

BREAKTHROUGH

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THEY ARE FREEDOM FIGHTERS,
NOT TERRORISTS!



VICTORY TO NATIONAL LIBERATION
INSIDE THE U.S. !

INSIDE:

BRINKS EXPROPRIATION... MEXICO AND CENTRAL
AMERICA... FREE PALESTINE/DEFEAT ZIONISM!

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EDITORIAL:

Defend the October 20th Freedom Fighters!

On October 20, 1981 New Afrikan (Black) and white anti-imperialist freedom fighters of the Revolutionary Armed Task Force, acting under the leadership of the Black Liberation Army, attempted to expropriate \$1.6 million dollars from a Brink's truck in Nyack, New York. Against the barrage of state repression, and the walls of silence and denunciation thrown up by much of the left around this action, a sharp struggle is being waged. The focus of this struggle is over the significance of the New Afrikan independence movement, the waging of revolutionary armed struggle in the US, and the participation of white people in this process. We believe that all anti-imperialists must unite in solidarity and defense of the BLA, the RATF, the captured combatants, and most importantly of the principles that they stand for.

The reemergence of the Black Liberation Army as an active armed clandestine organization, dedicated to winning independence, land and socialism for New Afrika through revolutionary armed struggle, is an historic advance. Throughout the history of this country, it has always been the movements of colonized people—and of the Black Nation in particular—which have led revolutionary struggle. The colonial relations that are at the foundation of the U.S. empire can only be overturned through revolutionary war. It is in this process that colonized people possessing the material, social and cultural basis for nationhood actually forge liberated nations. Today, leading forces of the Black, Puerto Rican, and Chicano/Mexicano struggles are advancing the strategy of protracted people's war against imperialism, as the *only* way to achieve national liberation and socialism. This means that armed struggle must be consciously built in the present if it is ever to grow to victory in the future.

By beginning to wage revolutionary war against imperialism, the armed clandestine movement in Puerto Rico, the FALN inside the U.S. and the BLA and RATF have rejected opportunist and reformist strategies for change. They are fighting to defeat imperialism at its very center. The existence of these forces poses a sharp challenge and gives leadership to the

white left in the 1980s.

Whether white people will build a relationship to national liberation struggles inside the U.S. based on anti-imperialist principles will determine our ability to build revolutionary movement in the oppressor nation. This is not an abstract or general issue. Many on the left are echoing the government lie that the Brinks action was the criminal product of a few "white survivors" from the Weather Underground—that it was a white-led action. This completely wipes out the revolutionary example of white people working under Black leadership and fighting for the freedom of the Black Nation. Those who attack armed struggle as criminal are dangerously wrong because they are denying the reality that revolution is an illegal, violent process.

The character of revolutionaries is formed by real choices made to participate in this struggle, to meet challenges, to fight for principles. The state's strategy of criminalizing liberation struggles in order to rob revolution within its borders of its political foundation has to be exposed and fought. We must create a revolutionary morality whose measure is the responsibility we feel to struggle to eliminate imperialism and oppression in the world. The white comrades who fought as part of the Revolutionary Armed Task Force understood that there cannot be one standard of politics for colonized people and another for the left and working class of the colonizing nation. By making the war for New Afrikan independence their struggle too, they broke qualitatively with the deep racism and colonial privilege of the white left, and embraced proletarian internationalism at the highest level.

We must confront the political truth that there never will be a revolution against imperialism without armed struggle. And there never can be a people's war without losses and risks taken. Freedom fighters of the armed movement who are captured or killed are not victims; they are conscious participants in this struggle. BLA soldier Mtayari Shabaka Sundiata, who was killed in action by N.Y. police, gave his life to advance the process of building a people's army to free the Black Nation.

From the moment that it became clear that Nyack was "no ordinary robbery," the state launched an intense campaign of repression against the New Afrikan independence movement, and its white anti-imperialist allies. Led from the highest levels of the U.S. state and coordinated by the newly surfaced Joint Anti-Terrorist Task Force, this attack is being projected as part of the world wide "anti-terrorist" offensive. But it is clearly a result of the growing conflict between imperialism and Black liberation inside this country. And it must be understood in the context of the escalating attacks against the Black, Puerto Rican, ChicanoMexicano and Native struggles. These have included widescale attempts at intimidation, arrests, frameups, and the creation of grand juries as part of the state strategy to attack the leadership and base of these movements (see p. 7).

A brief summary of what has happened in the wake of the October 20th action exposes the seriousness of the attack on the Black movement and its allies:

- * The capture on October 20th and the arrests in the subsequent days and months of New Afrikan Freedom Fighters Solomon Brown, Sekou Odinga, Abdul Majid and Kuwasi Balagoon. On October 20th white anti-imperialist freedom fighters Judy Clark, David Gilbert, and Kathy Boudin were captured. On March 22, 1982, Jamal (s/n Eddie Josephs) and Chui (s/n Cecil Furgeson), conscious citizens of the Republic of New Afrika and supporters of the Black liberation struggle, were arrested and charged with conspiracy in the expropriation.
- * The police execution of New Afrikan Freedom Fighter Mtyari Shabaka Sundiata, who was shot in the head while surrendering in Queens, N.Y. on October 23, 1981.
- * The torture to the point of near death of Sol Brown and Sekou Odinga. This torture was professionally carried out by representatives of the Joint Anti-Terrorist Task Force. Solomon's neck was broken and Sekou sustained permanent damage to his internal organs, in addition to being burned by cigarettes, having his head forced down a flushing toilet, and the trigger of a gun pointed at his head repeatedly pulled. All this was done in an attempt to obtain information about the BLA and the clandestine movement.
- * The raid by over 200 U.S. military, FBI, and SWAT personnel on a Jackson, Mississippi farmhouse which housed Fulani Sunni-Ali, Chairperson of the Peoples Center Council of the Provisional Government, Republic of New Afrika. With her in the house were Jerry Gaines, an RNA supporter; a

62-year-old RNA citizen; and twelve young children, who were all terrorized. The state frameup that Fulani participated in the expropriation was exposed. Jailed for refusing to collaborate with the grand jury, then released, she is now being hunted by the state, which wants to reimprison her for her refusal to testify.

- * The creation of a special grand jury based on RICO (Racketeer Influence & Corrupt Organizations Act), used for the first time to attack revolutionary organizations. It is an attempt to criminalize public groups such as the RNA and May 19th Communist Organization. As of this writing 12 people have been subpoenaed, the majority of whom are activists in the Black Liberation Movement. Three people are now in prison for refusing to collaborate: Jerry Gaines, an RNA supporter; Yaasmin Fula, a Black political activist; and Eve Rosahn, a white anti-imperialist.
- * The raid and ransacking of the Black Acupuncture Advisory Association of North America (BAAANA). BAAANA is a revolutionary health care center and school in the Black community.
- * The kidnapping of Solomon Brown from Woodbourne State Prison in an attempt by the FBI to turn him into an informant.

Many people do not think that political torture for the purposes of extracting information could ever happen in this country. But it is occurring, and it is documented in the treatment of some of the prisoners of war captured as a result of Nyack. The fact that it was professionally carried out under the direction of the FBI means that it is becoming part of government policy. This tears the mask off of the "legal process" and reveals the terms of struggle against the imperialist state.

In this period of imperialist crisis, our support for the survival and consolidation of revolutionary forces in the Black Liberation Movement must be uncompromising. If imperialism is to succeed in its domestic strategy of marginalizing and re-enslaving masses of Black people, it must prevent a revolutionary center from arising within the Black movement in the 1980s. We cannot allow the state to carry on its war of repression and extermination of Black leadership as it did in the 1960s and 1970s. Because if we allow this to happen the entire revolutionary process inside this country will be set back.

The state is very conscious that revolutionary nationalism has always been the center around which Black people have rallied to fight for freedom. In 1968, during the height of Cointelpro attacks against the revolutionary nationalist movement, the FBI wrote, "...the Negro youth and moderates... must be made

***They thought they killed you,
but I saw you yesterday.***

Assata Shakur, Youngblood

New Afrikan Freedom Fighter



MTAYARI SHABAKA SUNDIATA

February 18, 1944 - October 23, 1981

Murdered by Detective Irwin Jacobson, NYPD

***How can we talk about a nation and not talk about an army.
That's not realistic. Every nation has an army. So, power to
the people's army. The nation must come to fruition through
revolutionary action.***

MTAYARI SHABAKA SUNDIATA • 1975

to understand that if they succumb to revolutionary teaching, they will be dead revolutionaries." The current attacks on the BLA are the latest expression of the state's strategy. By moving to criminalize the BLA and public forces such as the RNA and the Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters, the state hopes to stop the revolutionary thrust of the Black struggle. The attack on the May 19th Communist Organization is an attempt to discredit and destroy revolutionary anti-imperialism among white people.

The reduction of freedom fighters and liberation wars to "terrorism" is a worldwide strategy of imperialism. The Palestinian nation has been deemed a terrorist gang, as have the liberation movements of Azania, Namibia and Puerto Rico. People's war develops on a small scale at its early stages and these beginnings are always characterized as criminal by imperialism. The scores of Black political prisoners and POW's like the BLA 25 are not criminals, they are liberation fighters.

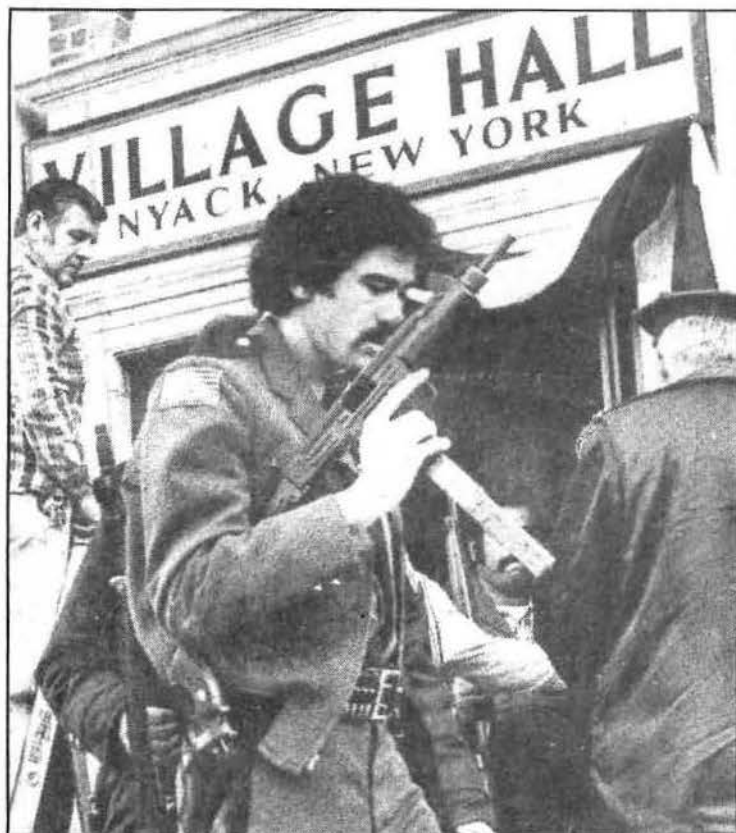
It is a serious contradiction that many white organizations which consider themselves revolutionary will support the armed struggles in Central America which are fighting U.S. imperialism, but refuse to acknowledge the fact that there are anti-colonial struggles inside this country. This view denies the reality that the US is a prison house of nations, and that colonized people will fight with arms for their liberation. These

politics wind up protecting the imperialist state, giving it a longer lease on life.

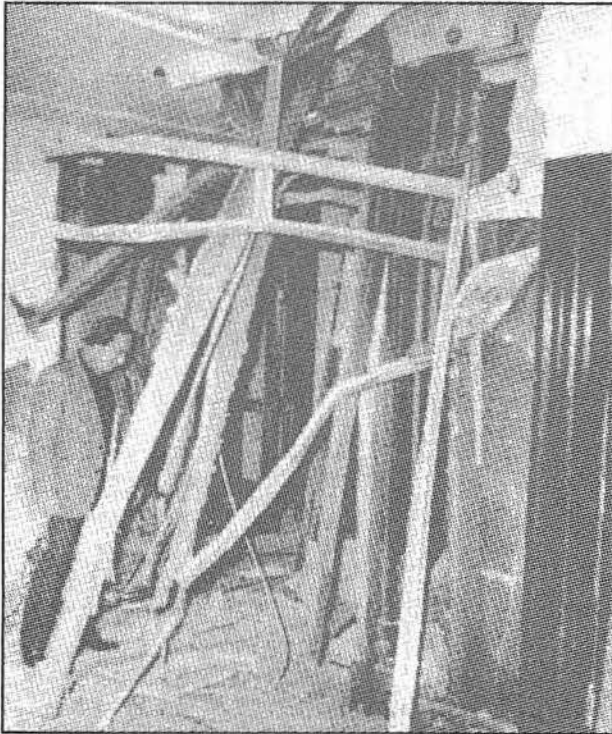
In opposition to this, the national liberation struggles inside the U.S. are building themselves on the understanding that the state is an illegitimate enemy power. It is imperative that white revolutionaries also base ourselves on this fact. The Marxist-Leninist truth that the state is a violent apparatus to enforce the rule of one class over another must be applied to the settler colonial foundations of "america" itself. The imperialist state arose out of the irreconcilable contradiction between the colonized and the white settler colonizers of north america. The legitimacy of this state and federal system, upon which modern imperialism rests, must never be accepted: it must be fought and destroyed.

To attack Black revolutionaries and their white anti-imperialist allies because two "working class" cops and a guard were killed at Nyack, denies the fact that police are a domestic army of occupation against the colonized Black Nation. The tactic of expropriation is one used by revolutionaries the world over, in every struggle, at nearly all stages of development. It is not only legitimate, it is necessary to liberate resources from the capitalist class and imperialist enemy. How else will the movements of the dispossessed acquire the funds and materials needed to carry out and build the struggle?

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Police armed with Israeli Uzi submachine guns guard Nyack courthouse where the captured combatants appeared after the Brinks expropriation attempt.



On September 25, 1981, the Black Liberation Army bombed the Schenectady, NY offices of the Eastern Rugby Union who sponsored the U.S. tour of the Springboks, the South African rugby team. This act of international solidarity with the Azanian revolution provided leadership to all forces in this country opposed to apartheid and settler colonialism.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to the captured comrades. Mail is material support that helps cut through the State's isolation attempts. Write the Attorney General of the U.S. to condemn the torture of the Freedom Fighters and to demand the end of all grand jury attacks. Refuse to collaborate with the grand jury and all state repressive agencies. Participate in the national campaign against repression of national liberation struggles in the U.S. Distribute *Resistance*, newsletter of the Coalition. For copies, other information, and to send financial support, contact the Coalition.

The Coalition to Defend the October 20th Freedom Fighters takes leadership from the National Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters and is building political/legal support for all those captured or under attack by the U.S. government as a result of the Brinks expropriation attempt in Nyack, N.Y.

This includes the captured freedom fighters and the grand jury resisters who are refusing to collaborate with the government attack on the armed clandestine forces and their public supporters.

The Coalition supports the waging of armed struggle for land and independence to free the colonized Black Nation and supports all political

prisoners and prisoners of war. It supports the Black Liberation Army and the Revolutionary Armed Task Force, which includes white anti-imperialists working under the leadership of the BLA.

