPD (Popular Democratic Party). In 1968, the PNP won elections, but the PPD won in 1972. The PNP reclaimed power in 1976, but the PPD took it back in 1984 until 1992 when the PNP reclaimed power yet again. Although the PNP is in power, polls show that only 36 percent of the public supports their view for statehood; although it is likely that with the support of U.S. Congress more would support statehood if Congress offered something tangible, like a specific chance and transition plan to become a state. If the terms are not too onerous, it is possible a majority would support statehood.

There is no doubt that it is possible to bend the will of an entire people and bring about assimilation. According to Marx and Lenin such assimilation was a progressive aspect of capitalism that prepared the day of one internationalist humyn race. On the other hand, Lenin strongly backed national liberation in the colonies and semi-colonies.

The masses of Puerto Rico expressed themselves for independence in the 1940s and 1950s. When they were turned down and their armed struggle was crushed, they turned to adjusting to their oppression. The Puerto Rican masses started to pay more attention to choosing their oppressors after 1952, to see if this or that one would provide any small advantage relative to the other oppressors. Both the PNP and PPD are parties of collaboration with Yankee imperialism.

In 1965, the United States sent the Marines to the neighboring Dominican Republic to prevent a democratically elected president from returning himself to power against a U.S.-backed coup. The blood in the streets reminded Puerto Ricans the price of resisting Uncle Sam. When the Nicaraguans elected a “democratic socialist” government, Uncle Sam gave military aid again to the other side and made the people pay in blood for their choice. For this reason, election results in Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the Third World only show what the people will say with their arms twisted behind their backs. In elections, the Puerto Ricans can only choose how they will be chained to the United States, not whether they will be chained.

The result in Puerto Rico where the people spoke for independence and the Yankees rejected it is proof why “democratic socialism” does not work. We communists reject “democratic socialism,” because in this day and age to achieve a truly free election it is necessary to be able to defeat Yankee imperialism militarily. To defeat Yankee imperialism militarily one has to organize a military force, and to be accountable we must admit that it means applying dictatorship over

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the Yankee. The Puerto Ricans have tried for decades "to persuade" the United States to leave, but only dictatorship (organized force) will settle the question. Without the freedom to keep the Yankees out, the elections only show what the Puerto Rican people will say with their arms twisted behind their backs. That is not to mention the economic pressures exerted on Puerto Ricans considering their destiny.

MIM is for dictatorship over the imperialist countries led by the proletariat of the oppressed nations. That means we believe it will only be organized force that abolishes the current state of colonialism and neo-colonialism in the world. We also believe that there should be free trade between socialist states, so that large economies can no longer blackmail small ones with the threat of tariffs.

We started this section talking about the origins of Commonwealth thought on economics. Now we turn to the economic bases for wanting statehood.

The economic basis of assimilation

It is thought that Puerto Rico is not particularly rich in natural resources going beyond its natural beauty, well suited to enjoyment, botany and tourism. With a population about the size of a U.S. city like Chicago, many doubt whether Puerto Rico is a viable nation.

We believe Puerto Rico is a viable nation; however, there is an economic basis for assimilation. It is not much difficulty for the USA to swallow Puerto Rico whole. The strongest force is the economic tie to the Mainland. "Men, as Rousseau remarked, run to meet their chains. Of no person is that more true than the average present-day Puerto Rican, who, with the old class alignments breaking down, indulges in a frantic pursuit of new social status through the ownership of the gimmicks and gadgets offered by the American system. . . . But because they are willing victims they become their own executioners."(24)

In this regard, Munoz Marin was the one to set up the standard where politicians were evaluated based on bread and butter issues devoid of status politics. Running to meet his chains is an apt description, because historians have now uncovered that despite public pronouncements to the contrary by the Congress and Presidents of the U.S. Government, Munoz Marin did receive the option of independence from the USA and he turned it down repeatedly saying it would be an economic disaster. For MIM, this made shocking reading. Usually a politician does not turn down the chance to be head-of-state, but Munoz Marin did. He preferred outright colonialism to neo-colonialism, apparently because he took his own economic philosophy for Puerto Rico seriously. Since Munoz Marin gave legitimacy to the idea of putting aside the status issue for bread-and-butter

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RAIL Notes pamphlet on Puerto Rico and Notas Rojas.

While many organizations claiming to be Marxist or Marxist-led showed up at the rally to distribute their literature, with the exception of RAIL, these groups were trying to connect the Puerto Rican peoples struggle with the so-called working class in the united snakes and promoting false solidarity between the white labor aristocracy and the Puerto Rican nation.

The speakers at the march drew attention to the general strike in Puerto Rico and the on-going phone workers strike, correctly calling for solidarity with the Puerto Rican people's struggle. But the so-called Marxists tried to claim that Amerikan workers' struggles for greater parasitism were linked to the struggle of the Puerto Rican people. As one RAIL comrade asked rhetorically in discussions at the rally: Just exactly when was it that white labor aristocracy struggles for greater wages ever turned into demands against u.s. imperialism? When was the last time white workers' struggles directly targeted or in any way threatened capitalism? While the Puerto Rican workers are drawing connections between the U\$. corporate control of the economy and the U\$. military occupation of the island, the Amerikan workers are supporting u.s. military plunder around the world.

D.C. Rally RAIL also participated in a rally in Washington D.C., at which about 4,000 people (according to the Washington Post) demonstrated in support of Puerto Rican independence. Speakers at the rally also paid special attention to Puerto Rican political prisoners and prisoners of war, who were featured on banners on the stage while family members wore flowers to identify themselves. RAIL found that many people were enthusiastic about reading the RAIL pamphlet on Puerto Rico, which includes a historical article about the Young Lords Party and its program from the late 1960s.

On the same day in Washington, pro-statehood supporters led by the lackey Gov. Pedro Rossello rallied for Puerto Rico becoming a U\$. state. Rossello said voting for statehood in a new referendum would be Puerto Rico's way of ending 100 years of colonialism.(1) In fact, statehood would only transform Puerto Rico from a direct colony to a neo-colony - despite offering some economic incentives to the middle class and labor aristocracy minority on the island. For the majority of Puerto Ricans, on the mainland and on the island, MIM agrees with the Young Lords Party of 1970 that independence and socialism is the real road to liberation.(2)

Notes:

1. *Associated Press in Washington Post, July 26, 1998, p. A10.*
2. *See MIM Theory 7 for an in-depth article on the Young Lords Party.*

100 Years of resistance: Thousands protest Amerikan occupation of Puerto Rico

July 25th 1998 marked the 100 year anniversary of the U.S. military invasion that landed in Puerto Rico through Guanica in 1898. Thousands of people came out to protest the u.s. occupation in cities across the u.s. and in Puerto Rico. RAIL organized a contingent to attend several of the rallies in support of the struggle for independence and self-determination for Puerto Rico. The RAIL contingent focused on the anti-imperialist struggle both within u.s. borders and on the island of Puerto Rico. RAIL also drew connections to national liberation struggles world wide.

The economy of Puerto Rico, where the average wage is far lower than in the u.s., suffers from high unemployment and low paying jobs. U.S. corporations control 90% of the Puerto Rican economy and the u.s. has important military bases on the island. To control its investment, the U.S. has set up a puppet government in Puerto Rico that does the bidding of their imperialist masters.

The u.s. government is attempting to co-opt the Puerto Rican people's desire for self-determination by offering a plebiscite on the status of the island. But under u.s. military and economic domination this plebiscite will do no more than put a democratic face on the u.s. occupation of the island.

RAIL joins the struggle for true self-determination for the Puerto Rican people. We demand that the Puerto Rican people be given immediate independence from u.s. colonialism and we will not stop fighting the U.S. imperialist occupation of Puerto Rico until independence has been won.

New York rally In New York city thousands of Puerto Ricans and supporters of other nationalities joined a festive march to the United Nations to demand an end to the u.s. imperialist occupation and independence for Puerto Rico. The overriding message of this march was anti-imperialist and many speakers decried the u.s. occupation while calling for revolution. The march took advantage of the U.N. resolution 1514 which recognizes the right of colonies to self-determination. Puerto Rico is recognized as a colony of the united snakes and so, if the U.N. were not controlled by the imperialists, principally by the u.s., this U.N. resolution would apply.

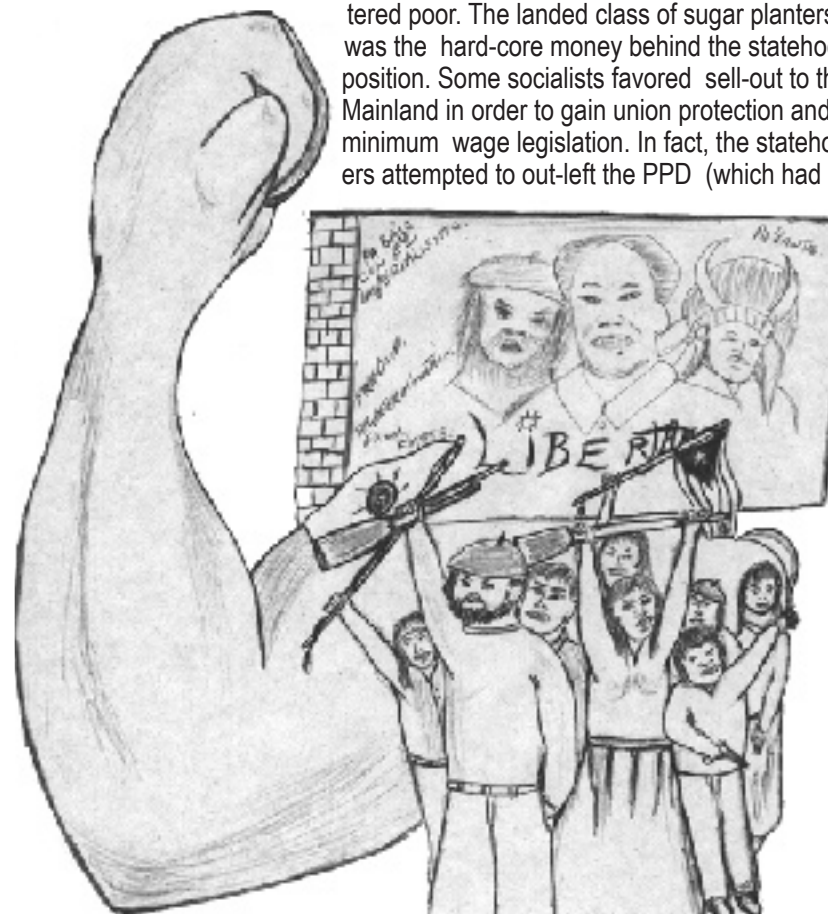
A large contingent of the Allmighty Latin King and Queen Nation participated in the march. MIM has done work with this organization and we support their moves towards increasing involvement in anti-imperialist political struggles. There were also organizations of Asians and Blacks and other Latino nations promoting revolutionary solidarity with the struggle of the Puerto Rican people.

A RAIL contingent marched in the rally under a banner demanding an end to the U.S. imperialist occupation of Puerto Rico and distributed many copies of the

issues, the other Puerto Rican politicians finally countered with economic strategies of their own.

Although PNP statehood supporters say that "statehood is for the poor" (which is the 1973 title of a book by PNP lead Romero Barcelo) because Puerto Ricans would enjoy more welfare benefits as a state, according to a 1997 San Juan Star poll, 52 percent of the Puerto Ricans making under \$5000 a year oppose statehood. That is about equal to the 52.8 percent who rejected statehood in a 1993 plebiscite with 75 percent participation.(25)

Nonetheless, the PNP strengthened its hand greatly by changing its stated reasons for statehood. Where it used to be a tiny minority party, it is now one of the two major bourgeois parties along with the PPD. Originally earlier in the century statehood was the project of the Socialist Party, Republicans and scattered poor. The landed class of sugar planters was the hard-core money behind the statehood position. Some socialists favored sell-out to the Mainland in order to gain union protection and minimum wage legislation. In fact, the statehooders attempted to out-left the PPD (which had



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come to sustained power with populism and colonial social-democracy). 1965 saw the launch of a movement for statehood based on the idea it would gain minimum wage and other labor protection standards for Puerto Rican workers. Out of this movement arose a strong showing in the plebiscite on status in 1967 and Luis Ferre came to power as governor as the head of the new party called the PNP in 1968. (26)

The PNP argued that it was necessary to have an eight person Puerto Rican delegation in Congress and votes in the electoral college to assure that Puerto Rico's budget not be cut. (27) Reagan ended up cutting the Puerto Rico budget in his first term.

Some have noted that as the multinationals repatriated more and more profits out of the country, the only thing that made up the difference was the increase of U.S. federal outlays to Puerto Rico. "Federal transfers--both in the form of program grants, such as those for education or urban improvement, and in the form of grants made directly to individuals, such as food stamps--came to play an increasingly significant role in sustaining the island economy. In 1950, they represented a mere 9 percent of the island's GDP; by 1980, federal assistance accounted for 29 percent and over 60 percent of Puerto Ricans were receiving food stamps." (28)

One basis for annexationism has been removed with the introduction of minimum wages. The notion that minimum wage laws in the U.S. will protect Puerto Ricans has had an influence on wages in Puerto Rico for some time. In 1982, those minimum wages finally fell into line with U.S. minimum wages. (29) Raymond Carr either did not know or passed over this point, but the U.S. companies in Puerto Rico have to pay \$5.15 an hour. It is perhaps difficult for the colonial bourgeoisie to argue that it is necessary to have statehood to have the minimum wage, when Puerto Rico can set its own minimum wage for itself. Currently it is \$4.25. Thus during the PNP period of power the wages equalized at the lower end.

Another basis for the PNP is the Cubans who left Cuba after the revolution. According to Liberal bourgeois historian Raymond Carr, "the most solid social support for the PNP comes from the Cuban exile community, many of whom are members of the prosperous former middle class who have fled the perils of socialism in their home island. . . . Their twenty thousand-odd votes are critical to the PNP; without them, Romero would not be governor of Puerto Rico." (30) That is a reference to the narrow margin of victory in 1980 by the PNP.

Historically, statehood had its support from sugar planters wishing to be part of the USA. Important labor, socialist, Cuban and Black leaders joined in. Al-

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At the end of June more well-known political figures were arrested for civil disobedience at the Vieques bombing site, including Puerto Rican nationalist leader Lolita Lebron and Ponce mayor Rafael Cordero Santiago. Lebron, now 81, was part of an armed attack on the U.S. Congress in 1954 and served 25 years in U.S. federal prison. Bail for her was set at \$30,000, which she refused to post. New York State Assembly member Adam Clayton Powell III was also arrested. His father was a well known Black congressman in the 1960s and his great grandfather was mayor of San Juan in the 1940s. Jacqueline Jackson, wife of Reverend Jesse Jackson, was sentenced to 10 days in prison and kept in solitary confinement because she refused to submit to body searches. (2)

Alberto de Jesus Mercado received the longest sentence for protesting the U.S. Navy bombing of Vieques. On probation for civil disobedience in Vieques, De Jesus was one of the protesters who hung the Puerto Rican and Vieques flags on the Statue of Liberty in November of 2000. Federal Judge Hector Laffitte revoked De Jesus' probation on June 20 and sentenced him to a year in prison. Asked if he had anything to say, De Jesus held up a ripped T-shirt that read "Vieques or Death." Laffitte ordered psychiatric treatment for De Jesus. (2)

In the United States protesters are being arrested as well. Reverend Al Sharpton remains in federal prison in Brooklyn serving a 90 day sentence (since May 23). He staged a hunger strike taking only liquids starting on May 29 and lasting until June 28. (2) Seven people were arrested at an anti-Navy protest in Hartford Connecticut, including State Representative Evelyn Mantilla. The protesters were engaging in peaceful civil disobedience in front of the U.S. Armed Forces Recruitment Center demanding an immediate end to Naval military activities on the island of Vieques. (3)

Of course, a number of American politicians continue to spew their old lies about the helpless idiots in the Third World who need the U.S. imperialists to occupy, exploit, and oppress them. The worst example this month comes from Representative James V. Hansen (R-Utah) in an interview on NPR. He said that Puerto Ricans should not get any special treatment because "They sit down there on welfare and very few of them paying taxes, got a sweetheart deal." (4) Yeah, having the Navy steal your land, bomb your island, contaminate and destroy your environment, and decimate your economy by destroying key industries (fishing, agriculture, cattle-ranching) sure is a sweetheart deal. Perhaps we could move the U.S. bourgeoisie to Vieques when we give back the land of the United States to its rightful original owners and let them enjoy the luxury of cleaning up the toxic waste for the Puerto Rican people.

Notes: 1. Weekly News Update on the Americas, Issue 597, July 8, 2001. Nicaragua Solidarity Network of Greater New York, wnu@igc.org 2. Weekly News Update on the Americas, Issue 596, July 1, 2001. Nicaragua Solidarity Network of Greater New York, wnu@igc.org 3. Vieques Libre - <http://www.viequeslibre.org>, June 27, 2001. 4. The Washington Post, July 1, 2001; Page B01

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if that is necessary to allow the Naval operations in Vieques to continue. The arrests are becoming embarrassing, even for the imperialists who are used to news reports of atrocities that they have engineered or backed. Conservative political figures who generally support imperialism are starting to change sides and join the anti-navy bandwagon.

Many Puerto Rican conservative activists belong to the comprador bourgeois class, which serves as local puppets for Amerikan imperialism. At the same time, they live among their people and must react to the national liberation struggle when it becomes particularly strong. For u.\$ politicians this struggle in Puerto Rico has become a way to try to gain Latino votes and avoid the wrath of the those who oppose the bombing.

Even the bourgeois media is beginning to report favorably on the anti-bombing activists as the protest movement spreads.

A U.\$ federal judge, claiming jurisdiction over Puerto Rico, sentenced Vieques protesters to unusually harsh sentences in July. The protesters, who attempted to block u.\$ Navy bombing in Vieques at the end of April, included Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., son of the assassinated u.s. Senator, who was sentenced to 30 days in jail. He was represented by former New York state governor Mario Cuomo.(1) Mario Cuomo's son Andrew is married to Kennedy's sister and Andrew is a candidate for governor. At the same time New York's Republican governor, George Pataki, has publicly expressed strong sympathy with the Vieques protests.(4) There is a large Puerto Rican population in New York whose support both men hope to win.

The Navy, not caring about political battles going on back home, carry on the tradition of good 'ol imperialist brutality on the island of Vieques. Kennedy and two other men who were arrested with him say they were treated like dogs by Navy police -- literally. They were put in dog kennels overnight. The Navy also deprived them of counsel on the grounds that they were not arrested, only "detained."(4) Peaceful protesters are being brutalized and stories are even making it back to Washington where politicians are worried about the impact on Bush's ability to get the Latino vote. Another prominent politician who went to Vieques to protest the bombing, Rep. Luis Gutierrez, a Democrat from Illinois, was kicked around by Navy policemen even though a video shows him following all orders. One officer put a foot on the congressman's neck and told him to put his face in the dirt. When some protesters told the guard that Gutierrez was a congressman, the guard laughed.(4)

Another unusually harsh sentence issued in July went to Puerto Rican senator Norma Burgos (of the conservative New Progressive Party) who was sentenced to 40 days in jail after the judge told her she "should be a lawmaker not a law-breaker." When she said that the Navy should be on trial, not the protesters, the judge increased her sentence to 60 days.(1)

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though statehood has still not earned majority support from the poor it has made substantial inroads there as well. Those advocating independence suffered from not being able to point to tangible resources and businesses that would keep Puerto Rico afloat if it chose independence. This situation differed from the Japanese invasion Mao faced in China, because the Japanese never managed nor intended to administer the whole country, so substantial parts of the rural economy were left untouched. Mao set up base areas and organized tangible economic forces for nationhood.

The new petty-bourgeoisie

Two authors writing on Puerto Rico--Gordon Lewis and Emilio Pantojas-Garcia-- have followed Poulantzas in talking about the new petty-bourgeoisie in Puerto Rico. Poulantzas put forward the MIM line on the new petty-bourgeoisie before MIM existed. He held that the new petty-bourgeoisie came to replace the working-class in imperialist countries.

Around 1960, the proletarian character of the Puerto Rican people living in the Mainland reached its peak. "By 1950, 48.4 percent of the Puerto Rican migrants in the United States were classified as 'operatives' (i.e. machine operators and related activities) and 18.6 percent were service workers. By 1960, 51.8 percent of the Puerto Rican migrants were classified as operatives and 15.2 percent were service workers."(31) Approximately 10 percent were unemployed; 8 percent were foremen and 2.8 percent were professionals or technicians. Half a million Puerto Ricans moved to the United States in the 1950s.

Meanwhile, those who were left behind in Puerto Rico became increasingly petty-bourgeois in character. "The sectors that increased the most were the craftsmen and foremen, the professionals and technicians, clerical workers, and service workers, in that order. If these occupational categories were translated into the concepts used here the craftsmen and foremen would be included in the labor aristocracy; the professionals and technicians as part of the category that has been called the technobureaucracy; and the clerical workers and service employees, as well as some professionals and technicians, as intermediary elements mainly linked to nonproductive activities. They would constitute, in an embryonic form, what Poulantzas calls the new petty bourgeoisie."(32) Despite the growth of the Puerto Rican petty-bourgeoisie, Puerto Ricans on the mainland still had a 46 percent higher median family income as of 1959.(33)

Monthly Review author Gordon Lewis put it this way in the early 1970s with regard to the formation of two new petty-bourgeois classes in Puerto Rico: "The growth in the 1950s and 1960s of a new generation of professional meritocrats who found a new economic base in the social programs developed by the Popu-

lar reform governments. They became, in Angel Quintero Rivera's phrase, the technocrats of the new industrial welfare state which is modern Puerto Rico. . . .