ADDRESSES: **Sekou Odinga** (s/n Nathaniel Burns) Brooklyn House of Detention, Brooklyn, NY 11201. **Kuwesi Balagoon** (s/n Donald Weems) Box 86 New Hempstead Rd., Rockland County Jail, New City, NY 10956. **Abdul Majid** (s/n Anthony LaBorde) Queens House of Detention, 126-02 82nd Ave., Kew Gardens, Queens, NY. **Chui** (s/n Cecil Ferguson) and **Jamal** (s/n Eddie Josephs) Metropolitan Correctional Center, New York, NY.

Solomon Brown, Kathy Boudin, Judy Clark, David Gilbert: Pouch 1, Woodbourne, NY 12788.

Coalition to Defend the October 20th Freedom Fighters: Box 254, Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009 & 495 Ellis St. #226, San Francisco, California 94102.

National Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters: Box 1184, Manhattanville Station, New York, NY 10027.



Some in the left are calling the Brinks expropriation attempt and the repression that has followed "unfortunate consequences of misguided adventurism." Others are trying to dismiss it as an isolated holdover from the 60s. But these attitudes incorrectly sever the Brinks action from its context as part of the growing Black national liberation struggle. Far from being an echo of the past, it is a signal of an increasingly combative present and future.

In the second year of the Reagan regime, the U.S. is increasingly moving towards fascism and war. Although imperialism remains very strong, its contradictions are inescapable. Driven to retain world dominance and to maximize profit, the U.S. is tightening its chokehold on colonized people. Internationally, local wars of national liberation, as in El Salvador, are leading to regional conflicts. Regional warfare coupled

with contention against the Soviet Union and inter-imperialist rivalry are preludes to war on a broader scale than we've known since World War II. Domestically, the crisis is devastating against colonized people, and it is beginning to impact on white people as well. After the relative quiet of the 1970s, people are becoming active and mass movements are developing against intervention and war, racism and the Klan, and the oppression of women. Many people in the left today are caught up in the numbers game of how big a demonstration or how large a coalition can be mobilized. We too believe that this is a time in which mass struggles must be built, but the question is for what purpose? Unless people are won to understanding that the imperialist state is the enemy, that it can only be defeated by allying with the leadership of national liberation inside the U.S., white mass movements, no

GRAND JURIES—NO COLLABORATION!

Federal grand juries are now being used again as a major weapon to attack national liberation forces. Grand juries in New York, Chicago and Puerto Rico, targetted against the Puerto Rican, New Afrikan and ChicanoMexicano revolutionary movements, have imprisoned and subpoenaed many people over the past year. The grand juries have a three-fold purpose: 1) to attempt to destroy the armed clandestine movement by gaining information about politico-military forces; 2) to attack the development of armed struggle through the repression of public organizations and individuals who support the strategy of people's war; and 3) to launch a broadside assault on progressive and revolutionary sectors of the left in an attempt to isolate and destroy support for national liberation.

Grand juries threaten people with jail to attempt to force us to work with the government. We must expose the lie that grand juries against revolutionaries ever exist to investigate criminal matters. Their only purpose is as a weapon of repression. The only way they, and all state repressive agencies can be successfully resisted is by refusing to collaborate in any way with them. The strategy of non-collaboration was upheld by the Puerto Rican and ChicanoMexicano movements in 1977-78 and the grand jury was stopped—no indictments were issued. This principled stand strengthened the Puerto Rican and ChicanoMexicano struggles and defended the armed clandestine movement.

In the face of the current wave of grand jury attacks progressive people must unite in our absolute refusal to

collaborate. Today, certain forces are opposing this stand with the position that it is alright to "selectively collaborate" with the grand juries. Some are saying that it is alright to participate in the witchhunt part of the way, to give physical evidence or limit testimony solely to oneself. This amounts to arguing that people should be partial accomplices with repression as long as the individual "has nothing to hide." In reality this plays into the hands of the state by giving the message that every time it moves against revolutionary forces, the movement will concede ground. Such a process makes the state realize that it can carry out greater attacks because our resistance is weak and divided. If we accept the government's definition that what is at stake in the grand jury is a question of guilt or innocence, and not of repression, we help imperialism criminalize the revolutionary movement. Those who take this position are saying, in effect, that people who collaborate are innocent, and those who take the principled stand of refusing to collaborate have something to hide and are therefore guilty. Forces articulating this view are attempting to roll back the struggle successfully waged over the past years that non-collaboration is the only way to combat state repression. This effort must and will be defeated. We would remind people of the McCarthy era when similar government bodies attacked the Communist Party and others for "advocating the overthrow of the state through force." Those who betrayed the movement by collaborating with the government in this period are looked upon by all progressive people as traitors to this day.

matter how large, will end up coopted. Spontaneity, and the failure to build communist organization based on a revolutionary line, will always result in reformism. This is one of the main lessons of the 1960s. If we are serious about building movements that can play a role in defeating imperialism, we too will have to confront and face the consequences of the repressive power of the state.

As people's war for national liberation emerges in the United States, building strength from small to larger scale, the armed clandestine movements will increasingly assume the leadership of the struggle. An example of this is the recent statement by FBI director William Webster, who referred to the armed movement for Puerto Rican independence as the "Achilles heel of the US." It is the principal task of white revolution-

aries to support and defend this process unconditionally. By organizing support for the actions and growth of the armed clandestine movement, by building solidarity with Prisoners of War, we contribute to the development of revolution inside the U.S. The combatants captured as a result of the October 20th action will face trial in the fall of 1982. We must use this period of time to intensify our work in their support, in solidarity with the New Afrikan independence struggle, and against the grand juries on a national level. This is why PFOC is participating in the Coalition to Defend the October 20th Freedom Fighters, a white formation working under the leadership of the National Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters. This is an effort all progressive and revolutionary people must commit ourselves to. ■

In November 1981, at an anti-Klan conference in San Francisco, a representative of the Palestinian struggle stated that "it is perhaps safe to assume, based on material facts, that one of the most confused questions of our times is the Palestinian question." The truth of this is apparent in the current debates within the left and women's movement over the issues of Zionism and anti-semitism. Too often this debate has been clouded by tacit acceptance of Zionist mythology: "The Palestinians are anti-semitic," "fighting anti-semitism means supporting Israel," "Zionism is a national liberation movement." This resurgence of Zionism within the white left acts as a brake on building solidarity with Palestine and undermines support for national liberation within the U.S.

Anti-semitism is a reactionary, vicious ideology and practice which must be fought by progressive people. But the Palestinian Revolution is not anti-Jewish; it has opposed anti-semitism while exposing the racist, col-

onialist nature of Zionism. The Palestinian Revolution is the spearhead of the battle for revolutionary change in the Middle East. For anti-imperialists, it is of great importance to expose the lies of Zionism and to fight for the truth about Palestine.

News of the latest mass uprisings in Palestine underscores the urgency of building solidarity with the Palestinian Revolution. Day after day, Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights have taken to the streets in militant protest, fighting back with bricks and stones against the bullets of the Israeli occupiers. They have shown the world that Palestinians will never accept Israeli rule, whether in the form of outright military terror or phony "autonomy" and "self-rule" schemes designed to maintain Israeli power. By their courage and sacrifice, the Palestinian masses have made it clear that Palestine will one day be free.

In 1948, under the orchestration of Western imperialism, the Zionist state of Israel was carved out of the colonized nation of Palestine. The Israeli army terrorized two million Palestinians, forcing them off their land and into exile. Since then, Israel has become a military monster, expanding its borders through aggressive wars. Israel is a garrison for Western imperialism in the Middle East, guarding vital shipping lanes for oil and other resources, and attacking the revolutionary and progressive movements in the region. Recently the U.S. announced a new "strategic alliance" with Israel, involving even closer collaboration on military and intelligence matters. Israeli Prime Minister Begin remarked, "We've always said that Israel has a friend in the White House. Now we can say that we have a very good friend indeed." Despite U.S. talk of the "Soviet threat," the Israeli-U.S. strategic alliance is directed at crushing the Palestinian Revolution.

PEOPLE'S WAR IN PALESTINE

Leading forces of the Palestinian struggle are carrying out a strategy of protracted peoples' war as the only road to victory. The armed struggle has been carried to all areas where Palestinians live, mobilizing wide sectors of the dispersed population in the war against Zionism. Refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria have become base areas and centers of resistance. Residents of the West Bank and Gaza are dramatically escalating their courageous struggle against the Israeli settlers and occupiers, as are the 1.2 million Palestinians who remain colonized within the pre-1967 boundaries of Israel.

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PALESTINE WILL BE FREE!

Zionism, White Supremacy and the Palestinian Revolution



UPDATE

The struggle for Palestine, April -May 1982:

- * Israeli forces broke the cease fire in Lebanon by bombing and strafing civilian areas controlled by patriotic Lebanese and Palestinians.

- * Mass uprisings and attacks by Palestinian freedom fighters took place in the West Bank, Gaza, and within "Israel" after a U.S.-born Israeli

soldier invaded the Dome of the Rock mosque, killing Palestinian worshippers.

- * Begin announced the establishment of eight new Israeli settlements in the West Bank and stated that future Israeli governments should be prevented by law from giving up any territory or settlements as part of peace negotiations.

- * After the U.S. vetoed Security Council action, the U.N. General Assembly condemned Israeli aggression in Lebanon.

This struggle is growing in the face of brutal terror by the Israeli military. In July 1981, Israeli jets killed 300 and wounded 800 in a bombing raid on Beirut, one of many carried out against urban centers and refugee camps in Lebanon. Israeli military police conduct systematic torture of Palestinian militants and routinely shoot down unarmed demonstrators in the West Bank. But the armed struggle continues to sharpen and the resistance of the Palestinian masses has firmly established the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Revolutionary Palestinian organizations within the PLO, like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), have made it clear that the struggle is not just against Israel but is directed at the whole system of imperialism and its reactionary client states in the Middle East. The PFLP argues that:

The Palestinian revolution bears a special responsibility for furthering the polarization between the pro- and anti-imperialist forces in the region. The battle for Palestine is part of the battle for the region, and only in firm alliance with the other patriotic forces and clearly distanced from Arab reaction can the Palestinian revolution achieve victory.

The coordinated resistance waged by Palestinian and Lebanese revolutionaries to the brutal 1978 Israeli invasion demonstrates the developing alliances which threaten reactionary rule throughout the region. By identifying conservative Arab regimes as enemies, the Palestinians advance the process of building socialist and revolutionary consciousness in the course of the war for national liberation. This includes the struggle for the liberation of women in Arab societies. Their mobilization is part of transforming the revolutionary process into one of people's war. Palestinian women are taking up the military and political battle against the Zionist state and withstanding brutal repression. At the same time they are overturning their oppression, rooted in centuries of Arab feudalism and European colonial domination. As the PFLP notes, "While the war of liberation rages, the foundation of the new society is being laid and the process of eliminating all forms of oppression begins—a process in which women must play a crucial and equal role."

U.S. imperialism's strategy in the Middle East aims at strengthening Israel's political, economic and military role while bringing reactionary Arab regimes into a formal alliance with Zionism. This was the goal of the Camp David agreement. But Camp David didn't





Palestine Women's Militia.

succeed in breaking Palestinian unity or in bringing any Arab governments except Egypt into a formal treaty with Israel. The recent sale of AWAC planes to Saudi Arabia and U.S. promotion of the eight-point Saudi "peace plan," which recognizes the existence of Israel and proposes the creation of a Palestinian "mini-state," are current expressions of this strategy. Many people regard the "mini-state" as a logical answer to the Palestinian demand for self-determination. But the Palestinians have a right to all of Palestine. Coexistence beside a powerful militarized Israel would pressure Palestinians to compromise revolutionary principles and subordinate themselves economically and militarily to Zionism. The Saudi Plan, along with diplomatic initiatives by Western European powers, aims to subvert the unity of the PLO, isolate the PFLP and other revolutionary Palestinian forces and secure recognition of the state of Israel. But these neocolonial schemes have been rejected by the PLO.

The stated goal of the PLO is to win back the land and create a democratic, secular Palestinian state in the whole of what is now called Israel. This is not a demand to "drive the Jews into the sea," as the Zionists always charge. It is a demand to end the Zionist state of Israel, to eliminate the privileges and colonial power which Jews maintain over Palestinians.

This is the only just basis for Palestinian national liberation. But there are many in the U.S. left who reject the Palestinian program and instead promote a vision of a "socialist Jewish state" sitting side-by-side

with a Palestinian mini-state. Advocates of this position are "left" Zionists who accept the basic premise of Zionism (that Jews have the right to the land of Palestine) while mouthing support for Palestinian human rights. They argue that Israel has the right to exist in Palestine because of the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis. Israel is a "special case" in which colonial conquest is justified.

The holocaust was one of history's terrible crimes, the brutal culmination of years of violent attacks against Jews in Europe. But invoking the holocaust to justify Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people is historically and morally indefensible. German fascism, not the Palestinian people, committed genocide against the Jews. Nazi death camps were part of a strategy to consolidate fascist power and unite the German nation behind imperialist war. Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Treblinka and Dachau stand as stark reminders of the barbarism of fascism. The horrors of the holocaust, like the genocidal crimes committed by the U.S. against the peoples of Indochina, should harden our resolve to destroy the imperialist system responsible for such brutality.

ISRAEL IS A SETTLER COLONY

Israel is no "special case." The Zionist state is an illegitimate settler colony occupying conquered Arab land, where Palestinians had lived and worked for thousands of years. From its inception, the Zionist movement put forward Jewish settlement of Palestine as a vehicle for securing British colonial interests in the



The Reagan and Begin regimes are strategic partners. Despite occasional wrist-slapping by the U.S. in response to Israeli atrocities, the Zionist government carries out U.S. objectives in the Middle East.

Middle East and also as a means of combatting Jewish participation in proletarian struggle for socialism in Europe. Zionism was promoted by the Jewish bourgeoisie, in close alliance with Western imperialist powers, particularly Britain. Zionism was rabidly anti-communist, working with other bourgeois forces to isolate and attack the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

At the turn of the century, there were hardly any Jews in Palestine. Despite Zionist efforts, by the 1930s Arabs still far outnumbered Jews in the country. But with the rise of Nazism in Germany and the outbreak of World War, the Zionists were able to organize a mass invasion of Palestine by white European Jews, while the Zionists' Western allies (despite their professed concern about aiding Jewish victims of Nazism) blocked Jewish immigration into their own countries. With the cooperation of the British (who still controlled Palestine), the European settlers acquired Arab land by terrorizing Arab owners to sell at low prices or by outright theft. In November 1947, when the Zionists had built up their numbers and military strength, the U.S.-dominated United Nations partitioned Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state. The Zionists then moved militarily to seize much of the remaining Pal-

estinian land. Zionist terror organizations wiped out whole villages of Palestinians. In April 1948, the Irgun, led by Menachem Begin, attacked the village of Deir Yassin, brutally massacring 250 Arabs. But Zionism persists in the lie that Palestinians left Palestine of their own "free will."

Terror and land theft continue to this day in the new Zionist settlements on the West Bank. Current Israeli plans call for 100,000 Jewish settlers, backed by the full power of the military, to complete the invasion and occupation of this Palestinian territory.

Israel is a classic settler colony. This is further revealed by its relationship with South Africa, another racist state founded by white Europeans on land stolen from the indigenous population. This alliance is somewhat ironic, considering the anti-semitism of the South African government and the fact that many of the current leaders of South Africa were Nazi collaborators during the Second World War. The Israeli-South Africa axis is rooted in a long history of collaboration between Zionism and settler colonialism in Southern Africa, based on commonality of interests and origin. Theodore Herzl, the founder of Zionism, was a close friend and supporter of Cecil Rhodes, the architect of British imperialism, colonizer of Zimbabwe and foremost proponent of the "white man's burden" to civilize Africa. Herzl put forth similar views in regard to Palestine: "We should form there (in Palestine) part of a wall of defense for Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization against barbarism."