"Beneath them--although the class lines are somewhat blurred at this point--is a new middle class proper, the genuine children of the embourgeoisement process, the product, sui generis, of the transformation of the society from a quiet, rural economy into a modern, American-style urban economy, with its frenetic pace, its frantic search for social status, its obsessive materialism, and, in brief, its compelling anxiety to 'make the grade' in a new competitive world. Statistically, it forms something like 20 to 25 percent of the population. Occupationally, it includes teachers, government employees, doctors, dentists, welfare workers, salesmen, owners and managers of satellite service industries, junior executives, secretaries, mass media functionaries, technicians, and others. Its physical presence, highly visible, can be seen in the myriad suburban villa areas that have proliferated in the expanding outskirts of the major cities, thus converting greater San Juan into a modern American-style megalopolis, while most of the other Caribbean centers still remain pre-industrial townships."(34)

Already by 1971, poverty was mainly a rural thing. 73 percent of those receiving federal aid for the neediest were in the rural areas of Puerto Rico.(35)

The economy had regressed considerably in the 1960s in terms of employment, but people had moved out of the countryside and a radical expansion of state jobs once again cushioned the blow of a shrinking economy. In 1964 the government sector provided 12 percent of the jobs and by 1976 it was 22 percent.(36)

According to Emilio Pantojas-Garcia, it is the new petty-bourgeoisie which most adamantly opposes independence. Created by economic ties to the USA, the new petty-bourgeoisie seeks various ways to maintain that relationship.(37)

Prospects of development and growth of the Puerto Rican labor aristocracy

Between 1976 and 1988, Puerto Rico generated almost 200,000 new jobs. Much of what dominated political discussion was how to attract banking business to Puerto Rico.

It turns out that imperialist capital benefits from commonwealth the most, because it brings tax-free shelters that would not exist if Puerto Rico were a state in the union. In 1986, taken as a country, Puerto Rico led the whole world for providing profits to U.\$ direct investors. Not England, Canada or West Germany matched total profits obtained in Puerto Rico.(38)

Vieques votes U.\$ Navy out; U.\$ continues bombing

By MC17

On July 29 residents of Vieques once again demonstrated that they want the Navy off of their island. In a referendum that drew 80.5% of the voting population, 68% voted for the "Immediate and permanent termination of the military exercises and bombings of the Navy in Vieques. Withdrawal of the Navy from Vieques and cleaning and return of the viequense lands to its citizens."

The next day an eviction notice was handed to the U.\$ Navy on the island by the mayor of Vieques. The united States considers the referendum nonbinding, meaning that they don't plan to listen to the will of the people and will continue with the training exercises. But it does demonstrate that the anti- navy protesters are not just a vocal minority as Navy supporters like to claim.

President Bush is sticking with his plan to continue bombing Vieques until 2003. In typical imperialist style, Bush plans to hold his own referendum in Vieques in November which will only give the people the option of choosing between his plan or the Navy remaining indefinitely. Consistent with U.\$ electoral practice around the world: When unable to control the outcome of a vote, control the terms of voting. Oh, and try to buy off the voters. Two weeks ago the Navy announced a program to compensate fishermen \$100 per day that bombing exercises prevent them for working. At the same time the Navy announced grants of up to \$25,000 to help small businesses get started on Vieques. Of course the united States has been trying to buy the support of the Puerto Rican people for many years. Supporters of the Navy on the island expressed fear that an anti-Navy vote could jeopardize \$14 billion in annual federal aid.

The passion of the Puerto Rican people surrounding this issue was apparent in the voting; within four hours of the polling stations opening 75% of the island's registered voters had cast their ballots. It is no surprise that the Navy is ignoring the will of the Puerto Rican people. The U.\$ navy is all about ignoring the will of the people around the world. It's purpose, along with the rest of the imperialist military, is to put down any resistance to U.\$ imperialism around the world.

Notes: Associated Press, July 29, 2001.

Conservative politicians jump on the Vieques bandwagon as arrests and bombings continue

By MC17

The U.\$ government appears to be willing to arrest and imprison the entire population of Puerto Rico as well as a substantial section of the united States

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This is why MIM talks about the importance of building a revolutionary party that can lead the anti-imperialist struggle to victory. The imperialists are organized and already well armed. The people are stronger in numbers but need organization and strategy to defeat the imperialists. We stand strong in our support of the protests against u.s. occupation of Vieques and we believe that this is a winnable battle. But we know that the end to u.s. imperialist colonization of Puerto Rico will not come until the people force it out in revolutionary struggle.

Notes:

1. *Weekly News Update on the Americas, Issue #546. July 16, 2000. Nicaragua Solidarity Network of Greater New York, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012. wnu@igc.org.*
2. *Edwin Melndez ed., Colonial Dilemma, Boston: South End Press, 1993, p. 61.*
3. *Boston Globe, August 7, 2000.*



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Thus the growth of the role of imperialist capital in Puerto Rico and the escape of poor Puerto Ricans to the mainland means that the seal of parasitism is rapidly going into place in all of Puerto Rico. In the 1976 to 1988 period, "service and financial sectors led job creation. . . Nonproductive or nonmanual categories grew far more than productive ones, from 47.1 percent of all occupations to 52.3 percent. Productive ones declined from 40.6 to 34.4 percent of all occupations."(39)

The growth of the labor aristocracy in Puerto Rico is assured the more Puerto Rico resembles the imperialist country economies. Currently, the economic situation is comparable to the level of economic development in Greece. Puerto Rico is a notch above Portugal as well, based on gross domestic product per persyn. In this range of development we should also include Korea.

In these countries we see some favorable political fermentation. In Korea, Puerto Rico and the Six Counties of occupied Ireland, the economic development level is about half that in the USA and a national question has lingered in the air for a long period of time. In each of these cases imperialism has demonstrated its ability on a limited basis to buy off chunks of people by favorable trade, tax or other arrangements. Without the economic confidence associated with having a closer relationship to imperialism, these countries would have adopted revolution long ago.

However, when militant labor bureaucrats say the economic conditions are bad in an imperialist country and expect revolution by determined workers, they should look at the countries in this batch first. Just based on economic conditions and not particular political crises, we should not expect a staunch proletarian movement in the United States before we see it in Puerto Rico. If the workers in Puerto Rico are not in a revolutionary mood, less can we expect such from U.\$ or English or French or Japanese workers with regard to their economic conditions. While allowances should be made for particular political crises--like the rape of Japanese children by U.\$ troops in Japan--in general it is a good measure of ultraleftism to hear people talk about the prospects of revolution in the imperialist countries as if those prospects were better or more essential than those in Puerto Rico, Korea and the Six Counties. Revolutionary gains in the imperialist countries count on strategies focussed on immigration, the lumpenproletariat, internal oppressed nations, anti-militarism, environmentalism and proletarian feminism. Even in these areas, it may not be possible to organize a majority except against militarism and for the environment.

One thing that our excellent author Emilio Pantojas-Garcia on development misses is the prospects for a Puerto Rican solution globally. Any bragging about the abilities of the capitalist system even at this late imperialist stage to sustain

economic growth should be balanced by the cases of capitalist countries where there has been regression in GNP per capita. As we showed in MT#1, the facts are that in the Third World, losers outnumber winners. In fact, even in Europe, the oldest imperialist powers such as Portugal and Eastern Europe have seen losses of position relative to their hey-days. It is not that capitalism is a dynamic influence (except relative to feudalism). Some countries can gain especially in a combination of favorable tax, tariff and land reform struggles, but others will just as surely fall back.

It is almost a tautology to say that the strategy pursued in Puerto Rico cannot be pursued elsewhere. The premise of Puerto Rican development is that corporations operate there tax-free and Puerto Rico faces no tariffs to export to the USA. If all countries were able to operate tax-free vis-a-vis Uncle Sam, then the corporations would spread out very thinly and no one country would benefit from such a status. The same is true of tariff advantages. If all countries had no tariffs placed on their goods imported into the USA, there would be a different kind of advantage, but not the kind where capital concentrates itself in one place.

The fact that Puerto Rico's "model of development" or "showcase to Latin America" is not reproducible is immediately apparent in Puerto Rico's reaction to Reagan's CBI-- Caribbean Basin Initiative. Reagan wanted to make investment and trade advantages available to all of the Caribbean islands and El Salvador. Puerto Rico objected and critics accused Puerto Rico of foot-dragging in its administrative role for the CBI. Among other things, the Puerto Ricans feared that their rum sales would be undercut as other islands got in on the act of producing rum and selling it to the USA tariff-free. In response, the Puerto Rican government even protested "discrimination"?(40)

Prospects for revolution

This being the 100th anniversary of the infamous Yankee invasion, the prospects of revolution are much better. Political energy and focus is being brought to bear. In 1997, polls conducted for the San Juan Star showed that the public already rejected certain elements of integration with U.S. imperialism. For example, support for statehood had failed to cross 36 percent for several years.

Over two-thirds of Puerto Ricans opposed losing the ability to go to international sports events and beauty contests as Puerto Rico instead of part of the United States. 75 percent opposed making English the official language.

With 89 percent literacy, now more than ever the Puerto Rican masses are

A u.s. Navy spokesman put the following spin on the protests: "Most of these people have a political affiliation, and their cause has nothing to do with Vieques."(3) While MIM can't speak for the protestors, it is clear that they are taking a stand against the damage being done to a part of their nation by an imperialist military. If Gordon's statement is alluding to the fact that the protestors have larger goals in mind besides getting the Navy out of Vieques, then more power to them. For without dealing with the larger problem of u.s. involvement in Puerto Rico, the smaller problems will not go away.

Even politically conservative Puerto Ricans are outraged at the u.s. occupation and destruction of Vieques. There were over 400 cases pending against Vieques protesters on July 10 when assistant u.s. prosecutor Lilliam Mendoza Toro filed papers demanding that she be excused from prosecuting the cases. The papers filed by her lawyer stated "As a Puerto Rican, Mendoza believes strongly in the Vieques movement and feels that she cannot prosecute another Puerto Rican who is defending something that she believes in."(1)

President Clinton stated that the Navy will leave by May 2003 if the people of Vieques vote them out some time next year.(3) Clinton needs to wake up because the people have already spoken! If he had any true intentions of listening to their needs the Navy would have been pulled out a long time ago. The vote is being used by Clinton to postpone action. If it does occur next year it will give the u.s. plenty of time to influence the results, as is their common practice with votes in Latin America. A vote will not reveal the people's true desires as long as the nation is under imperialist influence.

On July 12 the United Nations Decolonization Committee passed a resolution supporting an end to the u.s. occupation of Puerto Rico. The resolution stated in part: "[we] encourage the government of the United States...to order an end to the exercises and military maneuvers of its armed forces on the inhabited island of Vieques and to return the occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico, to end the persecution, arrests and mistreatment of peaceful demonstrators, to respect fundamental human rights like the right to health and to economic development, and to order the decontamination of the areas of impact."(1)

Passing a resolution that is non-binding and requires no action on the part of the UN member states is not going to change the u.s. position. But the global pressure against u.s. occupation of Vieques is growing as the Puerto Rican people remain steadfast in their vocal protest.

In 1975, the united States withdrew the naval forces from Culebra, another small island that is part of Puerto Rico, because of the powerful and united protests against the Amerika's presence.(2) The successful resistance to that occupation serves as an example that liberation can only be achieved by forcing the Amerikan military out, not by asking politely or electing the right person.