Israel and South Africa are now each other's primary trading partners, supplying each other with advanced technology, military hardware and personnel, and political/diplomatic support. The Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO) has documented the presence of Israeli soldiers among the South African occupying troops in Namibia. Western imperialism relies heavily on the Israeli/South Africa axis as a striking force against revolution in Africa and the Middle East.

ZIONISM IS WHITE SUPREMACY

Zionism is an integral part of white supremacist movement in the U.S. It is rooted in the defense of white privilege over colonized people. Zionists lay claim to Palestine based on the alleged Biblical right of Jews, the "chosen people" to return to the "promised land." This is markedly similar to the claim of racial and religious mission that Europeans have traditionally asserted to justify their violent conquest of Third World people. The U.S. version is "manifest destiny," the racist license to commit genocide against Native people, occupy and conquer Northern Mexico, enslave

and colonize Africans and then expand U.S. empire to Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines in 1898.

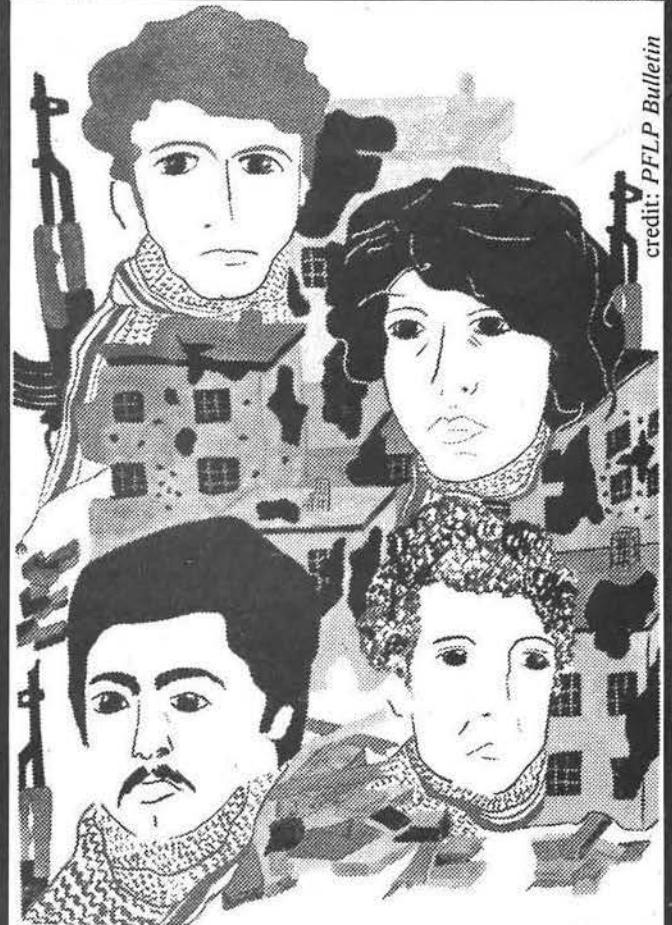
Empire-building is always glorified by the conqueror. Romantic images of the American pioneer—good, fearless people who tamed the West—go hand-in-hand with the stereotypes of Native people, Mexicanos and Blacks as primitive obstacles to progress. Similarly Zionism projects Israeli pioneers as “agricultural geniuses who take arid land from lazy Arabs and make the desert bloom.” For Zionism, the Palestinians simply do not exist as a nation. Israeli settlers assume the right to steal Palestinian land and water, to super-exploit Palestinian labor, while all the time posing as the victims of Palestinian and Arab aggression.

Zionism has become a vehicle through which many Jews in the U.S. are drawn into the racist offensive against Third World people. Most Jews would never support the Ku Klux Klan, because of its virulent anti-semitism. But many see nothing wrong with the Jewish Defense League, a paramilitary formation responsible for many violent attacks against Black, Puerto Rican and Chicano/Mexicano people. Zionism creates a base in the Jewish community for these fascist organizations and legitimizes their actions.

Entering the 1960s, most Jewish people identified as liberals, generally supportive of the Civil Rights movement and active in the emerging antiwar fight. But the rise of Zionism, coupled with a “white backlash” among Jewish progressives in response to the Black Liberation Movement, changed this to the point where in 1972, the Jewish vote went to the great friend of Israel, Richard Nixon.

The Zionist political offensive coincided with the Six Day War in June 1967. The powerful, U.S.-equipped Israeli military invaded the surrounding Arab states and seized Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, the Syrian Golan Heights and the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The Zionist propaganda machine portrayed Israel as a brave, tiny David surrounded by the Goliath of vast, hostile Arab states. American Jews raised tens of millions of dollars for the war effort. Fighting anti-semitism was made synonymous with support for Israeli conquest. Simultaneously, Zionist organizations began opposing and attacking the Black liberation movement. Responding to Black rebellion in the cities and to the demand for Black Power, they charged “reverse racism” and raised the battle cry of “Black anti-semitism.”

In the New York teachers' strike of 1969, the United Federation of Teachers, led by AFL-CIO vice president Albert Shankar, whipped up racist hysteria among Jewish teachers, calling on them to defend their jobs and positions against the demands of Black parents in



credit: PFLP Bulletin

WE SHALL REMAIN

*It is a thousand times easier for you
to pass an elephant through a needle's eye,
to catch fried fish in the Milky Way,
to plow the sea or teach an alligator to speak;
Than to smother with your oppression
the spark of an idea,
or to force us to deviate
a single step from our chosen march...
Here we shall remain upon your chests;
and in your throats we shall remain
a piece of glass, a cactus thorn;
and in your eyes, a blazing fire...*

We breed rebellions

One after another...

Here we shall spill our dearest blood;

Here we have a past

a present,

and a future...

Our roots are entrenched

Deep in the earth

in Lydda, in Ramlah, in Galilee—

Here we shall remain.

—Tawfiq Zayyad



The para-military Jewish Defense League is actively organizing a white supremacist base among Jews to oppose national liberation in the U.S. Here the JDL carries out an "anti-crime" patrol in Los Angeles. In Brooklyn, NY in April, the "militant faction" of the JDL bombed an Arab restaurant killing an elderly woman.

the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community for more control over the education of Black children in the schools. The fact that Black revolutionary organizations were beginning to take open stands in support of the Palestinian revolution was further fuel for the Zionist attack on the Black movement.

This reactionary direction has intensified to the point where Zionists now occupy leading positions in the racist anti-busing movement, sharing the territory with the KKK. Last year, the JDL joined in a demonstration with U.S. Nazis in which Iranian students were violently attacked. Banners reading "Never Again" flew beside swastikas and signs reading "White Power." When Menachem Begin came to the U.S. recently and warmly embraced Jerry Falwell, the right-wing anti-semitic leader of the Moral Majority, as a "true friend of Israel and the Jewish people," he was merely putting the finishing touches on a process which has been going on for years.

There are many Jews, especially those who consider themselves "liberals," who oppose Begin as a narrow-minded extremist and who disagree with the blatantly

racist settlements policy on the West Bank. But most still refuse to question the colonial nature of Israel or to support Palestine. They have been won to the Zionist view that the PLO is a "terrorist" organization and that defense of Israel is the prime responsibility of every Jewish person in the world.

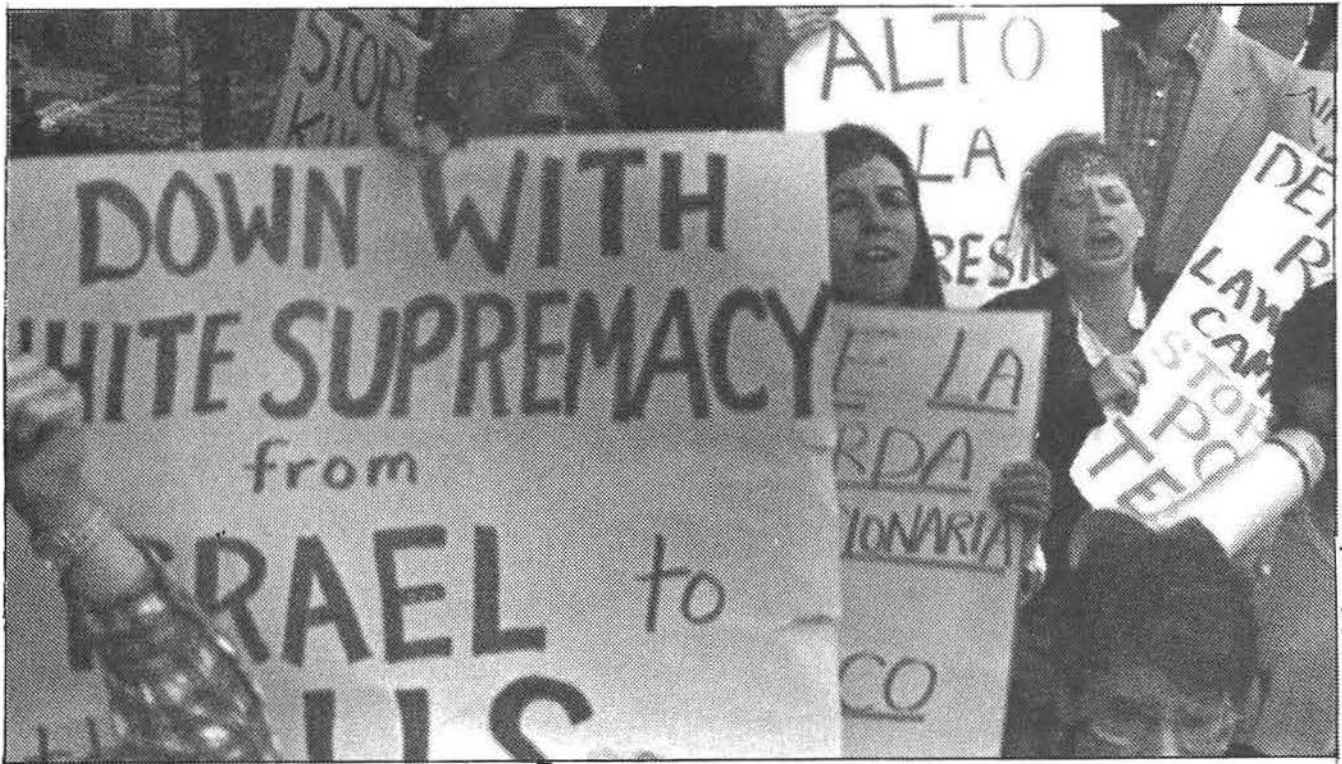
ZIONISM IS NOT NATIONAL LIBERATION

It is in this light that we have to evaluate the trend among many progressive Jews towards acceptance of Zionism as a legitimate expression of Jewish identity. In a recent issue of *Big Mama Rag*, a Jewish feminist from Boston writes:

I adamantly refuse to accept the indictment of Israel as a "settler colonial state" and I refuse to equate Zionism with racism. The national liberation movement of no other group of people is equated with racism and no other state, however corrupt, imperialist or authoritarian, is denied the right to exist. (I support the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as demanded by the recent Saudi peace plan.)

Zionism is *not* a national liberation movement! It has meant the plunder by Europeans of the land and resources of a Third World nation. It has meant the establishment of an outpost for Western imperialism in the Middle East. It means genocide and terror directed against the Palestinian people—the rightful owners of the land. This is why no national liberation movement in the world supports the Zionist state of Israel. This is why Israel's closest allies are Western imperialist powers and their racist partners like South Africa. This is why Israel has armed and supported fascist regimes like Somoza's in Nicaragua, the Salvadorean junta and the Pinochet regime in Chile. The state of Israel has no right to exist. Just as South Africa has no right to exist as a white settler state oppressing the Azanian masses; nor for that matter, does the U.S. have the right to exist on conquered land as an imprisoner of colonized nations.

Many Jewish women in the women's movement have begun to equate the struggle against anti-semitism with the fight of Third World people against racist oppression and even to identify themselves as "other than white." Anti-semitism remains a reality in the U.S. and elsewhere. But it is a lie to equate the situation of Jews with the genocidal attacks experienced by Third World people. Like other oppressed and exploited European immigrants, Jews have been incorporated into a privileged white oppressor nation which dominates internally colonized people within the U.S. To deny this ex-



credit: Breakthrough

Solidarity with the Palestinian Revolution and opposing Zionism are fundamental to building an anti-imperialist movement in the U.S.

empting Jewish people from the responsibility of struggling against white supremacy. Within the women's movement, this line undermines support for national liberation in the name of Jewish women "focusing on our own oppression." This furthers the reformist view within the women's movement which separates the struggle for women's liberation from the overall fight to defeat the imperialist system.

The imperialist system is responding to profound crisis with increasingly fascist solutions. This has spawned the rise of neo-Nazi and fascist mass movement in both Western Europe and the U.S. Along with this comes the rise of anti-semitism. There is a tradition of Jews fighting back against fascism and anti-semitism, from the battles against the pogroms in Europe and Tsarist Russia to the heroic Warsaw Ghetto uprising against the Nazis in Poland. To call up this history of resistance in defense of Israeli fascism and genocide is a betrayal of that history. For progressive Jews the only principled stand is total rejection of Zionism and support for Palestine.

VICTORY TO THE ARMED STRUGGLE

Drawing on the lessons of the victorious national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America, the Palestinian people have chosen the difficult path of people's war to reclaim their homeland.

Fighting from base areas in Syria and Lebanon, from within the West Bank and Gaza, and from within Israel itself, the Palestinian freedom fighters have thwarted Israeli attempts to wipe out their nation.

The state of Israel has become one of the most highly militarized in history, with a vast U.S.-supplied arsenal. Its farms and frontier settlements are armed to the teeth to guard against guerrilla infiltration. Every Zionist settler functions as some part of the colonizing army, defending Israel against the ever-increasing advances of the Palestinian guerrilla forces. As in every people's war, the Zionists must contend with every Palestinian, and must consider each Palestinian a potential enemy. Not only does Israel have to guard against attack from outside its borders, but it has to protect itself from the Palestinian masses who still live and work as colonial subjects within Israel. It is a great strength of the Palestinian revolution that the war for Palestine has been brought into the heart of Israel, striking at the frontier settlements and within the urban centers.

The Israelis scream "terrorism" whenever a bomb explodes inside one of their cities or settlements. At the same time, Israeli pilots flying U.S.-made fighter bombers rain down indiscriminate terror on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. The Israelis call these attacks "self-defense."

Many people in the U.S left echo the Israeli charges of "terrorism" against the Palestinians. They raise the issue of attacks against the "civilian population," ignoring the fact that in Israel the civilian population functions as an armed militia directed against Palestinians. But criticism of Palestinian military actions reflects a more basic disagreement with the Palestinian strategy of people's war. Those who would deprive the Palestinians of their most effective weapons against the Israeli invaders and occupiers have no real commitment to the destruction of Zionism.

Left critics of the Palestinians also attack the actions of the FALN, the BLA and other armed clandestine formations inside the U.S. For these people, the time is never right for armed struggle, and the harsh realities of wars for national liberation should never be brought to the heart of the empire.

* * * * *

Nineteen eighty-one was the year the Zionists unleashed the Beirut raid and other attacks against Lebanon, destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor, escalated attacks by riot police and soldiers against Palestinians on the West Bank, and annexed the Golan Heights. But for all its ferocity, Israel can only succeed in buying time. No amount of Zionist military aggression and expansionism or maneuvering by U.S. imperialism can destroy the Palestinian commitment and capacity to see their nation liberated. The destruction of Zionism, however long it takes, and the building of a free, independent and socialist Palestine will be an historic victory in the anti-imperialist struggle. The time is long overdue for those of us in the U.S. left to break with the politics of collaboration with Zionism and white supremacy, which has denied the Palestinian revolution essential solidarity. ■

VICTORY TO PALESTINE!