Notes:

1. *Weekly News Update on the Americas, Issue #558, October 8, 2000. Nicaragua Solidarity Network of Greater New York, wnu@igc.org.*

2. *Associated Press, 16 Oct 2000; Associated Press, 17 Oct 2000.*

3. *New York Times, October 8, 2000. P.A16.*

4. *Reuters, 13 Oct 2000.*

U.\$ attempts to buy end to Vieques protests

by MC17 and a MIM-led study group

The U.\$ government, in an attempt to buy peaceful subservience to imperialism, is giving the Puerto Rican island of Vieques \$40 million in aid as part of the military appropriations bill signed into law on July 13th.(1) This is the same bill that gives funding to the Colombian military, infamous for working with paramilitary groups to torture and kill the Colombian people. This money is being given to Vieques as pay off to try to get the anti-navy bombing protests to stop.

The u.\$ Navy seized over 72% of Vieques in 1941 and has used it ever since as a military training ground. Live-ammunition exercises have devastated the environment and economy of the island. After a year of protests following the "accidental" death of a civilian security guard on the base shut down the Naval bombing, on February 10, the Puerto Rican government, acting as a good lackey for u.\$ imperialism, agreed to let the U.\$ Navy resume military training on the island.

The \$40 million is allocated for economic development of the island of Vieques and for a health study of the residents.(1) The island of Vieques suffers from a cancer rate 27 times higher than the main island of Puerto Rico as a result of the toxins the bombing releases into the environment.

This would be small compensation for the destruction of the island and the lives of the people of Vieques. But even the \$40 million comes with more strings. The U\$ Navy Secretary has to certify to the House and Senate Armed Forces Commissions that access to the Naval firing ranges on Vieques are not being interrupted and illegal entries to the land the Navy claims to own have ended.(1)

The people of Puerto Rico have staged on-going protests against the U.\$ bombing of their island including occupations of the bombing ranges. Over 600 protesters have been removed from the site since May of this year. Over 100 of them remained in jail in July for refusing to pay bail.(1)

able to compare their experiences with international experiences. For this reason, 65 percent agree that Puerto Rico would benefit economically by becoming a state while only 36 percent want to become a state. Thus Puerto Rico may have reached a point where we cannot adopt a straight-forward economist interpretation of Puerto Rican behavior.

Having achieved much of the U.\$ standard of living, Puerto Rican masses feel no conscious or unconscious push toward statehood--as long as U.S. tax breaks for businesses operating in Puerto Rico remain in place. Should the U.S. Congress eliminate such tax breaks as often threatened, we may see a different view from the people who may feel either resentment or pressure for statehood.

The U.S. Republican Party's attempts to bring Puerto Rico on board as a state may also backfire, since such an endeavor is bound to be high-profile. As historians have shown, much of U.S. policy toward Puerto Rico is simply ignorance and therefore continuation of the status quo out of lack of concern. When it comes to being in the spotlight, we may find that the U.S. government officials blunder intentionally or unintentionally and create Puerto Rican nationalism and better prospects for revolution.

While the question of status bodes well for revolution, the economic tide has turned against the revolutionary movement. The growth of the new petty-bourgeoisie and the appeal of getting on the gravy-train are very great. On the other hand, we can also hope that the Yankee style economic development gives the masses a sense of being able to do without Uncle Sam's foodstamps. The Puerto Rican people may yet come to believe they can afford nationhood and maybe the nationalization of Yankee assets.

Another factor is the migration away from Puerto Rico of Puerto Ricans and the influx of non-Puerto Ricans. By 1971, the number of people voting in Puerto Rico who were not Puerto Rican was 30,000.(41) The U\$A dumped the reactionary Cubans fleeing revolution in Puerto Rico. In addition, there are those from the Mainland who settle in Puerto Rico for the same reasons they would to Hawaii or Florida.

Until a Jesse Helms position takes control of the Puerto Rico policy of the Mainland U\$A, it will be difficult even for the new democratic stage of revolution to occur. Puerto Ricans who wish to vote can move to the Mainland and thereby enjoy bourgeois democracy without making revolution. As New Yorkers or members of other states, they can vote and enjoy the limited civil liberties of bourgeois democracy. For that matter Gordon K. Lewis pointed out that Puerto Ricans can and do directly appeal to U.S. public opinion from Puerto Rico. As

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long as this is possible and there is no open fascist dictatorship, prospects for revolution are diminished.

Notes: 1. Raymond Carr, *Puerto Rico: A Colonial Experiment* (NY: New York University Press, 1984), p. 231.

2. Gordon K. Lewis, *Notes on the Puerto Rican Revolution: An Essay on American Dominance and Caribbean Resistance* (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p. 52.

3. Ronald Fernandez, *The Disenchanted Island: Puerto Rico and the United States in the Twentieth Century*, 2nd ed. (Westport, CT: 1996), p. 239.

4. William M. Kunstler and Ronald L. Kuby, intro. Ronald Fernandez, *The Disenchanted Island: Puerto Rico and the United States in the Twentieth Century*, 2nd ed. (Westport, CT: 1996), p. xi.



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arrest with help from local fisherpeople.(1)

In spite of the widespread protest and condemnation of u.\$ bombing of Vieques among the people of Puerto Rico, the united States and its NATO allies staged a mock invasion of the island on October 17. Fifty warships, 31,000 u.\$ soldiers and an undisclosed number of other Western troops participated in the largest military exercises on Vieques in four years.(2)

The united States has held Puerto Rico as a colony since before World War I. One of the important benefits to the united States is the use of Vieques as a military training base. The u.\$ navy has destroyed the economy and the environment of Vieques while carrying out military exercises that prepare it to put down any uprisings against imperialism around the world.

There has been increasing protest against the u.\$ Navy's occupation of Vieques after a civilian security guard was killed there over a year ago. This heightened awareness of and opposition to their position as a u.\$ colony among the people of Puerto Rico has led to significant outcry against their inability to vote in the u.\$ presidential election this year. Although Puerto Ricans have u.\$ citizenship and can be drafted into the military, they do not have a vote in the election.

Eleven Puerto Ricans brought a lawsuit in federal court challenging the exclusion of Puerto Ricans from participating in the presidential elections. On August 29th Judge Jaime Pieras of the Federal District Court in San Juan ruled that Puerto Ricans, as u.\$ citizens, have the right to vote in a general election. Pieras pointed out that u.\$ citizens living outside of the united States can vote in absentia so the fact that Puerto Rico is not a state should not prohibit Puerto Ricans living on the island from voting. Puerto Rican governor Rosello' then signed a law that will allow the vote to take place.(3)

The u.\$ government challenged this ruling in the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit in Boston. The appeals court sided with the government and overturned the district court, saying that Puerto Ricans cannot vote in presidential elections as long as Puerto Rico is not a state.(4)

MIM does not consider the fight for a vote in the presidential elections for the people of Puerto Rico to be a revolutionary battle. Allowing the Puerto Rican people to have a say in which imperialist will lead the exploitation and oppression of the world's people will not advance the cause of the world's oppressed. And it will not be a step closer to self-determination for the islands of Puerto Rico. MIM stands strong with the people of Puerto Rico in their demand that the u.\$ Navy get off of Vieques. And we state unequivocally that Puerto Rico has a right to national self-determination, without u.\$ occupying troops, or intervening capitalist corporations, political control of the government, or any other form of colonial occupation by the united snakes.

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not renew the u.\$ Navy's water quality permit in Vieques, issuing a report that contained 102 water contamination violations committed by the Navy during its military exercises on the island over the past five years.(4)

It is no wonder that the cancer rate on Vieques is 27% higher than on the main Puerto Rican island. It is for this destruction and the theft of both resources and labor that the u.\$ government owes the Puerto Rican people reparations.

The only solution is revolution

The movement to get the u.\$ Navy off of Vieques is, for the most part, a single issue movement. This means that the people are demanding nothing more than the removal of the Navy from one particular location. MIM unites with this movement in this important anti-imperialist demand. But we know that this battle must be an integral part of the struggle for self-determination for the Puerto Rican people and for all peoples of the world.

The u.\$ will retain Puerto Rico as a colony even if it gives in and ends the Navy training on Vieques. The U.\$ will continue to invade countries throughout the world as it desires to maintain world hegemony whether or not it has a military training base on Vieques. The year 2000 marks the 102nd anniversary of the U.\$ invasion of Puerto Rico. This is an anniversary we must organize to celebrate by demanding the u.s. get out of Puerto Rico entirely.

While single issue battles like the struggle over Vieques can be waged effectively by a variety of progressive organizations, the overthrow of imperialism will only be possible with the leadership of a communist revolutionary party. Join with us to demand and end to U.\$ imperialist domination in Vieques and the world.

Notes:

1. *New York Times* 4 December 1999, p. A1.
2. *Toward Freedom Magazine*, Nov. 1999.

People of Vieques protest u.\$ bombing again; Puerto Ricans denied the vote

MIM Notes # 222 Nov 15, 2000

October 1 - Between 5 and 6 thousand demonstrators joined a march on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques demanding the u.\$ Navy end its military occupation of the island.(1) This march, which organizers say was the largest in the history of Vieques, builds on the on-going protests by Puerto Rican people demanding an end to u.\$ Navy bombing on Vieques. Sixty five protesters were arrested for entering the area the Navy claims to own. Another nine escaped

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5. *Fernandez*, pp. 15-9.
6. *Ibid*, p.62.
7. *Ibid*, p. 71.
8. *Ibid*, p. 73.
9. *Lewis*, pp. 68-9.
10. *Fernandez*, p. 117.
11. *Carr*, pp. 157-60.
12. *Ibid*, p. 215.
13. *Emilio Pantojas-Garcia, Development Strategies as Ideology: Puerto Rico's Export-Led Industrialization Experience (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990)*, pp. 29-30.
14. *Fernandez* p. 117.
15. *Pantojas-Garcia*, p. 37.
16. *Fernandez*, p. 127.
17. *Ibid*, p.145.
18. *Pantojas-Garcia*, p. 50.
19. *Fernandez*, p. 153.
20. *Ibid*, p.154.
21. *Ibid*, pp. 187-9.
22. *Ibid*, pp. 214-5.
23. *Pantojas-Garcia*, p. 80.
24. *Lewis*, p. 58.
25. *Fernandez*, p. 261.
26. *Carr*, p. 148.
27. *Ibid*, p. 152.
28. *Ibid*, p. 215.
29. *Ibid*, p. 217.
30. *Ibid*, pp. 263-4.
31. *Pantojas-Garcia*, p. 81.
32. *Ibid*, p. 84.
33. *Ibid*, p. 92.
34. *Lewis*, , pp. 60-1.
35. *Ibid*, p. 65.
36. *Pantojas-Garcia* p. 123.
37. *Ibid*, p. 132.
38. *Ibid*, pp. 166-7.
39. *Ibid*, pp. 168-9.
40. *Carr*, p. 326.
41. *Lewis*, p. 18.

MIM Congress resolution on Puerto Rico 1998

1998 marks the 100th anniversary of the U.\$ invasion of Puerto Rico. We seek to make it a year of progress toward the end of colonialism.

Uncle Sam uses the carrot and the stick to keep Puerto Rico under U.\$ rule. One important carrot is U.S. citizenship. Economic pressure in Puerto Rico only builds up so much before emigration to the U.\$A. Puerto Ricans arrive in the U.\$ not as illegal immigrants but as citizens.

U.\$ government programs also bring money to Puerto Rico. These programs dull the nationalist passion of the Puerto Rican people.