Building Strategic Alliances and People's War: National Liberation Inside the u.s. Imperialist State



Speech by Ahmed Obafemi, National Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters

This is a speech given by Ahmed Obafemi in Denver at an event sponsored by the Comite de Colorado Contra la Represion in December 1981. He was speaking on behalf of the National Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters, which is leading the political work around the New Afrikan Prisoners of War and their white anti-imperialist allies captured as a result of the October 20th Brinks expropriation attempt.

* * * *

On behalf of the National Committee to Defend New Afrikan Freedom Fighters, and on behalf of the New Afrikan independence movement, I bring you warm and revolutionary greetings with the battlecry of Free the Land! If I was to say good morning to most people, they would say "good morning." If I was to say good night to most people, they would say "good night." Those are greetings. So again I am going to greet you with the revolutionary greeting of *Free the Land!*

audience: Free the Land!
Free the Land!

audience: Free the Land!
If the Native Americans had sovereignty over their land, Leonard Peltier would not be a Prisoner of War. If the Puerto Rican people had a free land, the 11 would not be Prisoners of War. If the ChicanoMexicano people had obtained already the reunification and socialization of Mexico, Kiko Martinez would not be now facing the possibility of going to jail for life. And if the

Republic of New Afrika's land was free, we would not have New Afrikan freedom fighters, Prisoners of War, or the Black Liberation Army 25. So the question of land, the question of free land, is the only question which we are concerned with. The only question, because the resolution of that question should in fact resolve all of the other questions.

I come here tonight not only to greet you, but to extend to the ChicanoMexicano people, their liberation movement, and to the Puerto Rican independence movement, and to the real anti-imperialist North Americans, the solidarity of my people and the solidarity of our soldiers. It is not merely by accident that I come here. Because there are severe conditions in the world which bring me here tonight. And the fact is that we need to talk about this situation that all of us are in. It is to talk about this situation, to talk about this empire, that has all of us in its grip. And it's to talk about how we deal with this imperialist beast.

"OUR HISTORY BRINGS US TOGETHER"

In 1848 New Afrikan warrior/slave/rebels joined forces with the Mexican troops, which fought the armies of the united states of america, as the ChicanoMexicano people battled to resist the westward expansion of the imperialist empire. At that time the struggle of New Afrikan slave/rebels for land and freedom had made us natural allies with the ChicanoMexicano people.

In 1508, Puerto Rico was a colony of the Spanish empire. Afrikan slaves were among the populace of Puerto Rico. Our ancestral blood ties, and our demand for control and freedom have made us natural allies of the Puerto Rican independence movement. Our enemies were the same, European imperialism, the same rich, racist, inhumane, low-down dirty dogs. As we had the same enemy, it was natural that we should aim our weapons at the same target.

We are here today because our 19th century war for national liberation and your 19th century war of resistance against white European american imperialism has not yet come to an end. u.s. imperialism has not yet been defeated. So the same problem that we faced, that the u.s. imperialists caused your people and my people in the 19th century is the same problem that we face today.

In the mid-1800s my people were already enslaved and colonized in the southeast portion of what is now called the united states of america, while u.s. imperialism was colonizing the ChicanoMexicano people in the southwest and the Puerto Rican people in Puerto Rico. The enslaved New Afrikan population in the southeast of the so-called united states of america had been kidnapped from Africa, taken from our land in Africa while white nations took over African land. We were colonized in North America as our brothers and sisters were colonized in Africa. In North America our

people, as Africans taken from many different African nations, merged into one people, a new people, a New Afrikan people, and a New Afrikan nation. In North America in the states of the Black Belt our nation came into existence in about 1660. As slaves and after slavery, we developed the land in the Black Belt and elsewhere. We picked the cotton, and cotton eventually made the united states rich. We did not enjoy the benefit of our labor, however, and we were denied control and sovereignty over the land which we developed. We developed Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Louisiana, and surrounding states. In most of these states, we were, in fact, in the majority. Soaked in New Afrikan blood and cultivated in New Afrikan labor, for three hundred years the birthplace of New Afrikan babies, and the burial places of New Afrikan ancestors, this land became New Afrika, portions of the land subject only to the just claims of the Native American population.

But we were denied our independence and our sovereignty over this land by the white North American government, and we were colonized, beaten and murdered, and the Native American population was massacred and driven out. We resisted, we fought against the slave trade, we fought against slavery, we fought for land and independence in North America. We did not as New Afrikans fight against the indigenous Red Nations. But as New Afrikans, escaped slaves



These Black men were participants in the Indian resistance known as the Crazy Snake Rebellion. In 1904, Creek Indians in Oklahoma took up arms to oppose the conversion of their tribal lands to private ownership. Led by a warrior named Crazy Snake, the Creeks and their Black allies fought courageously, but were brutally suppressed by the U.S. military.



In 1855, a group of teenage Black slaves armed themselves and escaped from Virginia. When a posse of slavecatchers surrounded them, their leader, Ann Wood, raised her weapons and dared the whites to fire. The posse was forced to retreat and the courageous young Blacks reached Philadelphia safely.

and freemen, we fought with the Native American population. These nations, like the Seminole Nation and the Choctaw Nation were Afro-Red Nations. They struggled for independence. Our solidarity with the Red Nations was not just an isolated event. Indeed the bonds between us have left the blood of the Red Nation running deep in the veins of almost every New Afrikan family. These blood ties flow not from the system of race and subordination imposed by the European american slave masters, but from the mutual alliance against the slave master during the period of anti-imperialist warfare.

Yet, both the Red people and the New Afrikans were denied the land in the southeast of the so-called united states that both populations had lived on, developed, and fought for. Both nations were defeated and colonized. Our nation was colonized in the southeast and the Native American nations were driven to the west. Meanwhile the land of the ChicanoMexicano people in the southwest and from the Puerto Rican people, by

force of arms, by the same colonizers that denied us land in the southeast, was being taken. You were colonized in your own land and sometimes taken from your land. And as white racist settlers calling themselves pioneers moved onto your land to displace you and to seize power for the imperialist state, white terrorist organizations called "democratic clubs," Ku Klux Klan, and white mothers' sewing clubs in the 1800s pulled our peoples out of state legislatures and shot them down in the streets. And imperialists colonized New Afrikans, ChicanoMexicanos, and Puerto Ricans. Mexico, Puerto Rico and New Afrika were colonized and neo-colonized, and foreigners and puppets were placed at the helm of the government of these lands.

So this is how we in the southeast, and the Chicano-Mexicano in the southwest of the so-called united states became the landless, and how the Puerto Ricans, without control of their land, became the wretched and dispossessed. And as a colonized people each and every right we had has been disrespected, including the fight

for liberty and life. Under the slogan of white superiority, state rights, and war against crime, we have been burned at the stake, we have been castrated, lynched, and placed on chain gangs in an endless succession of acts of state-sponsored terror. In fact you, under the slogan of "manifest destiny," have been butchered and displaced from your land. In fact, you have been hunted and called illegal immigrants for crossing borders which are illegal themselves.

New Afrikans are common victims of terrorism. In Buffalo, NY our men have been murdered, and their hearts taken from their chests. In Jackson, Mississippi; Los Angeles, California; New Orleans; in Tennessee, our Black women have been shot down in the streets. In Oakland, California; Boston, Massachusetts; Wrightsville and Atlanta, Georgia, our children are being killed. They are killing our babies and no one goes to prison or is punished for these genocidal crimes against us. But yet, some months ago they attempted to send 16 New Afrikan people, New Afrikan men, to the electric chair for a rebellion in Pontiac Prison against the conditions which clearly no human being should live under.

"THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THE DISPOSSESSED"

So we have the same problems in the 20th century that we had in the 19th century. And technology has changed, but the colonizing system remains the same. So as the ChicanoMexicano people seeks the reunification and socialization of its subjugated territory, and the Puerto Rican independence movement seeks the liberation of the subjugated island of Puerto Rico, we seek independence over New Afrika in the southeast portion of what is called the united states of america. Together we must also support the Red population in their struggle to regain sovereignty over their land. And we must support each other in our drive to liberate our respective nations. In solidarity our respective liberation struggles must tear the guts out of this imperialist state, thereby serving our people, and indeed, serving the world.

So history brings us together again. Let us once again adjust our sights on our target and again we will find that our target is the same. That which has been built from death, destruction, exploitation, and slavery, and which survives off the modern day version of the same thing, must die. That which survives off of death, destruction, exploitation and slavery of others must be destroyed. All of our nations held by the death grip of this imperialist state must be free. We must destroy the imperialist state by destroying imperialist control over us and over our respective lands.

The new president of the united states of america Ronald Reagan, who has been elected along with the former cia director George Bush, and at their side now have the infamous war monger, Alexander Haig, they along with the Ku Klux Klan and killer cops now run amok in the streets. Counter revolution and state terror is the order of the day. Neocolonialist puppets in your country, in Puerto Rico, in our country, in subjugated Brown and Black communities across the continent have been tied firmly to their strings. The imperialist state now attempts to avoid its historical destiny. It deserves to die. The smiling hypocritical Jimmy Carter is gone. The usa with Reagan, Haig and Bush have put on their harsher face and threaten us with naked fascism.

This is done to discourage those of us who seek independence from its grip, and who seek its demise. But the new growl from the old beast is really not an unfamiliar sound. We who are in the beast's empire have always known the force and fraud by which it operates. The force now breeds its counterforce. The consequences of repression, as history reflects, breeds resistance. Which breeds more repression, which breeds resistance, which breeds more repression, which ultimately must breed revolution.

The future belongs to us, the dispossessed. We cannot be denied. As the ChicanoMexicano people rise in the southwest for national reunification and socialism, so shall we rise for independence, land, socialism in the southeast. Recently, the united states government has taken to calling the Black Nation, the Republic of New Afrika, a terrorist nation. A terrorist nation. But the question that we must ask is who is the real terrorist? It was not the New Afrikan nation who kidnapped Africans from the shores of Africa. It was not New Afrikans who branded African people with hot iron. It was not New Afrikans who beat my sister, lynched my father, raped my mother and castrated my brother. It was not the New Afrikan nation that committed genocide on the Native Americans. It was not the Republic of New Afrika that dropped the H-bomb on Hiroshima, and napalmed the Vietnamese people. Who is the real terrorist—that is the question. The real terrorist is the u.s. government, who assassinated Patrice Lumumba of the Congo, who overthrew Salvador Allende in Chile, who helped to overthrow the legitimate government of Iran years back and installed the tyrant Reza Pahlavi, the so-called Shah of Iran. I can tell you something. The Shah didn't die of cancer, he died of fear. That's what he died of.

It is the u.s. government that's the terrorist, that propped up the fascist Somoza regime, and you know what they did to Somoza, they blew him sky high. It

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credit: NCDNAFF

On July 18, 1981, the National Committee to Honor New Afrikan Freedom Fighters mobilized hundreds of people in Harlem, NY in support of the BLA, Sister Assata Shakur, and all Black political prisoners and POWs.

the u.s. terrorist organizations that arm the dying state of Israel which stole the homeland of Palestinians and which aids white settler colonists in Azania and Namibia, terrorizing African people. Who is the real terrorist? The real terrorists are the white terrorists of invading armies, the police, the FBI, the CIA and the likes in our communities who shoot down young Black and Brown, poor oppressed people, who shoot our pregnant women, kick in doors, terrorizing our people with guns—who is the real terrorist?

The real terrorist is the imperialist u.s. state which sent two hundred death merchants to Mississippi with four tanks, two helicopters and a host of automatic weapons to terrorize twelve children, two women, and one grandfather. And I ask you, who is the real terrorist?

NEW AFRIKAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS

And so, comrades, if we understand who the real terrorist is, then we now can better understand who the freedom fighters are. The brothers and sisters of New

Afrika who struggle for land and independence are freedom fighters. And they are carrying on a tradition. And what is the tradition that they are carrying on? They are carrying on the tradition of Denmark Vesey. They are carrying on the tradition of David Walker who said that Black people in the united states were a nation within a nation. And they are carrying on the tradition of Nat Turner, and you know what Nat Turner did. He rose up to slay the slave master. In fact, Nat Turner was a member of the underground, the forerunner of the Black Liberation Army. Look at the tradition that they are carrying on. They are carrying on the tradition of Marcus Garvey. Marcus Garvey who asked the Black man, "Where is your nation? Where is your flag, and where is your army?" They are carrying on the tradition of Malcolm X, who said our struggle is not a struggle for civil rights, but it's a struggle for human rights, the right to self-determination, the right to land, the right to independence, and the right to build a socialist nation. What is the tradition that they are carrying on? They are carrying on the

tradition of those Black Liberation Army members who have been captured, and who have been slain on the battlefield. They are carrying on the tradition of brothers like Twyman Meyers and Sisters like Assata Shakur, and the many others who have resisted united states government attempts to liquidate us.

There will be no Black holocaust! As we struggle politically for our independence, there is also a formation in our nation known as the Black Liberation Army, who functions, prior to the development of people's war and armed struggle, in a clandestine way. We have an underground army in the Black nation. And you have to understand that as an oppressed colonized people who have the right to self-determination, it says that we have a right to struggle for our liberation by any means necessary. And I'm not saying it, but the United Nations has said that oppressed colonized people have the right to struggle for their liberation up to and including armed struggle. And so I support resolution, I think it's 3324, of the United Nations.

THE BRINKS EXPROPRIATION

With respect to the revolutionary expropriation that took place on October 20th, 1981, we are very sorry that the action was not successful. And we think that every progressive, every just-thinking people, should understand this, should not have no problem with what happened in Nyack on October 20th. And you should support that. Because any time that revolutionaries will risk their lives to take 1.6 million dollars to put back into the community from which it had been taken, from a low-down, dirty, imperialist capitalist dog, you must support that. Because there is no way in this world that that action can not be supported. Because that's our money. That is the money that we pay for this dilapidated housing that they provide for us. It is the profits made from the exploitation of our labor.

With respect to those comrades who were captured at Nyack, we salute their courage and we say that they should rest assured that we will work for their freedom, and that we will make sure that history reflects correctly their action. We say to Judith Clark, we say to Kathy Boudin, and we say to David Gilbert, our allies, we say that they have shown by their actions and their practice that they were serious when they said that they supported, unconditionally, the Black Liberation Movement. We salute our comrade Brother Sekou Odinga, a very strong man, a courageous and dedicated New Afrikan man, who was not only beaten immediately upon arrest, but when he was taken to the precinct, he was tortured. They put a pistol to his head and pulled it a number of times. They burned cigarettes and cigars

on his skin. They put his head in a toilet and flushed it. They beat him so bad that they destroyed his pancreas. But Brother Sekou stayed strong. Didn't mumble a word. Now I wasn't there, but knowing Brother Sekou, if he did anything, he probably spat in their faces.

And we salute our comrade Prisoner of War Sam Brown, who also was tortured, was beaten until he was unconscious, had his shoulder and his neck fractured to the degree he had to have a brace put on him, was picked up by this brace and thrown on the ground. And the pigs stood on his head, and he stood strong and courageous. We salute Eve Rosahn, who resisted and would not collaborate with the Grand Jury who attempted to extract information from her about the Black Liberation Movement. We salute and commend Yaasmin Fula, who refused to cooperate and collaborate with the imperial state. We salute and commend Sister Fulani Sunni-Ali who was just recently incarcerated for not collaborating with the u.s. imperialist state. It is important that we just reflect on those few names in terms of noncollaboration.