Finally, as for carrots, there is the U.\$ dollar itself binding Puerto Rico to the U.\$A. Since Puerto Rico does not have its own currency, it benefits fully from U.\$ imperialist manipulations of international exchange. The masses of Puerto Rico enjoy the same prices for goods that mainland U.\$ residents do.

For the stick, the U.\$ puppet regime in Puerto Rico still does not allow unionization of workers and there is no minimum wage. As we speak, tepid legislation is coming to pass to allow government-approved unions.

This unique combination of circumstance makes Puerto Rico a microcosm of imperialism and its relationship to oppressed nations. Using the carrot more than in most oppressed nations, U.S. imperialism has created a "split in the working class" in Puerto Rico. The workers are not all sub-minimum wage proletarians and they are not all labor aristocracy. As an island, Puerto Rico would be the poorest U.S. state, but there are parts that certainly resemble the Mainland states, especially in the urban and suburban areas where living conditions are very similar to those in the Mainland USA.

When the people rise up against colonialism, the U.S. Government cracks down with killings and imprisonment. Even though Puerto Rico is not the 51st state, the U.S. Government calls some actions of the Puerto Rican patriots "sedition" and convicts Puerto Rican patriots in U.S. courts.

MIM upholds both the peaceful and armed actions of Puerto Ricans against U.S. domination. That is what all Marxist-Leninist-Maoists must do to uphold the right of self-determination in Puerto Rico.

Hence, we call for the unconditional release of all Puerto Rican prisoners of war. As of yet, the same U.S. government founded by George Washington has yet to uphold international treaties and recognize the prisoner of war status of the anti-colonial freedom-fighters in Puerto Rico.

All Puerto Ricans in prison are political prisoners; although not all are prisoners of war. Puerto Rican political prisoners should all be released to be tried by Puerto Rican justice systems. Some prisoners are truly sick and will be incarcerated by the will of the Puerto Rican people, but most are victims of the world's leading prison state per capita -- the USA. The majority will readily redeem themselves given a chance in a socialist system.

MIM seeks to uphold the Maoist tradition of the Young Lords Party -- Puerto Rican Maoists organized here in the USA with the inspiration of the Black Panther Party. It is our duty to render material aid to the organization of a Maoist party that will conduct the People's War in Puerto Rico.

It is also our duty given the actually existing conditions to call on the Euro-American settlers moving to Puerto Rico to do business or retire to respect the national aspirations of the Puerto Rican people. We expect that land currently held by Euro-American settlers will be returned to the Puerto Rican people through revolution.

MIM supports all peaceful and armed efforts of the Puerto Rican patriots against the U.S. government. There are two mistakes to avoid through this line. One is to avoid opposing the right to self-determination. The Puerto Rican people are entitled to fight any way they choose. Some will fight better than oth-



content fired during exercises on Vieques this year was 90 pounds.(2)

The Pentagon also admitted that they used Vieques to store nuclear weapons between 1956 and 1975 without informing even the puppet government of Puerto Rico.(3)

The u.s. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced that it will

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In 1898 the u.s. invaded Puerto Rico, becoming its colonial master after nearly 100 years of Spanish colonialism on the island. In 1917 Puerto Ricans were granted a limited form of u.s. citizenship, against their will, so that the u.s. army could recruit them to fight in WWI.

U.s. corporations currently control 90% of the Puerto Rican economy and even the United Nations condemns the u.s. for its continued colonial occupation of the island.

In 1941 the u.s. congress passed legislation to take over the eastern and western parts of Vieques as a part of mobilization for World War II. Civilians were forced into the center of the island displacing 3000 people, half the population. Many people were forced off their land and had to accept the prices set by the Navy as the Navy took over 72% of the land.(2)

The Navy base on one side of the island is used for live practice. The terrain is pock marked from bombs and has more craters than the moon. There is live, unexploded, and dead ammunition scattered all over the land. The Navy base on the other side of the island is used for storage of ammunition. Among the dangerous weapons stored there are uranium and napalm bombs.

Vieques is the only training site that the u.s. Navy has where they can practice water, land and live ammunition exercises. It is used to prepare for the invasion of many countries, particularly those in Latin American and the Caribbean where the attack by the u.s. military comes from the water.

In 1947 and again in 1961 the u.s. Navy tried to take over the entire island of Vieques but protesters stopped them. Currently the u.s. military occupies ten percent of Puerto Rico's land.(2)

The u.s. has a long history of pretending that they are going to take the Navy out of Vieques or at least improve the conditions. In 1983 the Navy signed an agreement with Puerto Rico pledging to change its practice in Vieques but did nothing. In 1990 the u.s. congress told the Navy to look for another place to set up their deadly practice. The Navy did nothing and the u.s. government did not follow through. In 1993 the Navy pledged to protect the environment on Vieques, but then did nothing.

Navy destroying the environment

In 1992 the Navy used Napalm bombs on the island. And in February 1999 the Navy fired 267 depleted uranium bombs on the island. Depleted uranium has a half-life longer than the entire existence of the earth up to this day. "A particle of uranium one quarter the diameter of a human hair emits 800 times the amount of radiation a human body can tolerate for one year." The total uranium

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ers, but we must uphold the rights of all Puerto Ricans to fight for their independence. All Puerto Rican patriots are our friends.

The other mistake MIM seeks to avoid is relativism and subjectivism. MIM is itself a collection of Maoist parties and pre-parties. It would not be correct for it to treat all Puerto Rican political organizers equally. It is natural that we should support the Maoist Puerto Ricans the most. Right opportunists and post-modernists believe that MIM should not favor the Maoist Puerto Ricans above other patriots. They would also oppose our criticizing Puerto Rican revisionism. However, we at MIM believe that Khrushchev, Gorbachev and Yeltsin were the bourgeoisie in the party in the Soviet Union and that fact is the same no matter one's national background. Fighting revisionism is a scientific matter that comes before asserting one's unique national identity. The cardinal principles upholding the Cultural Revolution in China and opposing old Soviet-style revisionism are cardinal principles everywhere in the world.

MIM calls on non-Maoists in the USA to support their counterparts in Puerto Rico seeking independence. It is MIM's duty to assist with the establishment of a Maoist pole in Puerto Rico. With the Young Lords, other organizations and amongst individuals in Puerto Rico there is already a strong Maoist tradition on which to build.

Puerto Rican plebiscite: phony self-determination

One way that the u.s. government is attempting to co-opt the Puerto Rican people's desire for self-determination is through the offering of a plebiscite, or popular vote, on the status of the island and its people. Such a vote has come up in different forms over the years of u.s. occupation of Puerto Rico and generally includes three options: the current "Freely associated state" also called commonwealth status, statehood, or independence. After 100 years of colonial occupation, this vote would put a democratic face on the u.s. occupation of the island of Puerto Rico.

As a "Freely associated state" or commonwealth, the Puerto Rican people have u.s. citizenship but if they live in Puerto Rico they can not vote on u.s. ballots. Puerto Ricans can and are expected to fight in u.s. wars, and Puerto Ricans sustain combat casualties in u.s. wars in numbers far exceeding their proportion in the population. Pedro Rossell, governor of Puerto Rico and willing lackey of u.s. colonialism, has as his goal, like that of other colonial lackeys who desire greater access to their master's wealth and privilege, is to gain full statehood for Puerto Rico as the 51st state.

Rossell refers to a plebiscite as the "self determination process," an "orderly method" which would allow the people of Puerto Rico to decide what they want with all the definitions spelled out clearly for them. But this so-called self deter-

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mination is not real democracy. It is not possible to talk about the Puerto Rican people exercising their right to self determination with u.s. troops occupying their island and the u.s. government controlling the country.

The economy of the island, where the average wage is far lower than in the u.s., suffers from high unemployment and low paying jobs. Since the Puerto Rican people have never had the opportunity to develop a self-sufficient economy, their livelihood is dependent on the many foreign (mostly Amerikan) corporations that set up shop for the cheap labor and good tax deals. As an amerikan colony, Puerto Rico has provided the u.s. a very strategic military base, a resource of cheap labor for manufacturing plants, and a vacation resort close to home. U.\$ corporations control 90% of the Puerto Rican economy.

In Puerto Rico's last country-wide vote on status in 1993, 48.6% voted to remain a u.s. commonwealth, 46.3% for statehood and 4.4% percent for independence. [Note that RAIL in no way sees this as truly representative of the people of Puerto Rico.] Commonwealth status, which dates back to 1952, means that Puerto Ricans are legally u.s. citizens and may serve in the armed forces. But they pay no federal taxes and cannot vote for president.

At this moment, there is a great difficulty in Puerto Rico's simply holding plebiscites. One problem is who to count. All Puerto Ricans have U.\$ citizenship and all U.\$ citizens can establish themselves to live and vote in Puerto Rico by fulfilling a residency requirement, according to a professor in Puerto Rico at the School of the Inter-Americas. There are pensioners retiring to Puerto Rico from the U\$A just as if Puerto Rico were Florida. These Euro-Amerikan settlers with the right to vote in Puerto Rico obviously cannot be wrestling with a Puerto Rican national identity.

Another problem is that so much of Puerto Rico's population is in the U\$A or formerly part of the U\$A. Both these problems of who to count in a plebiscite are a result of the 1898 invasion by Yankee imperialism. Puerto Rico has no representation in the U.S. Government (no Congress people and no voting for the President) and it does not pay federal taxes, but it has had citizenship rights and economic subordination to the U\$A.

At this time, the plebiscite that most u.s. and mainstream Puerto Rican politicians propose would simply show what the Puerto Rican people will say with the bribery and arm-twisting of Uncle Sam. Only the people themselves in Puerto Rico can establish a true plebiscite of the people for self-determination. After a stage of revolutionary nationalism, the Puerto Rican people will be able to decide their future without the influence of imperialist power.

Anti-imperialists must use this opportunity to expose the lie of self-determination at every turn. We must remain strong in our demand for complete u.s. withdrawal from the island of Puerto Rico.

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up to prevent the Navy from bombing. Protesters have been occupying the territory the Navy claims to own for six months. Federal agents have been prepared to move in and clear out the protestors but public outcry in Puerto Rico and the u.\$ has at least temporarily convinced the government that such an action would lead to a dangerous and uncontrollable response, particularly in Puerto Rico.

The government of Puerto Rico, led by Pedro Rosell— a supporter of statehood for the island, is trying to take advantage of the popular outcry against the u.\$ Navy presence. Rosell— placed himself at the front of the movement (after the protests were well underway and clearly had gained the support of the vast majority of the Puerto Rican people) and claims that he is representing the people in their demands to get the Navy off of Vieques. But the Puerto Rican government has a long history of collaboration with the u.\$ government and military. Puppets, willing to do the bidding of the Amerikan government, use the position of governor to fool the Puerto Rican people into believing that they have some amount of self-determination.

Pretending to objectively study the issue after it became clear that the protests on Puerto Rico would not go away on their own, President Clinton appointed a four-member Pentagon review panel. In the end of September they recommended resumption of live-fire combat training on Vieques.

The history of colonialism on Vieques

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weapon that it seems likely the Navy will be allowed to continue using on Vieques. Far from inert, these bombs are considered less dangerous than live ammunition because they do not contain an explosive unit. But they can still carry hundreds of pounds and kill people and destroy the environment. The depleted uranium bomb is considered inert, yet it is a tremendously dangerous weapon.

The Secretary of the Navy made it clear that the Navy does intend to return to training on Vieques. Speaking about alternate training facilities currently being used he said, "These arrangements will not provide training as good as that obtainable in Vieques, but we believe that not pressing the issue at this moment in Puerto Rico is the most productive route for resuming training in Vieques over the longer term."(1)

The Navy is also offering Vieques \$40 million for an economic revival project. But in the past they have claimed that they can not clean up the mess, including live and dead ammunition, on the island because that would be too dangerous for Navy personnel who might be injured or killed by unexploded live ammunition. It is not clear what this money will be used for but the people of Vieques are owed far more than \$40 million in back rent alone for use and destruction of their land. Currently the unemployment rate on Vieques is 50% and 72% of the population lives below the poverty line.

Even if the people win this round and the u.s. Navy has to give back the Vieques land that it stole from the Puerto Rican people, the colonial system which keeps Puerto Rico subjugated to the U.S. and denies the Puerto Rican people the right to self-determination, will remain. This system of imperialism is behind the need for the u.s. Navy to occupy Puerto Rican land to train for imperialist attacks on other nations. And it is only through the destruction of this system that we can remove the u.s. military from the many nations around the world that it occupies against the interests of the majority of the world's people.

"Accidental" death sparks protests

On April 1 a civilian security guard was killed and four were injured at the Navy training facility on Vieques. The Navy dropped two 500-pound bombs on them from an F-18 fighter. The Navy says it missed the target, but we say the Navy should not have been there in the first place. This event galvanized the Puerto Rican people to take action and demand the Navy get out of Vieques. The Puerto Rican people have never been happy with this dangerous use of their land. The Navy's occupation threatens them directly with the possibility of bombings hitting the wrong target. The occupation indirectly causes many more deaths through the use of dangerous materials like depleted uranium that will have effects for years to come, and destroys the environment on the island of Vieques.

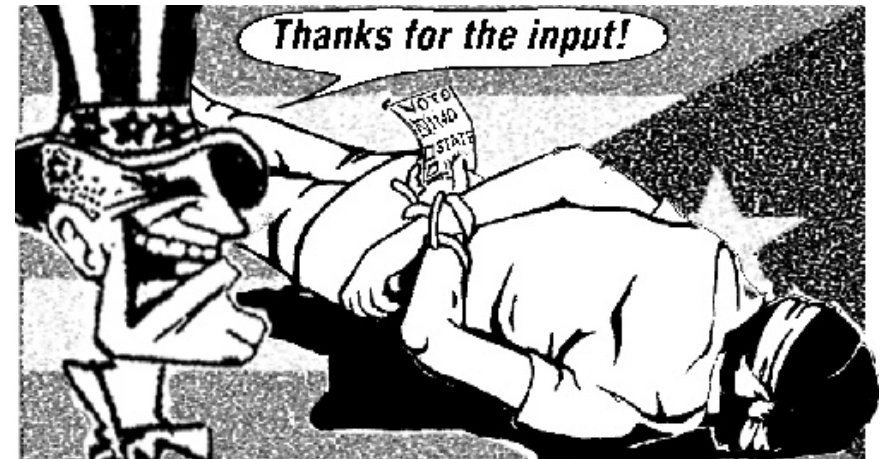
There are currently 15 camps scattered throughout the island of Vieques set

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Puerto Ricans vote on colonial status

On December 13 a plebiscite was held in Puerto Rico which gave Puerto Ricans a choice between the status quo or a new slant on its status as a colony of the U.S. The big winner: "none of the above." Puerto Ricans were given a choice of four options: current territorial status under the U.S., "free association" under a treaty with the u.s. government, independence, statehood, and none of the above.

With about 75% of the eligible population voting, over 50% voted for none of the above. The second victor was statehood with 46.5%. The "none of the above" vote was supported by the Popular Democratic Party (PDP) which opposes statehood but supports the status quo and did not like the definition of commonwealth used on the ballot.(1) Based on results of recent similar votes, it is likely that most of the people who voted for "none of the above" support the current colonial relationship with the u.s.



As the 100 year anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico draws to a close, there is significant support for some kind of colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the u.s., whether in the current form or as a state. Puerto Ricans who earn an average per capita income of \$8,000 are significantly poorer than Americans with the average U.S. income at \$25,660.(2) But the country has benefited from its neocolonial relationship with u.s. imperialism. U.S. citizenship makes Puerto Ricans eligible for welfare and Puerto Rico enjoys far more wealth than most u.s. neo-colonies. Because of its proximity to the u.s. as well as its unusual status which allows for u.s. citizenship, the U.S. has put enough money into the country to buy off a segment of the population.

In response to the vote President Clinton said he said he remains "com-

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mitted to implementing a majority choice for Puerto Rico's future status."(3) Of course the U.S. is not willing to remove u.s. political, military and corporate control of the island and then let the people really have a free choice. Since the Puerto Rican people have never had the opportunity to develop a self-sufficient economy, their livelihood is dependent on the many foreign (mostly American) corporations that set up shop for the cheap labor and good tax deals.

As an American colony, Puerto Rico has provided the u.s. a very strategic military base, a source of cheap labor for manufacturing plants, and a vacation resort close to home. U.S. corporations control 90% of the Puerto Rican economy.

The PDP opposition to the way the commonwealth status was phrased is ironic: the PDP claimed that the definition was a "colonial" one. But the definition on the ballot was an accurate description of the current status. The PDP wanted to add a few benefits to the status which the U.S. has already rejected. Included is the provision that Puerto Ricans acquire the ability to make treaties with other nations and veto federal laws.(3) In reality the PDP supports the status quo, with or without these enhancements. Their push for "none of the above" seems like more of a political maneuver than a real attempt to gain more autonomy and move away from a colonial relationship with the u.s.

As a "Freely associated state" or commonwealth, the Puerto Rican people have u.s. citizenship but if they live in Puerto Rico they can not vote on u.s. ballots. Puerto Ricans can and are expected to fight in u.s. wars, and Puerto Ricans sustain combat casualties in u.s. wars in numbers far exceeding their proportion in the population.

Rosello' acknowledged that the "none of the above" option was being used as a protest vote by many who oppose his administration, the privatization of the island's telephone company as well as his position on statehood.(3) The plebiscite was called for by Puerto Rican governor Pedro Rossello' in an attempt to pressure the u.s. congress to admit Puerto Rico as a state.

MIM supports the Puerto Rican peoples right to self determination. And for true self-determination the u.s. must first end its imperialist domination of the island. Join MIM and support the Puerto Rican national liberation struggle.

Notes:

1. *Washington Post*, 14 December 1998, Page A02.
2. *Reuters*, 13 December 1998.
3. *Washington Post*, 15 December 1998, p.A10.

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Besides the above leaders, there are ten other Puerto Rican prisoners for whom activists are demanding amnesty and freedom. Carmen Valentín was sentenced to 98 years; Alicia Rodríguez to 85 years; Carlos A. Torres to 78 years; Dylcia Pagn to 63 years; Alberto Rodríguez to 35 years; Elizam Escobar to 68 years; Adolfo Matos to 78 years; Edwin Cortés to 35 years; Antonio Camacho to 15 years and Juan Segarra to 65 years.

RAIL supports and struggles for genuine national liberation of the Puerto Rican nation. Continued military, economic, political, social and cultural domination of the people will only be halted when the imperialists are kicked out of Puerto Rico and the people are free to develop socialism. We must struggle to end the unjust incarceration of Puerto Rican leaders and we must continue to expose and build opposition to the use of American gulags in general as a tool for national oppression. The struggle against unjust incarceration and increased imprisonment of oppressed nationals is a necessary battle in the path to liberation.

Notes: For detailed information on COINTELPRO, check out Agents of Repression, by Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall. South End Press, Boston, MA. All quotes taken from the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners. 2607 W. Division, Chicago, Illinois 60622, < <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/5919/>>

Puerto Rican people: U.S. Navy out of Vieques

*MIM NOTES No. 201 January 1, 2000
by MC17*

On December 3 President Clinton ordered a halt to all live-fire military training on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques after more than seven months of vocal protests by the Puerto Rican people. Clinton also ordered an end to all military exercises on the island within five years unless local residents agree to an extension.

This plan demonstrates that under imperialism, some reforms are achievable through mobilized action on the part of the people. After years of people complaining to mainstream political leaders about the Navy activities on Vieques were ignored, recent protests and occupation of land the Navy claims to own finally got the attention of the u.s. government.

But the imperialists will not give in without a fight. What sounds like a victory for the Puerto Rican people is really just a few small concessions while the u.s. government and its military wait and hope that the protesters will go away. There has still been no decision on what is considered "inert" ammunition, a type of

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being allowed to move to lower security levels. This is specifically because Oscar is a leader among the Puerto Rican people.

To ensure the flow of super-profits and resources, Amerika has continuously smashed revolutionary independence movements both on the island and inside Amerika's illegitimate borders. Amerika has carried out this repression and genocide through military action, economic warfare, political control, forced sterilization and mass migration policies and social and cultural domination. As Rivera said, we are "instructed in a culture that denies the very idea that Amerika is an empire." He explained that racism was created to justify colonialism. He vehemently stated that we are not living in an era of post colonialism, but that Amerika continues to repress and dominate her internal colonies.

While Amerika hides this lie through massive miseducation, lies and settler nationalist propaganda, the people continue to struggle to teach the truth. And it is for this reason that Puerto Rican leaders have been incarcerated and tortured. Amerika seems to think that if leaders are imprisoned, the masses will be too afraid to stand up and fight for the self-determination of Puerto Rico and the liberation of the world's masses. But the strength and continuous struggle of Puerto Rican activists facing repression within Amerika's gulags point to the fact that the oppressed will not stop fighting until liberation is won.

Alejandrina Torres fought to teach the truth of the Amerikan domination of the Puerto Rican nation. "She was a founding member and later a teacher at the Puerto Rican High School in Chicago. She later helped found the Betances Health Clinic and was active in boycotts of public schools which continued to mis-educate children and were hostile and racist to their parents." She was sentenced to 35 years for alleged membership in the FALN.

Ricardo Jimnez "was a leader in the struggles which ultimately led to the creation of Roberto Clemente High School." Among many activities to stop oppression of the Puerto Rican nation, he exposed the Chicago 21 plan to gentrify the area and he struggled to institute the first Puerto Rican history class at Loyola University. "He was arrested in 1980, accused of seditious conspiracy and related charges, and sentenced to 98 years.

Luis Rosa was active in the Puerto Rican community in Chicago as well and worked specifically against police brutality. He faces 105 years in prison.

Ida Luz Rodriguez, facing an 83 year sentence wrote: "We were not and are not criminals. The Puerto Rican movement for liberation was not and is not a crime. We were and continue to be motivated by a deep sense of responsibility to liberation." "Colonialism is a crime and it must end. Liberation is just as necessary today as it was then. Some place the burden of responsibility for the use of violence solely on the shoulders of Puerto Rican revolutionaries while leaving the impression that the United States is law-abiding and not a colonial power."