There's one thing about all three of them, it is that they are women. They are women. The next person to be called to the Grand Juries is another woman, Sister Jerry Gaines. Our information has it that Sister Sonia Sanchez was just recently terrorized, her and her child, and that another Sister, Ebony, who supports the Black Liberation Movement, was terrorized, her and her child. Now the thing about these things is that these are women who have children, who in most cases live by themselves. Why are they trying to terrorize women? If we look around we can look at Assata Shakur, and Haydee Torres and Dylcia Pagan Morales, and we can see that in the struggle for independence of nations inside of the imperialist state, women are playing a major role. Women are rising to the fore, and so the imperialist state feels that if they can terrorize women and children, they might be able to set back our liberation movement. But clearly we have news for them. We will not turn around, and you will not terrorize us into giving up our struggle for land and independence and socialism wherever we may reside within these borders.

In closing, our revolutionary greetings to the Black Liberation Army 25. Our revolutionary greetings to the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and to all other Prisoners of War. And I have to say this, I have to make sure that our comrades understand that we love them, we support them. And they must understand that they have made supreme sacrifices and that we have not forgotten them. And that we must always remind them that top priority on what we do is to struggle for their freedom.

Now we know that some of them will be free the way we freed William Morales. And some of them will be freed the way we freed Sister Assata Shakur. But ultimately, the only way that all Prisoners of War will be free is that if we free our respective nations.

In closing, I would like to quote from our beloved-fallen comrade Brother Mtayari Shabaka Sundiata, a brother who we have a poster of him, a brother who was killed in action, a brother whose life was dedicated to the liberation of his people and oppressed people all around the world, a brother who was murdered on the streets of New York. He was murdered. He was lying on the sidewalk after having been shot a number of times, and he was shot in the head by Detective Irwin Jacobson. And every time I speak I always like to let it be known that I always carry a message from the New Afrikan people for Irwin Jacobson, and that one day, one day he will receive revolutionary justice.

But to quote Brother Mtayari, this is what he said, but not only did he say this, he lived it, and I quote:

"How can we talk about a nation, and not talk about an army. That's not realistic. Every nation has an

army. So power to the people's army. The nation must come to fruition by revolutionary action."

And so on behalf of all the New Afrikan people, I say to you in closing, as our respective nations arise, the Red, the Black and the Brown, North American imperialism must and will come down. Support and long live the Black Liberation Army! Support and long live the Revolutionary Armed Task Force! Support and long live the FALN II! Land and socialism for Puerto Rico! Reunification and socialism for ChicanoMexicano people! Land and independence and socialism for New Afrika! Sovereignty for Native American Indians! Comrades: Free the Land! ■

* * * *

For further information, to make contributions, and to subscribe to the Committee's newspaper "The New Afrikan Freedom Fighters," write to:

*National Committee to Defend
New Afrikan Freedom Fighters
P.O. Box 1184, Manhattanville Station
New York, N.Y. 10027*



On May 1-2, 1981, mobilizations in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas, advanced the process of unity among ChicanoMexicano, Puerto Rican and New Afrikan revolutionaries.

They Are Watching Assata's Daughter

They are watching Assata's daughter
like they watched her born
screaming
in a cell in Rikers Island
then, immediately,
stole her
from this kamp where babies are not supposed to be born,
from this woman who was not supposed to be permitted
to conceive
this small
 blood victory
for Black Freedom,
this new soldier for the Black Liberation Army.

They are watching Assata's daughter like
they watched the movement of Afrikan people on the
New Jersey Turnpike in 1973,
scanning car windows
 and license plates
to study the deployment of guerrilla troops.
Spotting a car they wanted
their gunfire met
gunfire:
Zayd Shakur killed, but not before
two of theirs were taken out,
Sundiata Acoli escaping and later captured,
Assata critically wounded and fighting on.

They are watching Assata's daughter like they watched
Assata and her comrades
on November 2nd, 1979
drive out the gates of New Jersey's Women's Prison,
a kamp this woman was not supposed to be able to escape from...
like they watch the movement of
all Afrikan people in Harlem
hallways
for Kakuya's mother, whose
love for all
 Black children
guides her fight to
Free the Land.

B. C. for Breakthrough

*"There is, and
always will be,
until every
Black man,
woman, and
child is free,
a
Black
Liberation
Army ..."*

Assata Shakur



The attention and conscience of the world is focusing on El Salvador, Guatemala and the rest of Central America. Here, all of the misery and terror of imperialism is being challenged by peoples determined to be free. These just struggles are being met with a massive escalation of genocide and warfare. By early March, the Reagan administration revealed that it is creating a "secret" Latin American army to attack the economic, political and military infrastructure of revolutionary Nicaragua. Right-wing Nicaraguans and Cubans are currently being trained in Honduras and Florida to carry out this task. The goal is to overthrow the Sandinista government while covert and overt military plans aimed at destroying the revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala are well under way.

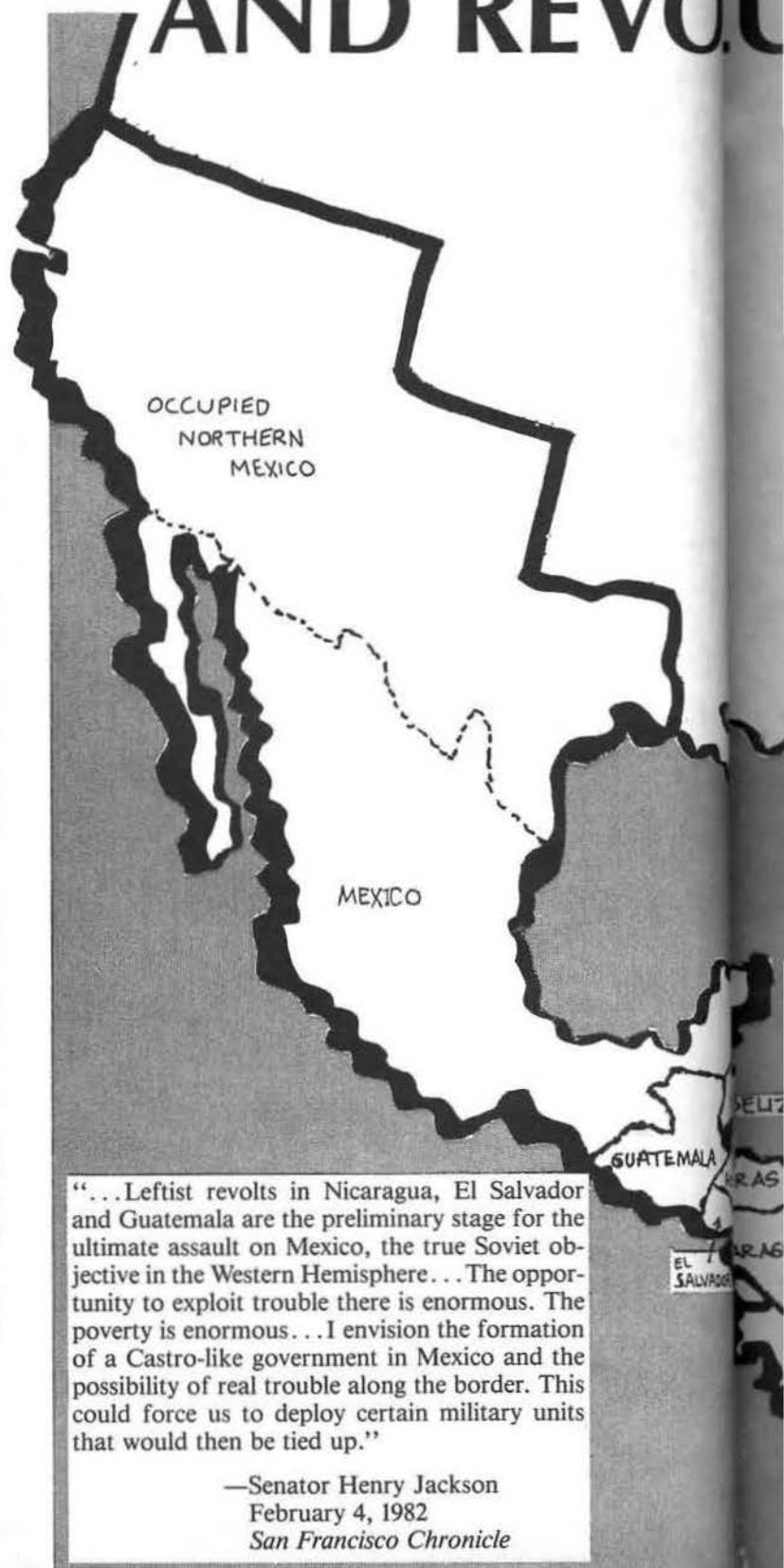
As Haig points out, Guatemala, in particular, poses a most serious threat to the U.S. because it borders on Mexico. In Guatemala, the people's armies and organizations have been waging armed struggle against a regime that has been condemned throughout the world for its atrocities against the Guatemalan masses; a regime that was installed by and has always been supported by the U.S. Recently, this dictatorship was replaced by a junta that will make it easier for Reagan to justify intensifying military assistance to the Guatemalan government in their efforts to destroy the guerrilla forces. It has been reported that this coup was planned in Washington, D.C. last January. Now, behind a new facade and with some mild rhetoric about the need for reforms, imperialism can intensify its war against the Guatemalan revolutionary forces.

The United States understands full well the threat posed by the liberation struggles in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. And together with the growing revolutionary movement in Mexico they represent a force that can break imperialism's stranglehold over the region.

Like in other Latin American countries, the contradictions inherent in Mexican society are explosive. Mexico is a dependent capitalist country where 14 million peasants are landless, 1,000 children die of malnutrition daily, and thousands of political activists "disappear" at the hands of the P.R.I. government. The P.R.I. (Revolutionary Institutional Party) has maintained dictatorial one-party rule in Mexico for over half a century.

The economy is dominated by the U.S. Mexico is a rich agricultural nation, yet its agriculture is so dominated by the U.S. that the country must import \$1.6 billion a year in food from the U.S. Despite Mexico's vast oil reserves, it owes U.S. banks nearly \$24 billion. The interest charges on these debts alone run to \$9

MEXICO AND REVOLUTION



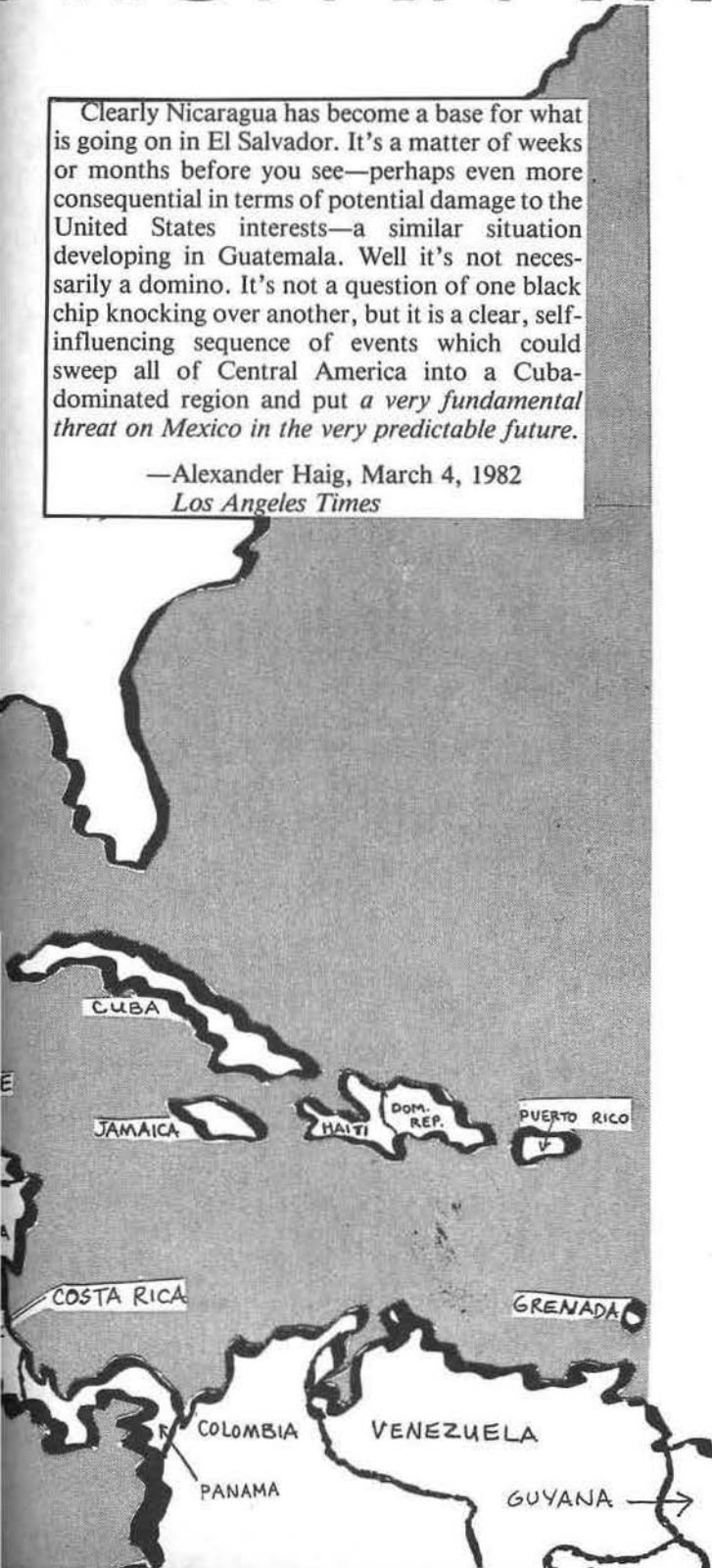
"...Leftist revolts in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala are the preliminary stage for the ultimate assault on Mexico, the true Soviet objective in the Western Hemisphere. . . The opportunity to exploit trouble there is enormous. The poverty is enormous. . . I envision the formation of a Castro-like government in Mexico and the possibility of real trouble along the border. This could force us to deploy certain military units that would then be tied up."

—Senator Henry Jackson
February 4, 1982
San Francisco Chronicle

UTION IN THE AMERICAS

Clearly Nicaragua has become a base for what is going on in El Salvador. It's a matter of weeks or months before you see—perhaps even more consequential in terms of potential damage to the United States interests—a similar situation developing in Guatemala. Well it's not necessarily a domino. It's not a question of one black chip knocking over another, but it is a clear, self-influencing sequence of events which could sweep all of Central America into a Cuba-dominated region and put a *very fundamental threat on Mexico in the very predictable future.*

—Alexander Haig, March 4, 1982
Los Angeles Times



billion a year. Seventy percent of Mexico's trade is with the U.S.

Today, throughout Mexico, independent left organizations are building the capacity of the Mexican masses to wage a protracted struggle which can topple the fascist state apparatus and put an end to imperialist control of the Mexican nation.

The recent statements made by Haig and Jackson are designed to prepare the U.S. population for growing struggle in Mexico and thus to justify the U.S. government's increasing militarization of the border and repressive attacks against Mexican people. The P.R.I. government plays a critical role in containing revolutionary struggle within Mexico and throughout Central America, securing U.S. interests in their "backyard." One way the P.R.I. fulfills its role is by cultivating an international image as a progressive and democratic government opposed to right-wing regimes in Latin America. Behind this reputation, Mexico fosters social democratic alternatives in the region which isolate the revolutionary left and benefit imperialism. One example of this is Mexico's sponsorship of the Reagan-Haig Caribbean Basin Plan which tightens the U.S. economic and military grip on the region.