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PUERTO RICO: 100 YEARS OF U.S. COLONIALISM GOVERNOR SPEAKS IN SUPPORT OF COLONIALISM

[Note: The original version of this article said there was no minimum wage in Puerto Rico. This was incorrect and was corrected in MIM Notes 160. In fact, U.S. companies in Puerto Rico do have to pay the minimum wage of \$5.15. The rest of Puerto Rico is required by Puerto Rico to pay \$4.25/hour.]

Pedro Rossello', governor of Puerto Rico and willing lackey of u.s. colonialism, spoke at Harvard University in mid- February. A graduate of Yale medical school who later went on to finish his medical training at Harvard, Rossello' was elected chair of the New Progressive Party, a pro-statehood party, in 1991. He was then elected Governor in 1992 and reelected in 1996 by a large margin. He was at Harvard to commemorate Puerto Rico's "100 years of solitude" (100 years of colonialism). It was 100 years ago in 1998 that the u.s. invaded Puerto Rico and took over as its colonial master.

At times Rossello' sounds almost radical in his opposition to the current status of Puerto Rico which he correctly labels colonialism while calling for self-determination. But this radical rhetoric is just a cover that helps him sell a referendum on statehood as self-determination for the Puerto Rican people. As a "Freely associated state" or commonwealth, the Puerto Rican people have u.s. citizenship but if they live in Puerto Rico they can not vote on u.s. ballots. Puerto Ricans can and are expected to fight in u.s. wars, and Rossello' pointed out that Puerto Ricans sustain combat casualties in u.s. wars in numbers far exceeding their proportion in the population. Rossello's goal, like that of other colonial lackeys who desire greater access to their master's wealth and privilege, is to gain full statehood for Puerto Rico as the 51st state.

Congressman Young from Alaska has proposed a bill in the u.s. congress, now referred to as the Young bill or HR856, which calls for a political status referendum in Puerto Rico. Rossello' refers to this as the "self determination process," an "orderly method" which would allow the people of Puerto Rico to decide what they want with all the definitions spelled out clearly for them. But this so-called self determination is not real democracy. It is not possible to talk about the Puerto Rican people exercising their right to self determination with u.s. troops occupying their island and the u.s. government controlling the country.

The referendum would offer the Puerto Rican people three options: current commonwealth status, statehood, or status as an independent republic. One of the reasons Rossello' is such a supporter of this referendum is that in similar previous referendums Puerto Ricans have supported statehood in large numbers so the chance that it would win is high. In Puerto Rico's last country-wide vote on status in 1993, 48.6% voted to remain a u.s. commonwealth, 46.3% for statehood and 4.4% percent for independence. [Note that MIM in no way sees this as truly representative of the people of Puerto Rico.] Commonwealth status, which

dates back to 1952, means that Puerto Ricans are legally u.s. citizens and may serve in the armed forces. But they pay no federal taxes and cannot vote for president.

Rossello' said "the Puerto Rican electorate should be given the right to end colonialism." But MIM agrees with the representative from the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWs and Political Prisoners who asked during the question and answer period: "How can you speak about self determination without the withdrawal of u.s. troops from Puerto Rico?" Self determination is not possible for an occupied people. Any referendum held under such conditions does not offer the people real power and real freedom of choice.

Several Puerto Rican activists protested outside the talk before it began shouting "Piti Yanqui go to Hell, Puerto Rico not for Sale." Those who spoke during the question period in favor of independence got loud applause but only from a minority in the audience: most of the Puerto Ricans in the crowd were Rossello' supporters who cheered loudly when he gave the stupid response to one question about the national oppression of Puerto Rican people in this country "You have a choice, you can go back to Puerto Rico." As if in Puerto Rico the people are all living free from national oppression because they are not in the minority. This demonstrates Rossello' 's total lack of understanding of the concept of colonialism and makes it clear that he only uses the term as rhetoric to appease the Puerto Rican peoples genuine desire for self determination.

A Puerto Rican activist with Latinos for Social Change pointed out that in 1917 u.s. citizenship was imposed on Puerto Rico after the Puerto Rican legislature voted against it. And in both Puerto Rico and the united states they have criminalized the struggle for independence. He pointed out that resolution 1514 in the United Nations states that every colonial country has a right to self determination and can use every means necessary to struggle for independence. When Rossello' tried to respond to him by also suggesting he go back to Puerto Rico he pointed out that 60% of Puerto Ricans on the island live off of food stamps, 13% of the island is occupied by the u.s. military and unemployment is 19%. MIM would add to this that Rossello' himself said that as many Puerto Ricans live in the u.s. as on the island (where the population is 3.8 million) so carrying out the struggle for self-determination for Puerto Rican people within u.s. borders is an important part of the national liberation struggle.

After he had spoke for about a minute both Rossello' and the Harvard moderator tried to shut up this activist, telling him he could only ask a question and could not state his opinion. They threatened to call security when he went on for another sentence. And rather than respond to the activist's statements, Rossello' said "you have demonstrated what system you would impose on the Puerto Rican people by your actions here tonight." This is ironic considering that the pro-colonialism view is given hours of free speaking time but when the pro-independence view attempts to speak for a minute (less time than several of the

Freedom and Amnesty for Puerto Rican independence leaders

The Counter Intelligence Program(COINTELPRO) began in 1956 as a coordinated effort by the FBI to undermine the Communist Party USA. COINTELPRO subsequently intensified its attacks against progressive and revolutionary leaders and organizations. COINTELPRO has been used to infiltrate, split and smash various Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, First nation, and anti-imperialist organizations. Through COINTELPRO, the FBI has harassed, wrongfully arrested, framed and imprisoned leaders of the people's movements. Leaders have been murdered outright as a result of COINTELPRO operations. This imperialist program intensely repressed the people's movements in the 1960s and 1970s and continues to repress the people's movements of today. And as then, the aim of the imperialists today is to dismantle the people's struggles to achieve justice and liberation.

During the 1980s, the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacin Nacional (FALN) and other organizations devoted to Puerto Rican independence were the target of some of the FBI's most intense covert operations. Many Puerto Rican activists and the general public of Puerto Rico suffered massive raids lead by the FBI COINTELPRO.

Puerto Rican independence movement leaders and activists accused of being members of the FALN have received sentences of 35 to 105 years in prison. There are still currently 15 Puerto Rican activists in the gulags convicted of seditious conspiracy (attempting to overthrow the u.s. government) and alleged membership in the FALN - not one of them was charged with or convicted of any action which resulted in bloodshed.

Oscar Lpez Rivera is one of the 15 men and wimmin accused of membership in the FALN. He was arrested in 1981 and is serving a sentence of 70 years in the Amerikan gulags. "At one time or another during their lengthy imprisonment, most of them have been subjected to brutal psychological or physical abuse, including assault, multiple strip-searches, body-cavity searches, and extended periods of isolation and sensory deprivation. But because government authorities perceive Oscar to be a leader, they have singled him out for the harshest, most continuous attack. They hope to break the other political prisoners, as well as the Puerto Rican independence movement as a whole, by breaking his spirit."

For the last eleven years, Oscar has been incarcerated in a small isolated cell with no contact visitations allowed. "Oscar has also been framed with false disciplinary charges and subjected to sting operations which used desperate prisoners as informants and provocateurs." In a 1986 operation, he was falsely accused of conspiring to escape from prison which resulted in the pigs sentencing him to an additional 15 year sentence. Oscar has been continuously placed in isolation despite compliance with rules and despite similarly situated prisoners

According to Jimenez, O'Neal, who was in charge of security for the BPP, was also in the Young Lords offices. Jimenez was also targeted, though not killed. He was arrested on a bogus hostage-taking charge, which was eventually thrown out after he spent nine months in jail. He was arrested many times by the Chicago police, who also arrested people just for wearing Young Lords buttons.

Jimenez was not uncritical of the early Young Lords work, for example with regard to gender. "In terms of women, we were just like the rest of the community," he said, "and we were very discriminatory. We were macho . . . We're the first ones to admit that." However, like the YLP, they had a separate women's group, "They [the wimmin] had a group called 'Mothers And Others' -- MAO -- and they met separately." The wimmin's work also led to the day care and breakfast programs: "We just put programs in place -- you know, we didn't do a lot of analysis of the woman question," Jimenez said. From what MIM knows of the YLP and the PRRWO, they did do explicit analysis of the role of wimmin in society and in the revolution. In fact, the wimmin in these organizations stepped forward and seized positions of leadership (see MIM's review of the YLO, YLP, and PRRWO in MIM Theory 7).



other pro-statehood questions), the speaker is threatened with arrest.

As we commemorate the 100 years of u.s. imperialism in Puerto Rico MIM fights for genuine self determination for the Puerto Rican people. In the united states, within the belly of the beast, we organize again u.s. military and political control over the island. At the same time, both in Puerto Rico and the u.s., we organize the people for the national liberation struggle that will overthrow imperialism and allow the Puerto Rican people to finally exercise their right to self-determination. Commemorate the 100 year anniversary of Puerto Rican colonialism by joining MIM in the fight to overthrow imperialism.

Young Lords Party: revolutionary leadership in the 1970s

Excerpted from MIM Theory #7, Proletarian Feminist Revolutionary Nationalism

Revolutionary organizing among Latino Nations in Amerika is difficult and complicated. With so many Latinos in Amerika being relatively recent immigrants, there are many open questions about what groups are nations in themselves, what groups are still part of the nations they left behind, and what groups, if any, in Amerika can now unite as new nations. The questions raised by the Young Lords Party in the 1960s and 1970s are still very pertinent today. Strategically, we know that national liberation is the revolutionary process needed to free the Latino peoples from Amerikan imperialism. But the form of that struggle cannot yet be determined at this stage of the movement.

The Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization began in 1965 as a Chicago street gang called the Young Lords. They were politicized in 1967 by then-president Cha cha Jimenez, and the name was changed to the Young Lords Organization (YLO).

The first major struggle for the Young Lords Organization and that which brought the YLO to the Puerto Rican people was the Garbage Offensive. For successive Sundays, the YLO cleaned the streets of El Barrio (Spanish Harlem, NY) and distributed literature to passersby. For the first two weeks the YLO cadre filled garbage bags and trash cans with garbage, but the sanitation crews didn't pick it up, so on the following Sunday they shifted tactics: they piled the garbage (and abandoned cars) in the center of the street, where the city would have to remove it. The masses of El Barrio joined in: first behind brooms, and later in throwing bottles at the pigs who came to arrest the Young Lords.

The Young Lords were able to open an office and then "shifted tactics from street fighting to programs to serve our people. We began Free Breakfast and Lead Poisoning Detection programs, supported the struggle of welfare mothers that year, began organizing hospital workers and studied revolutions in other countries.

“In October of 1969, we wrote the Thirteen Point Program and Platform (revised May, 1970) and Thirty Rules of Discipline (revised December, 1970).”(1)

The Young Lords Organization was catapulted to international recognition and recognized as a threat to the State with the People’s Church Offensive. A local Methodist church refused space for the operation of a free breakfast program, so after attending mass, letter writing, and other methods failed, “on December 28, we took the church, renamed it People’s church, and for the next eleven days, we ran free clothing drives, breakfast programs, a liberation school, political education classes, a day care center, free health programs, and nightly entertainment (movies, bands or poetry).”(1)

As the New York YLO grew after the People’s Church Offensive, they began to notice problems with the national leadership in Chicago. The newspaper, YLO, was not coming out regularly, so the YLO did not have a political line to follow. The East Coast YLO developed on their own -- “the Thirteen Point Program and Platform is an example.”(1) The Thirteen Point Program is reprinted here and the one important disagreement we have with it is the analysis of the “millions of poor white people” rising up. A thorough analysis of the white working class shows that the allegiance between the imperialists and the white workers, who they have bribed with superprofits taken from the exploitation of the oppressed people of the world, has created a huge labor aristocracy uninterested in revolutionary change.

Because of their lack of theoretical and practical leadership from their National Leadership, the East Coast and Chicago sections split, with the East Coast becoming the Young Lords Party. A major Young Lords Party struggle was in defense of hospital patients and workers. “Ninety percent of hospital workers in New York City are Black or Puerto Rican. To meet their demands for better conditions, and to serve the needs of the patients, the Health Revolutionary Unity Movement (HRUM) was created.”

“A city T.B. x-ray truck was liberated” and the Young Lords were able to examine more than five times as many people as the city normally would. In July, 1970, Lincoln Hospital was liberated. “We ran programs, like TB and lead poison detection services, and a day care center. “ (1)

Programs and campaigns continued to expand. The YLP also worked on prison campaigns, political prisoners, and the defense of their own organization from State repression.

The Young Lords Party recognized and supported the Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as a revolution against the capitalist roaders inside the Party who were attempting to restore capitalism. The YLP attributed Cuba’s problems to the failure to have a cultural revolution.(2)

for the U.\$. in previous wars.

Chicago Mayor Daley’s urban renewal program drove all the Puerto Ricans out of Lincoln Park, which helped spark a political consciousness in the community. “What got us involved was not the independence of Puerto Rico,” Jimenez said, “but that they were taking our neighborhood from us. . . . Everyone else thought urban renewal was good. They still think it’s good. Urban planners all over the country emulate what they did in Chicago.”

His involvement with local street gangs and drug use got him in trouble with Chicago police, and landed him in jail as a young man. There he saw the guards beating up the undocumented immigrant workers they were hauling in. His early activism was helping these immigrants with translating. While in jail, he started reading Martin Luther King, and then Malcolm X. “Then I wanted to go to confession,” he recalled. “And after confession I wanted to overthrow the government.”

His early reading also included material from the Brown Berets and the Black Panther Party. With this influence, he helped turn the Young Lords, then a street gang, into a political organization. They read Marx and Lenin and Mao. “Some of it related to us, you know,” he said. “The Red Book was pretty good. We could relate to Mao because he could relate to the community.”

Their early actions were very militant, and they didn’t realize how much trouble they would get into. They took over a local police station, and the urban renewal office: “We trashed it . . . It got shut down for a few months” because of the damage they caused, he said. They also took over the McCormick Theological Seminary and held it for a week, demanding investments in public housing. And they took over People’s Church, and it became national headquarters. They gave free day care, health clinics, lead poisoning screening, and legal advice. “We needed a lot of lawyers,” he said.

Jimenez met with Fred Hampton, the local leader of the Black Panther Party (BPP), and Hampton told him that they were going to be in big trouble from the takeovers, and they would need better organization. So they created more formal organization, including ministries like the Panthers had. Then the Young Patriots, BPP and the Young Lords together created the original “Rainbow Coalition,” whose name was later stolen by Jesse Jackson.

Jimenez said such alliances were essential for them. “One of the things in the Red Book, Mao said, ‘United the many to defeat the few.’”

The FBI’s COINTELPRO program targeted the Rainbow Coalition for destruction. Fred Hampton was murdered by the Chicago Police in a raid on his apartment in late 1969. The raid was made possible by the work of an FBI infiltrator named William O’Neal, who provided the pigs with floor plans and schedules of who would be where (see Agents of Repression, by Ward Churchill and Jim Vanderwall, South End Press, Boston, 1990).

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world who fight for justice and are against the rulers of this country. QUE VIVA CHE GUEVARA!

12. WE BELIEVE ARMED SELF-DEFENSE AND ARMED STRUGGLE ARE THE ONLY MEANS TO LIBERATION.

We are opposed to violence - the violence of hungry children, illiterate adults, diseased old people, and the violence of poverty and profit. We have asked, petitioned, gone to courts, demonstrated peacefully, and voted for politicians full of empty promises. But we still ain't free. The time has come to defend the lives of our people against repression and for revolutionary war against the business men, politicians, and police. When a government oppressed the people, we have the right to abolish it and create a new one. ARM OURSELVES TO DEFEND OURSELVES!

13. WE WANT A SOCIALIST SOCIETY.

We want liberation, clothing, free food, education, health care, transportation, full employment and peace. We want a society where the needs of the people come first, and where we give solidarity and aid to the people of the world, not oppression and racism. HASTA LA VICTORIA SIEMPRE!

Young Lords founder recalls Maoist history: Cha Cha Jimenez highlights MLK Day events

Ann Arbor, Mich. -- Cha Cha Jimenez, founder of the Young Lords Organization in Chicago, was the highlight of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events at the University of Michigan. Other events included some progressive historical lectures and a student rally in defense of affirmative action polices.

Ever since a student strike and protests successfully won University recognition of MLK Day at the University of Michigan, the occasion has seen a host of presentations and events around civil rights issues. Most of these are apolitical or liberal reformist events, but this year there were some notable exceptions.

Cha Cha Jimenez gave a speech on the history and origins of the Young Lords Organization (YLO), founded in 1967 in Chicago. The Young Lords Party (YLP) in New York City and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRRWO) grew from the YLO. These organizations formed the Maoist pole among Puerto Ricans at the same time as the Black Panther Party exerted Maoist leadership among Blacks.

Jimenez's parents were part of a big wave of Puerto Rican immigration in the early 1950s. Many of them were fruit-pickers, but when they moved to Chicago, settling in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, many worked in the hotel industry in bottom-rung jobs. His father was in a "street gang" that fought discrimination and defended the Puerto Rican community. His uncle and grandfather were soldiers

La Lucha Boriqueña

In another advance over the mistakes of the Black Panther Party, the YLP actively worked to advance their membership and create new leaders. They realized that their Party, in the first few months, relied too much on their charisma of five or six leaders, so they developed their ideology -- recognizing that ideology is a more effective organizing tool than personal charm.

The name was changed to the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRRWO) in 1972 because the name "Young Lords Party" was confusing in Spanish and did not explain what the organization was about. After the name change, mention of Marx, Engels and Mao became more frequent. The YLP/PRRWO newspaper, *Palante*, positively quoted an I Work Kuen member (the Chinese vanguard in the United States) as saying "[T]hat only by applying and following the principles of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse Tung Thought can the powerful enemy of North American imperialism be defeated."⁽³⁾

The example of the Young Lords Party and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization serves as an example to revolutionaries today. They applied the principles of politics in command, and unity-struggle-unity and continually advanced the cause of liberation for Puerto Ricans.

Notes:

1. *Palante: Young Lords Party*, McGraw-Hill: New York, 1971, Introduction.
2. *Young Lords Party*, p. 58.
3. *Palante* 9/1/72, p.3,9.

Young Lords Party 13 Point Program and Platform

THE YOUNG LORDS PARTY IS A REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL PARTY FIGHTING FOR THE LIBERATION OF ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE

1. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PUERTO RICANS, LIBERATION ON THE ISLAND AND INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

For 500 years, first Spain and then the United States have colonized our country. Billions of dollars in profits leave our country for the United States every year. In every way we are slaves of the gringo. We want liberation and the Power in the hands of the people, not Puerto Rican exploiters, QUE VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE!

2. WE WANT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL LATINOS.

Our Latin Brothers and sisters, inside and outside the United States, are oppressed by American business. The Chicano people built the Southwest, and we support their right to control their lives and their land. The people of Santo

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Domingo continue to fight against gringo domination and its puppet generals. The armed liberation struggles in Latin American are part of the war of Latinos against imperialism. QUE VIVA LA RAZA!

3. WE WANT LIBERATION OF ALL THIRD WORLD PEOPLE.

Just as Latins first slaved under Spain and the yanquis, Black people, Indians, and Asians slaved to build the wealth of this country. For 400 years they have fought for freedom and dignity against racist Babylon. Third World people have led the fight for freedom. All the colored and oppressed peoples of the world are one nation under oppression. NO PUERTO RICAN IS FREE UNTIL ALL PEOPLE ARE FREE!

4. WE ARE REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISTS AND OPPOSE RACISM.

The Latin, Black, Indian and Asian people inside the U.S. are colonies fighting for liberation. We know that Washington, Wall Street, and City Hall will try to make our nationalism into racism; but Puerto Ricans are of all colors and we resist racism. Millions of poor white people are rising up to demand freedom and we support them. These are the ones in the U.S. that are stepped on by the ruler and the government. We each organize our people, but our fights are the same against oppression and we will defeat it together. POWER TO ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE!

5. WE WANT EQUALITY FOR WOMEN, DOWN WITH MACHISMO AND MALE CHAUVANISM.

Under capitalism, women have been oppressed by both society and our men. The doctrine of machismo has been used by men to take out their frustrations on wives, sisters, mothers, and children. Men must fight along with sisters in the struggle for economic and social equality and must recognize that sisters make up over half of the revolutionary army: sisters and brothers are equals fighting for our people FORWARD SISTERS IN THE STRUGGLE!



La Lucha Boriqueña

6. We want community control of our institutions and land.

We want control of our communities by our people and programs to guarantee that all institutions serve the needs of our people. People's control of police, health services, churches, schools, housing, transportation and welfare are needed. WE want an end to attacks on our land by urban renewal, highway destruction, and university corporations. LAND BELONGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE!

7. WE WANT A TRUE EDUCATION OF OUR ARO-INDIO CULTURE AND SPANISH LANGUAGE.

We must learn our long history of fighting against cultural, as well as economic genocide by the Spaniards and now the yanquis. Revolutionary culture, culture of our people, is the only true teaching. JIBARO SI, YANQUI NO!

8. WE OPPOSE CAPITALISTS AND ALLIANCES WITH TRAITORS.

Puerto Rican rulers, or puppets of the oppressor, do not help our people. They are paid by the system to lead our people down blind alleys, just like the thousands of poverty pimps who keep our communities peaceful for business, or the street workers who keep gangs divided and blowing each other away. We want a society where the people socialistically control their labor. VENCEREMOS!

9. WE OPPOSE THE AMERIKKAN MILITARY.

We demand immediate withdrawal of all U.S. military forces and bases from Puerto Rico, Vietnam, and all oppressed communities inside and outside the U.S. No Puerto Rican should serve in the U.S. army against his Brothers and Sisters, for the only true army of oppressed people is the People's Liberation Army to fight all rulers. U.S. OUT OF VIETNAM, FREE PUERTO RICO NOW!

10. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR.

No Puerto Rican should be in jail or prisons, first because we are a nation, and Amerikkka has no claims on us; second, because we have not been tried by our own people (peers). We also want all freedom fighters out of jail, since they are prisoners of war for liberation. FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR!

11. WE ARE INTERNATIONALISTS.

Our people are brainwashed by television, radio, newspapers, schools and books to oppose people in other countries fighting for their freedom. No longer will we believe these lies, because we have learned who the real enemy is and who our real friends are. We will defend our sisters and brothers around the