But behind the P.R.I.'s carefully constructed "progressive" mask is the face of fascism. In the past years, Pres. Lopez Portillo has moved to qualitatively strengthen the Mexican army, particularly along its border with Guatemala. Daily, the P.R.I. government returns Guatemalan revolutionaries and refugees to the Guatemalan regime where they face certain death. When revolution is on its doorstep, threatening the stability of Mexico itself, the facade of internationalism can't be maintained and fascist repression is the response.

The democratic face put on by the P.R.I. also serves to cover for the oppressive conditions the Mexican masses are forced to live under and the terror and repression the government unleashes against those who challenge its existence. Because of their militant opposition to the P.R.I. regime and their refusal to collaborate with it, the Comité de Defensa Popular (CDP) is a main target of state-sponsored repression. The CDP is a leading mass revolutionary organization

which has organized hundreds of thousands of people in the state of Chihuahua. Through land takeovers and the establishment of colonias (independent, collectively organized communities) the CDP is meeting the immediate needs of the impoverished Mexican masses. At the same time, they are organizing people into a political movement that understands that the oppression and poverty they suffer is the result of a political economic system that cannot be peacefully reformed but must be overthrown through armed struggle. They have exposed the attempts by the P.R.I. to consolidate its hold over the people and to isolate the left through meaningless reforms.

On May Day, 1981, while the Mexican government held its own so-called worker's day celebration in Juarez, the CDP led over 10,000 people through the streets denouncing the P.R.I. and U.S. imperialism, demanding that the proletariat seize what is rightfully theirs. In this demonstration, and on the following day across the border in El Paso, Texas, Puerto Rican, Mexicano, Black and North American revolutionaries

demonstrated with the CDP our unity with the Mexican revolution and the struggle for a reunified and socialist Mexican nation.

The P.R.I. government reacted to the May Day demonstrations with terror. On May 30, 1981, hired guns of the mayor of Juarez attacked a meeting of the CDP at the colonia Tierra y Libertad. A leader of the CDP was killed and others seriously wounded. Coming shortly after the May 1st demonstrations, this was an obvious attempt by the government to intimidate the CDP and to try to prevent growing support for the Mexican revolution. But, in response, the CDP has continued to take to the streets to demonstrate that the struggle will move forward at all costs. On June 10, 6,000 people demonstrated in Juarez; and on June 24, 14,000 people organized by the CDP occupied the Plaza de las Armas in front of the government offices in Chihuahua.

Supporting the Comité de Defensa Popular and opposing the violent repression of the P.R.I. must be the responsibility of all progressive and anti-imperialist people. We can't be deceived by the image the P.R.I.



Following the massive May Day demonstration in Ciudad Juarez, the PRI regime launched a bloody campaign of repression against the CDP. This led to the murder of Jose Fernandez Mejia, a CDP leader of the colonia Andres Figueroa Cordero.



credit: Breakthrough

In many colonias revolutionary forces like the CDP are organizing hundreds of thousands of urban poor to build a base of revolutionary power.

wants to project. To excuse or overlook its violent nature means an abandonment of the revolutionary left in Mexico and their efforts to bring about the downfall of the fascist government. The U.S. and the P.R.I. want to see these organizations isolated. If we support revolution in Central America and the struggle to build socialism in those nations, then we must support the Mexican revolution.

Revolutionary struggle in Mexico, the development of armed struggle and the process of building towards a full scale popular war, will not be a phenomenon that will remain isolated "south of the border." Already, the threat posed to imperialism is apparent as Mexicano revolutionaries of the CDP have forged a unity with the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional (MLN). The MLN has asserted that the only path to the liberation of all Mexicano people is through a protracted people's war to achieve a socialist and reunified Mexico. This demand is based on the historical fact that Mexico was forcibly divided 134 years ago when the United States waged a bloody war of expansion and annexed half of the Mexican nation. A border was imposed and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed.

This treaty, signed under the gun as Mexico City was completely under siege by the U.S. military, has meant the colonization of the Mexican people living to the north and the creation of a dependent, but vital, agent for imperialist interests in the south. To destroy the white settler colonial regime that the ChicanoMexicano people live under in the U.S. southwest and to liberate their land, the MLN argues that they must build a movement that rejects the imperialist-imposed border and unites with revolutionaries in the south who are fighting for socialism.

With this growing unity, it is easy to understand why the U.S. is becoming increasingly concerned over the future stability of Mexico. The Mexican revolution impacts on Latin America, and reaches into the very heart of the empire itself.

We believe it is very important for white anti-imperialists to unite with a strategy of socialist reunification. For many of us, it means rejecting a view that the U.S. border is sacred and unchanging. We can look around the world and see other liberation movements that have refused to allow imperialist-imposed borders

to destroy their nations. The Vietnamese, the Palestinians, the Basques and the Irish, all have maintained their national identity. This holds true for the Mexican nation as well. Imperialism has not succeeded in dividing a nation of people. If we accept the current border as a legitimate division, we are accepting imperialist conquest. In effect, we are accepting that "manifest destiny" was a legitimate strategy; that it was the white man's god-given duty to conquer people of color.

The fact that the illegal border has been the status quo for more than a century does not make U.S. settler colonialism in the U.S. southwest any more legitimate than the white settler colonial regime in South Africa, which has existed for a comparable period of time.

Today, with U.S. imperialism's threats of military aggression, the increasing genocide against the internal colonies, the rise and acceptability of the KKK and other paramilitary organizations, and the rise of fascist repression, "manifest destiny" is not a thing of the past, but is as alive as ever. Anti-imperialism demands that we follow the leadership of Mexican revolutionaries and unite with their goal of a socialist reunified nation. The threat the U.S. feels from pending revolutionary activity in Mexico is real. We can choose to make ourselves a part of it! ■

UPDATE

During the first week of Dec. 1981, a delegation from the ChicanoMexicano Commission of Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional met with a delegation from the Comité de Defensa Popular of Chihuahua. After two days of discussion and struggle concerning both the current and historic conditions facing the Mexican people on both sides of the illegally imposed border as well as a review of the joint and mutual work done to date, the C.D.P. delegation agreed on behalf of their organization to take up the struggle for the *Socialist Reunification of Mexico*. An immediate result of this historic meeting and agreement is that no longer will Mexican activists struggle in isolation against repression either from the U.S. imperialists or from the dependent Mexican capitalists. To date, this is the most advanced agreement and position ever taken against U.S. imperialism by Mexican activists.

Immediately, to forge this unity in the heat of struggle, the C.D.P. took the responsibility
continued on p. 32

Thousands of Mexicanos under the leadership of the CDP have demonstrated to demand freedom for the Eleven Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and to express their solidarity with the FALN and the struggle for Puerto Rican independence.





Revolutionary International Workers Day demonstration, May 1, 1981, in Ciudad Juarez.

continued from p. 30

of distributing in the southern 30 states to the other revolutionary independent left organizations of Mexico, an M.L.N. document on the repression currently launched against it and calling for the other Mexican left organizations to take up the question of the Socialist Reunification of Mexico. This document is currently being discussed within and between many of these organizations in Mexico. To further popularize the position of socialist reunification of Mexico, the C.D.P. has created and is distributing a poster supporting this position. This poster can be seen on the various walls of the cities of Chihuahua.

An indication of the serious consequences posed to the U.S. by this historic agreement showed itself on December 16th, 1981. On that day, four members of the M.L.N. and a sup-

porter were called before a federal grand jury in New York, investigating the Puerto Rican independence struggle. On that day in Ciudad Juarez, the M.L.N. and the C.D.P. jointly issued a proclamation denouncing the repression against the M.L.N. and calling for the socialist reunification of Mexico. This proclamation was carried in several Mexican newspapers in the state of Chihuahua. Later that afternoon, a rally of several thousand people circled the U.S. consulate in Cd. Juarez. At that rally, the C.D.P. displayed a banner calling for an end to repression against Mexicanos in the occupied territory and supporting the socialist reunification of Mexico. At the end of the rally, where representatives from both the M.L.N. and C.D.P. spoke, the U.S. flag was burned much to the joy of the demonstrators and to the displeasure of the U.S. imperialists.

**Alto a la Persecución Política Contra el Movimiento
de Liberación Nacional (M.L.N.) de "Los Estados Unidos"
Territorio Mexicano. Ocupado**



**No Colaboración con el FBI y Gran Jurado Federal
PRESOS POLITICOS LIBERTAD
POR EL INTERNACIONALISMO PROLETARIO
COMITE DE DEFENSA POPULAR**

The Comité de Defensa Popular has published a poster calling for Socialist Reunification of Mexico. The slogans say: "Stop Political Persecution against the MLN in the 'United States'—Occupied Mexican Territory... Non-collaboration with the FBI and federal Grand Jury... Free All Political Prisoners... For Proletarian Internationalism!"

LESSONS OF LARES

**Speech by Jose Lopez,
National Coordinator,
Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional**



Jose Lopez is National Coordinator of the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional (MLN), a revolutionary organization of Puerto Rican and ChicanoMexicano people within the current borders of the United States. The following speech was presented in Los Angeles on September 23, 1981, the 113th anniversary of El Grito de Lares, the historic uprising of the emerging Puerto Rican nation against Spanish colonialism in 1868.

* * * *

Compañeros and Compañeras,

First of all I would like to say that I am grateful to all of you and bring greetings from the MLN, which is a Puerto Rican and ChicanoMexicano organization, the only such organization that has ever existed. And we think that it's making a tremendous contribution toward the development of unity of Third World people in this country. I also bring you salutations, revolutionary salutations, from the 11 Puerto Rican Prisoners of War.

Lares is the culmination of a very long process in the historical evolution of the Puerto Rican people, dating back to 1493 when Columbus arrived on the island of Puerto Rico, and to 1508 when Ponce de Leon began his conquest. Tonight I want to say something at least briefly about Lares. Then I want to concentrate a bit on the lessons to be learned from Lares, in terms of the struggle of the Puerto Rican people today.

In Lares, we have the culmination of the unity of three distinct peoples—of the Taino Indians, of the Black Africans and of the Spanish. For over 400 years on the island of Puerto Rico these three people co-existed, mixed and created a new people. And this people, on the 23rd of September, 1868, proclaimed to the world that they were a nation which could never again, or thereafter, be negated.

In Lares there is the combination of the knowledge of advanced European ideology, particularly of liberalism in the 19th century. And even more so—

something which is very little known, but which was recorded in our history—in Lares, the red flag of communism flew. The leader, the mentor, of the Lares rebellion, a man known as the father of our country, Ramon Emeterio Betances, studied in Europe and was an active participant in the revolution of 1848 in France. And he was extremely influenced (as was Jose Martí) by the thinking, the socialist thinking, of the times. And we know now for a fact that Betances came and read the *Communist Manifesto*, the book which changed the history of mankind.

We combine in Lares the wisdom of the organizational skills of the Africans, and, perhaps, something which today has evolved into the most sophisticated form of struggle—the conspiratorial mind. Brought to the shore of America against their will, everywhere they were, Black people, African people, fought back. They fled to the mountains and from there many of them continued to wage war—guerrilla warfare—against the landowners. In Puerto Rico alone we have registered during the 19th century 40 slave revolts. In the United States in the period from about 1750 until 1863 there were registered 250 slave revolts, all organized in a form that required great skills. The form of conspiracy. The form of silence. And in a way that the enemy, which you were going to hit, was incapable of detecting.

And, of course, in Lares was combined the courage of the Taino Indians. The Tainos who stopped the Spanish conquest of the Caribbean on the island of Vieques. If you don't know this, first of all let me just tell you that there were *never* any Carib Indians. The Carib, the word "Carib" is a Spanish misnomer. It comes out of "carne," which means flesh. This was applied to the Indians, to Tainos, who fought back. In Puerto Rico the Tainos had fought. In Española the Tainos had fought. In Cuba the Cibone and the Tainos had fought. But in Puerto Rico, as everywhere else,

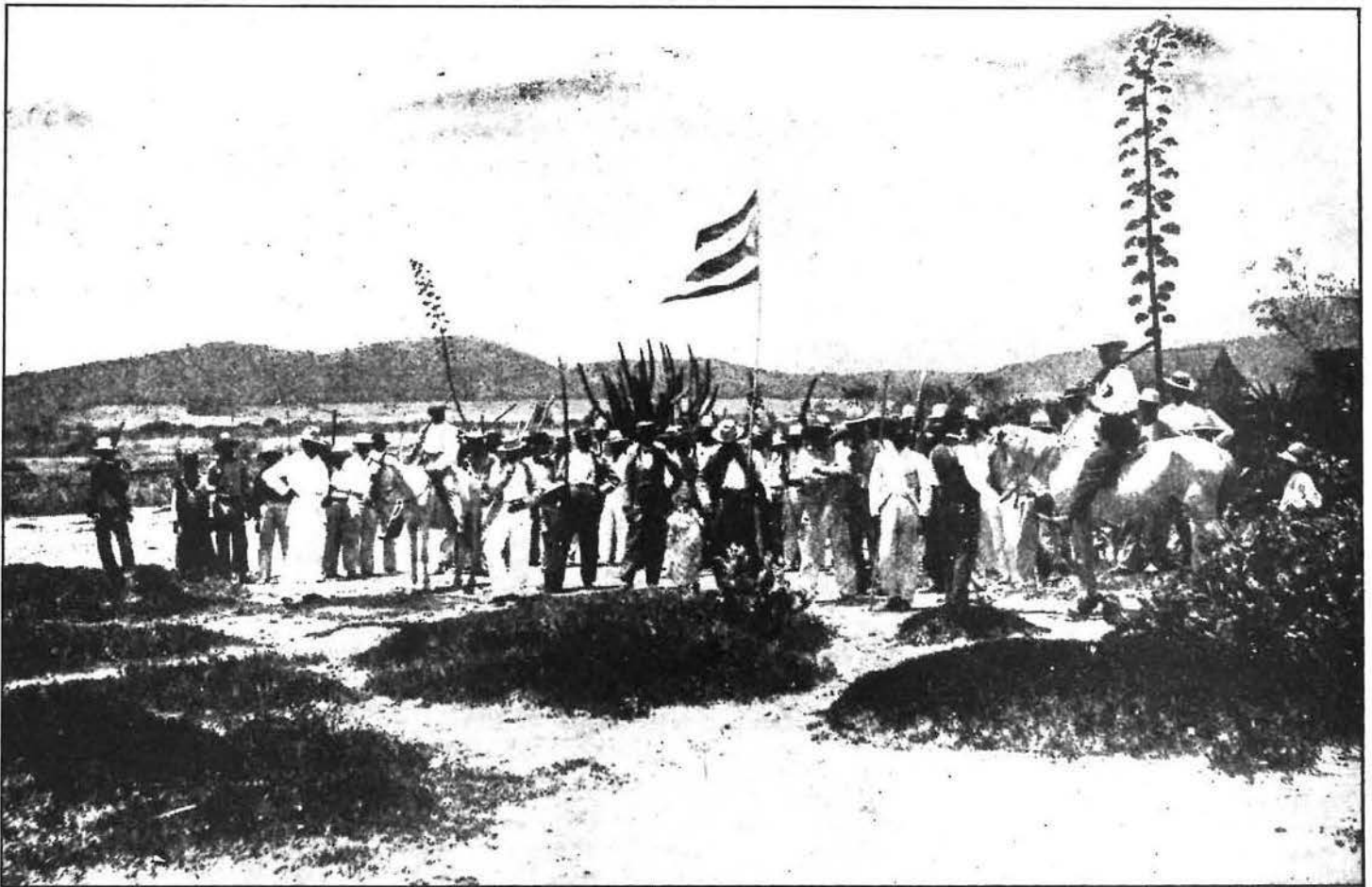
they were crushed. They were crushed by military superiority, but also by the sicknesses that the Europeans introduced.

But it was an interesting thing that in Puerto Rico, on the island of Vieques, the Tainos decided to stand up, and not to flee anywhere else. If you look at the area from Vieques, all the way to Trinidad and Tobago, you will not see a *single* Spanish possession. And the reason for that is that the Tainos stopped the Spaniards in Vieques. They fought them for 100 years, and the

Spaniards were amazed at the way these people fought, and called them the "carnivorous people." There were no real "Carib" Indians. They were all Tainos. The difference being that in Puerto Rico the Tainos were to be the passive people, where the Carib were these ferocious man-eaters. The fact is that, as everywhere, where people fight back, the oppressor *always* has to come out with terms that are derogatory in order to justify their continual exploitation and oppression of people.



The Puerto Rican people in arms declared their sovereignty and national integrity in El Grito de Lares, 1868. This is a detail from a 1970 drawing by Puerto Rican POW Elizam Escobar.



Las Aguilas Blancas, shown here flying the Puerto Rican flag, were one of the armed groups which fought Spanish colonialism and resisted the U.S. invasion and occupation in 1898. The U.S. imposed martial law for several years to suppress the guerrilla resistance.

THE BIRTH OF THE PUERTO RICAN NATION

So, while this knowledge, this wisdom, this courage, did not bring about the desire sought of a military victory over the Spaniards, it did establish to the world that the Puerto Rican people were a nation. In Lares we see the birth of the Puerto Rican nation, proclaimed to the world on September 23, 1868.

But that struggle did not end. The struggle was not really defeated. Puerto Ricans continued to fight for the next 29 years, until 1897. And they fought in the secret societies, which were organized along the conspiratorial form of organization.

In the 1880's they began using the boycott as a form of struggle, and had such a great impact, that these secret societies were called "las boicotisadoras," and they of course were called "partidas sediciosas"—seditious organizations. And in 1886, as a result of the tremendous success that the boycott had in Puerto Rico against the Spanish establishment, finally the Spanish government came down with tremendous repression, and was able to deal it a great blow. But, the struggle

continued, and it heightened. I don't know if you know this, but hundreds of Puerto Ricans fought in the war for Cuban independence. The two best ambassadors that Cuba had in the world in the 1890's were Eugenio Maria de Hostos, a Puerto Rican philosopher and revolutionary, and of course Ramon Emeterio Betances. And one of the greatest generals that Cuba had was a Puerto Rican: Rios Rivera. And the editor of the Cuban revolutionary newspaper in the United States, Soltero Figueroa, was a Puerto Rican.

Hundreds of Puerto Ricans left Puerto Rico and fought and died in Cuba. But hundreds, perhaps, it is now estimated that as many as 40,000 Puerto Ricans, were organized in the secret societies by 1898.

The only thing that Puerto Rico lacked at that time was a national leadership, because the best of its sons and daughters were in exile. But the Puerto Ricans fought, and the Spanish government knew that. And to circumvent the revolutionary movement, in 1897 Puerto Rico was given a Charter of Autonomy, perhaps the closest Puerto Rico has ever come to independence. That Charter of Autonomy, even though the

Autonomists in Puerto Rico claim credit for it, was due to the efforts of people like Betances, Forrets, and many others.

That was short lived, and in 1898 we have the U.S. invasion. I just wanted to give you a brief idea of the struggle of the 19th century, and what happened after Lares, but I want to take some lessons out of that struggle for us today.

"NO SYSTEM WILL DESTROY ITSELF THROUGH ELECTIONS"

The first lesson to be learned comes out of a slogan that the Puerto Rican Socialist League used many years ago. And it is that "En Lares—No Se Voto. En Lares—Se Peleo!" That basically means that in Lares there was no voting—people fought! In other words the independence of Puerto Rico can not be gotten in the ballot box. And that is important to remember, because even though people are not talking about elections now, within the next few years they will start. And people will start talking about what a *small* percentage of Puerto Ricans favor independence; and why the independence movement is insignificant. First of all, my answer to that (just as a note), is that most of the independentistas don't vote, because they learned their lesson from Lares.

Betances once said that elections were a farce. One of the great political statements. You may not think so, but *no* government or system will *ever* hold elections to destroy itself! There has never been a great revolution, or a change in the social order, through elections. *Never!* If you give me *one* example, I will tell you such an example does not exist. Because you can give me the example of the Philippines, or you can give me the example of even India, and I will tell you that thousands, and thousands, and millions of Indians died between the 1930's and the 1940's before India got its independence. Mahatma Ghandi was *not* the motive force of Indian independence. It was the blood of Indian martyrs who died for Indian independence. And it was the fight that the Filipino people carried on throughout the century that led to a mediocre independence in 1945, but it was not through any electoral process.

No system will destroy itself by elections!

Another lesson from Lares: that the struggle for national independence cannot be separated from the struggle for *social justice*. In Lares the first thing that the revolutionaries did, when they took over the town, was to proclaim the Republic of Puerto Rico, to end slavery, and to abolish the hated "libretta" systems of the Jibaros and the workers.

Throughout the 19th century, every slave revolt in Puerto Rico called for the independence of Puerto

Rico. As a matter of fact, in 1835, one of the major slave revolts in Puerto Rico drew up a constitution which proclaimed the "Republic of Borinquen"—the ancient Indian name of the island. And that tradition, of not separating the struggle of the Black people, and the struggle of national independence, is best stated in a statement that one of the great revolutionary leaders of Lares—Segundo Ruiz Belvis—made in 1865. He was elected by the Puerto Rican people to a commission in Spain to study reforms for the Antillean possessions of Spain. And when the session was about to start, Segundo Ruiz Belvis begins by saying, "We don't want reforms for the whites until every Black man in Puerto Rico is free!" And so the struggle for national liberation has to be tied to the struggle for social justice.

In 1981 this means that you cannot have independence for Puerto Rico without talking about the creation of a socialist Puerto Rico. And this means that you cannot talk about a two-stage revolution in Puerto Rico; because it is *stupid* to talk about a two-stage revolution when the bourgeoisie of Puerto Rico no longer has a role to play in the national liberation process of Puerto Rico. There is no national bourgeoisie in Puerto Rico. There are no peasants in Puerto Rico. There are *workers* in Puerto Rico. And the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico must be a struggle for the creation of a socialist republic of Puerto Rico. And that is extremely important.

THE NATURE OF THE STATE

It is extremely important because this brings us to the question of the State. The left, and particularly Marxists, have been influenced in the Western world so much by imperialism, that they hate to lose the privileges they gain from imperialism. It is a very interesting thing. People talk about creating the socialist State of the United States, and the multinational State of the United States, yet they forget that the first thing the workers in this country must do is to renounce some of their privileges, because their privileges come out of imperialist exploitation, not only abroad, but right here in the U.S.A. And what has happened, is that, particularly following the trend of social democracy (which has infected every communist movement in Europe—to create what is known today as "Eurocommunism," which is nothing more than social democracy), this movement, while not calling itself Eurocommunism, finds itself in the most revisionist spectacle throughout the United States with maybe 10 or 20 different communist parties all claiming to be the vanguard of the working class. *None* of them dare to question the very nature of the State. What does the

State exist for? Why is there a State? A State exists (and Lenin makes this very clear in his work on *State and Revolution*), a State is an instrument whereby one class oppresses another, and represses another. So if that is the role of the State, how in the world do you expect to change the system if you have not dealt with its most repressive apparatus? And so throughout Europe you are told, "Take the Parliament and you will take the police." Well, Salvador Allende tried that, and it failed. It failed because you must understand the nature of the State.

Not to give ourselves laurels, but in the history of this country there has never been a group of people who have questioned the nature of the State as the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War have. Because they said, "You can not try me! You have no authority to try me!"

The 11 Puerto Rican P.O.W.s have done something that no one in this country has ever done. No one has ever really put the State on trial. Because you can not put the State on trial using the legal structure, my friends. Many people call themselves P.O.W.'s but then they use the legal structure. You can not. There's a contradiction in that, an inherent contradiction, because how can you say, "Your system is going to defend me but I am a prisoner of war." It's a contradiction. I can tell you there are many people who criticize

the 11 and say, "Well, most of them could have gotten out within a few years." But a principle has to be upheld. And principles are deep and you can never compromise a principle. When we're talking about building a new social order, we're also talking about building a new society with new values and that means you never compromise principles, no matter what the cost. And so, the 11 said, "You can take all your lawyers, you can take all your laws, because you can not put me on trial. Not only do you represent a conquering power, but you also represent a particular class: you represent the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie!" The very essence of the State was put on trial by the 11 Puerto Rican Prisoners of War.

No one in this country has ever done that. No so-called communist, no one else has done it! And that's extremely important. Because if we are talking about imperialism, we are talking about the fact that this is the center of imperialism; and that the only way you can ever put an end to the system is by destroying it completely. And the only way that you can do that is to ultimately begin to talk about this country as a prison of nations. Where people—where internal colonies—have the right to organize themselves into nations, and to secede, and to destroy the federal system. Because the most powerful weapon of the bourgeoisie in this country is its federal system.



credit: Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Chicago

This painting of Haydee Torres by a Puerto Rican high school student shows how the POW's defiance of the colonial court's jurisdiction put the imperialist state on trial.

Unless we start to deal with that, unless people start to question the Constitution, and people start to question the very essence of the so-called democracy, and to put the State on trial, as a State. . . But more than that, to begin to organize around the very fact that you cannot have the Socialist Democratic Republic of the United States—it is an impossibility! Because this country is a settler State: built upon the graves of millions of people, of Native Americans, of Black people, and ChicanoMexicano people. You, particularly those of you who are white North Americans, have a special responsibility to begin to talk about the question of privileges, and to talk about that in relationship to the State, and to say that we must change the system. But even before you do that, you have to start to question the very essence of federalism.

THE NECESSITY OF ARMED STRUGGLE

And that brings me to the third lesson from Lares. And that is what Mao Tse Tung said many years ago, that "power comes from the barrel of the gun." No class in history, no colonizer in history, no empire in history, has ever conceded power without a struggle. And particularly, without an armed struggle. And anybody who thinks otherwise should look at history.

Betances, in 1867, decided to test the Spanish. He issued a very important document, an important political tract, known as the "Ten Commandments of Free Men." And he said to the Spaniards, "If you give us these rights, then we will be Spaniards; if not, then we are Puerto Ricans." And he said, "Spain cannot give what Spain does not have." And Betances understood that clearly. That the question for Puerto Rico could never be one of reformism. He knew very well that to make demands from Spain, to go kowtowing to Spain and to the Spanish parliament had no meaning. But the Puerto Rican people knew that what to do was to take up arms and liberate themselves, that you can only gain power and the power is really what you can guarantee yourself. You must be able to protect what you have. No nation is a nation unless it has an army. No nation can be sovereign unless it can defend itself.

Today we just had a very significant victory in the United Nations. Next year the United States will have to face the world, the conscience of the world, and tell the world that Puerto Rico is not a colony. And the world is going to say to them that Puerto Rico is a colony. However, although people may think that imperialism is declining, U.S. imperialism is on the decline, but it is a ferocious animal. It is very difficult and at many times comes out trying to revive itself.

And in Puerto Rico last week the colonial governor of Puerto Rico created something called the Commission on Decolonization. Can you imagine a colonial governor who swears allegiance to a colonial constitution, who says now we must create a Commission on Decolonization? Can you imagine that? But the interesting thing about this is that the Puerto Rican Independence party is invited to participate and it accepts. And the PSP is fighting to become part of the commission because they were left out. What is happening is an imperialist design. Romero Barcelo would never do this on his own. That's Washington telling him, "Get these independentistas and everybody and sit down and reason together while we find ways of expanding the colonial system in Puerto Rico."

2020 PROJECT: A PLAN FOR GENOCIDE

My friends, the United States has a plan for Puerto Rico that's called the 2020 Project. And it is a plan that says that by the year 2020, Puerto Rico will be 11 industrial-military centers, parks. And these parks are to be located on the coast of Puerto Rico. And you must leave the interior depopulated. By the way, my friends, do you know when this plan is going to start? In 1985, but they have actually already started. In 16 towns in the interior of Puerto Rico last year there was zero population growth. Forty per cent of the Puerto Rican women have been sterilized. And the number of people that died was greater, of course than the number that was born.

The idea is that you will move all the Puerto Rican people from the center of the island because on the center of the island is perhaps the third largest deposit of copper in the world after Katanga and after Chile. That copper the U.S. wants. Anaconda and Kennecott are fighting to get it. Well you see, along with the copper, there is nickel in Puerto Rico, and 40% of the potential nickel deposits of any territory under the U.S. flag is in Puerto Rico. And do you know what nickel is used for? Nickel is a very precious metal because there's not much of it. It is used for nuclear submarines because nickel is the only metal that can be used to transport nuclear weapons in submarines. And you see the U.S. Navy is 15 years behind the Russian Navy. And if they want to catch up to the Russian Navy they're going to need those nickel mines.

And so, the U.S. has no intention of giving up Puerto Rico. Not only because of the nickel, not only because of the copper, but because Puerto Rico is the only industrial-military colony the world has ever known. Do you know that? There has never been a colony that is so industrialized and so militarized as Puer-

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We're productive. And we're committed to our



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to Rico. Thirteen per cent of the land of Puerto Rico is military bases. An island that's 100 miles long and 36 miles wide has 11 military bases. It has the largest naval base in the world in Roosevelt Roads. The island of Vieques has 36,000 acres, 26,000 of which are controlled by the U.S. Navy. And over and above that, Puerto Rico is practically dancing on a sea of petroleum. Given these facts, the 2020 Project has to go on.

And the only obstacle is the five revolutionary organizations. They are the only obstacle, and the U.S. doesn't know who they are. The EPB-Macheteros did what no great power in the world has done outside of Japan, and that is to bomb a U.S. Air Force base and destroy its airplanes which were scheduled to be used in El Salvador.

So, my friends, an article came out on February 11, 1981, which came out all over the country from Washington. It says, it started out like this: "Five tiny terrorist Puerto Rican organizations pose the greatest threat to the U.S." Imagine this, not even the Soviet,

Union poses as great a threat as five tiny Puerto Rican organizations. They always say they're tiny. The problem with that is that they cannot count. You cannot count what you do not see. So they have a tremendous problem. The problem is how to carry on a campaign of destruction of the Puerto Rican nation with these organizations capable of doing what they do, who are basically able to operate on a very small piece of land where the CIA, the FBI and every repressive agency of the U.S. has its headquarters for Latin America. Now that's a tremendous problem.

"THE PIP AND PSP DON'T WANT REVOLUTION"

Since 1978 a policy has been adopted by the U.S. and that policy is, "Let us try to get the more reasonable elements within the independence movement and deviate them a little bit or as far as we can to the right, let them even participate and perhaps one of these days they'll get to be Senators in the colonial legislature and

can get a few who will maybe be a Resident Commissioner to Washington who will be an independentista. In the meantime we will repress the movement to instill fear in the petit bourgeois sectors that are going to get scared anyhow if anything happens." Because of course, they get scared because they don't want to lose their privileges; they don't really want revolution, you see. The PIP and the PSP don't want revolution; that's the farthest thing from their minds. "Let us get these reasonable people to sit down and reason with us and let us isolate these people so we can handle them. That way, little by little, we can concentrate and then narrow it down to a core so we can destroy them."

The fact is that that's not going to happen. Because, you see, movements like everything else, are dialectical. In Algeria, the French thought they had destroyed the National Liberation Front. And in 1960 they decided to hold a plebiscite and 90% of the Algerians voted to be a part of France. And 3 years later the French are forced to give Algeria independence because that movement, all of a sudden, regained strength and hit them in a way that they weren't even expecting.

It's very interesting because the same thing is happening in Germany right now. A few years back they said, "The Red Army Faction is gone. We put all of them in jail, we killed them." I was watching the program "Nightline" the other night and all of a sudden they put a map of Germany and bombs are exploding everywhere. But this time they were not against the Germans, they were against Americans, and they had infiltrated NATO intelligence. Now they were supposed to have destroyed the Red Army Faction three years ago.

You see, that's the problem. The problem is people. The ruling class everywhere and all the oppressors always think that you can get a few leaders in, you get a few people in, you put them in jail, and you've wiped out a movement. Albizu Campos said in 1939: "You can put Albizu Campos in jail, you can put 10,000 Nationalists in jail, you can kill many Nationalists, and a million Puerto Rican people will rise up." The only way that you can ever destroy the Puerto Rican resistance is by destroying the Puerto Rican nation and for that it will take a lot more than even sterilization, forced migration and everything else because it hasn't worked. For 50 years in the schools of Puerto Rico English was the only language that could be taught. Puerto Ricans don't speak English.

THE NATION CANNOT BE DESTROYED

The reason is this, that once a people become a nation, the nation is the highest unit that has ever been

created. Up to now, there is no higher form of unity than the nation. The nation is a very sophisticated form of political development that can not be destroyed.

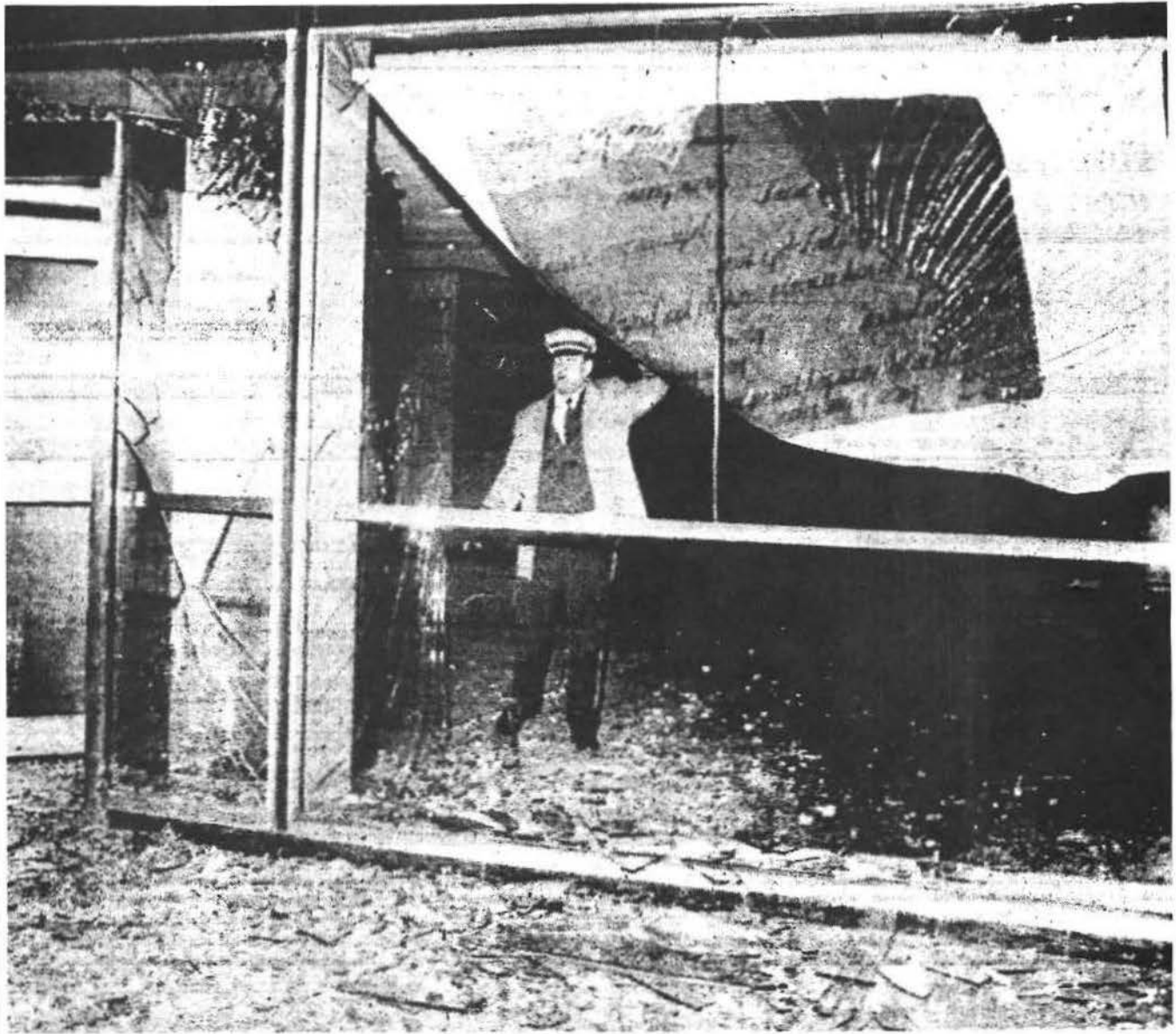
Ireland is the example. The British went as far in 1800 as to create the Act of Union and said, "No Ireland, you're part of the United Kingdom." And the Irish said hogwash and they continued to fight. In 1916 they fought, their leadership was killed, but by 1921 the Irish Free State is created. And in 1981, Thatcher doesn't know what to do with the Irish. So you must understand that nations can not be destroyed. You must liquidate a nation completely before you can destroy it, before you can assimilate it.

What I want to say, however, is that what the United States is attempting to do in Puerto Rico, and with the creation of this Commission on Decolonization, is to deviate the movement, to be able to isolate the revolutionary forces in Puerto Rico, and to continue their program of colonialism in Puerto Rico, whether it be by statehood or whether it be by an associate republic of some kind that they may create.

It is very possible that they would do such a thing. They did it with the Mariana Islands. You know in the Mariana Islands they created a government and they say now they're independent. Ha! You know what the Mariana Islands don't have? An army. Well, you can say why does the Mariana Islands need an army? Well, no matter how small a nation is, in order for that nation to guarantee its sovereignty, it must have control over its defense. And that's what the United States is trying to do with Puerto Rico. So, the greatest crime that the independence movement, and I'm talking about the PSP and the PIP, can commit is to become part of their Commission on Decolonization. Because the United States will be going to the General Assembly of the U.N. next year and say, "We are resolving the problem, this is an internal matter and the people are sitting there. They're all sitting there like good people and we're resolving the problem." That's what the United States is attempting to do with Camp David resolving the question of Palestine.

My friends, another lesson and an important lesson from Lares is the question of treason. Lares was scheduled to be on September 29, 1868. Because of a traitor, the plans were turned over to the Spanish government, and everything had to be accelerated. Much of the leadership was outside of the country and most of the defeat of Lares has to be blamed on this traitor. But understand that while in the independence movement we have an Alfredo Mendez, treason is also dialectical. In other words, every movement that's a serious movement is going to have traitors. A very

FALN BOMBS RIP WALL ST.



On March 1, 1982, the FALN bombed four financial institutions on Wall St. commemorating the Nationalist attack on Congress, demanding freedom for the Eleven Puerto Rican POW's, and expressing solidarity with the October 20th Freedom Fighters. The FBI, which once claimed to have "broken the FALN's back" was forced to admit "it has grown a new back."

good book, written by Che, is *Reflections on the Revolutionary War*. In this work, Che recounts the whole experience in the Cuban revolution. And one of the most trusted allies was a traitor. But you know this traitor was caught. And he begs Fidel for forgiveness. But you see, revolutionary justice can be as fierce as the justice of the enemy. And they kill him. They assassinated him and brought him to justice. And so I can assure you one thing, that an Alfredo Mendez will never walk the streets of any Puerto Rican community here or in Puerto Rico as a free man. Not that I would do anything, not that my organization would do anything, but revolutionary justice is fierce when it has to be. And this heroic example was given in Sebana Seca two years ago, when on November 11, 1979, a young Puerto Rican was imprisoned in Tallahassee, Florida, a leader of the Puerto Rican Socialist League, and was assassinated. A month later, these four organizations ambushed a Navy bus in Sebana Seca, killed two of the naval personnel, injured ten and told the United States: "This is what you get for killing one of us. Your loss is much greater than ours. And whatever you do to our patriots, you will be repaid ten times over." Because you see, there is a problem, which is that Puerto Rico's an occupied country, an occupied nation, and the occupier has a tremendous problem. There is no American who is in Puerto Rico who is not going to fear for his safety because, as this war increases, there will be no innocent Americans in Puerto Rico. And so, I want to say, that we should not be set back; we are not going to take one step back because of Alfredo Mendez. We will intensify our struggle and no traitor is going to stop us because our movement is too advanced to be stopped by anyone.

"REPRESSION IS A MEASURE OF OUR EFFECTIVENESS"

Today the United States is unleashing an attack on our revolutionary forces through grand juries, through incarceration, through harassment. The Secret Service has gone to people in our community, put guns to their heads and has told them if anything should happen to the President or any of us, their heads are going to be blown off. The FBI has threatened people with jailing and with everything else if they don't cooperate.

And now they've created a Senate Internal Security Committee, a subcommittee on terrorism and subversion, headed by Senator Denton, to investigate the Puerto Rican movement, the revolutionary movement. I'm going to say this to you: we welcome it. You know why, Mao Tse Tung once said, when you are criticized it is because you are doing something. When you are attacked, it is because you are being effective. And so we know we are being effective when we get the wrath of

the enemy upon us.

So, and I want to say this because a lot of people talk about COINTELPRO, and they talk about what happened in the 60s and what happened in the 70s. And they always present it as victimization—we were victims of this. Hogwash. No one is an innocent bystander in a war of liberation. Not my daughter who is 4 years old or my grandmother who is 90 years old. Or my mother who is 65 years old. They are not innocent victims. Because we are fighting a war and in a war everyone is responsible and ultimately we serve either to resolve the problem or we serve to maintain the injustice.

So there are no innocent victims. We must stop the repression in this country. There is no doubt that we must expose the Senate Internal Security Committee, that we must tell the world what is being done; because what is happening there is ultimately, you see, a greater plan for fascism in this country. And that is that, ultimately, in this country, the only way you can institute fascism is to contain at least 30% of your population which is of color. You must put them somewhere and have them as scapegoats in order to guarantee the survival of your system. Hitler came to power in Germany with 45% of the German vote. Hitler built fascism in Germany with the popular support of the German masses. And anybody who tells me different is lying. Reagan will build fascism in this country with the support of white people in this country, and white workers in this country; even though they may have gone to Washington today to march. They know what side their bread is buttered on and they know that imperialism is good for them.

What each of you, particularly the North Americans must do, your task is not to build a Communist Party-U.S.A., your task is to say to the white workers, "Lose your privileges so the whole of humanity will be free." Because you must be willing to do what Marx did in 1869 when he told the English Workingman's Association: "Your primary responsibility is to struggle for the independence of Ireland." Your primary responsibility in this country is to destroy federalism, is to guarantee that Black people will have a Black nation, that the so-called southwest will be returned to Mexico and that Native Americans are able to determine their future as they want. That's your task.

My friends, I would like to conclude by saying that the greatest lesson that Lares taught is contained in a brief sentence which Farabundo Marti made in the 1930s. "Cuando la historia no se puede escribir con la pluma, entonces tiene que escribir con fusil." "When history can not be written with a pen, it has to be written with the gun." ■

—interview with N A P O



'WE ARE A NATION AT WAR'

The following interview was conducted with a representative of NAPO in September 1981.

BREAKTHROUGH: Politically, why was NAPO formed, and out of what conditions did it emerge?

NAPO: The set of conditions in which We found ourselves in the mid-70's were essentially the same as those confronting our people everywhere, but We confronted these general conditions in the particular shape that prison gave to them.

When We began to analyze these conditions, We tried to do so in an all-sided way, and moved from the general to the particular.

A weak revolutionary tendency had been diverted by counter-revolutionary force: The masses were disillusioned; the ranks of movement cadres were scattered and confused; all activity was at a low level; a new wave of bourgeois "buffers" were on the rise; many of the ideas and forms of struggle that had been adopted had failed to fulfill our expectations.

All of this, and more, was part of the general set of conditions, and had their reflection inside the walls.

Some of us inside the walls had been active prior to capture, while others had become consciously political and active after capture. We had differing political backgrounds, and differing types and levels of experience. A "small circle mentality" prevailed, and our activity was characterized by spontaneity.

So, in brief, these are the conditions, and the organization was formed so that We could begin to make a contribution to the national liberation struggle of our people in a more systematic and productive way.

BT: Can you elaborate on the "small circle mentality" and "spontaneity"?

NAPO: Well, the "small circle mentality" was basically an expression of ideological heterogeneity, and it couldn't help but express itself in organizational relations. When We began to recognize the problem and then deal with it, the effort took the form of a struggle against dogmatism.

Some of us were ex-BPP members; some were ex-CAP members, while others were ex-NOI members, and still others were "free agents". While all of us claimed "total commitment to 'the struggle,'" the rule was that the ex-BPP members would spend most of their time together, and so would the other "small circles".

Some of us were still debating the merits of the "foco" as a method which was totally opposed to "mass organizing"; some still believed all white folks were devils; others believed We couldn't win independence without "achieving unity in the working class", which in practice means "white working class" and subordination of the New Afrikan national liberation struggle to the North Amerikkkan struggle. Some of us

called ourselves “black Marxist-Leninists” or “Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tsetung Thinkers” and denied the existence of the nation because they didn’t see any reference of it in the *Communist Manifesto*.

While We had these differences, and others, We were able to find “broad unity” in the fact that We were all “involved” in “the struggle”, and We were at our best in attempting to work together only when issues or crises arose—only to “dissolve” again once the issue had been resolved. It was at times like these that spontaneity most glaringly revealed itself, but it was also manifested in daily routine: individually, inside each small circle, taking our motley group as a whole, We would *read*, but there was very little *study*, research or analysis, or summation of experiences. We didn’t know what We’d be doing from one day to the next, and there was no formalization of work style, no detailed systematic methods of carrying out tasks and functions of organized revolutionary activity.

BT: How were you able to overcome these obstacles and form NAPO?

NAPO: First of all, NAPO was not the initial formation. Two or three other forms preceded NAPO, which was a result of ideological and practical struggle.

Again, it was when our motley group united and then dissolved again and again, around crisis situations that presented us with the most glaring examples of the spontaneity that characterized our thought and practice. It was this situation of coming together and then breaking up, of not having an on-going program of any kind, that inspired us to pursue some form of structure that would provide continuity for our efforts.

We formed a Collective, and the “common program” was based on “the need for unity and continuity”, but soon proved itself insufficient.

As We began to engage in practical struggles We discovered the need for more than an abstract unity achieved during or because of crisis situations. No matter what the particular situation—whether struggling around the latest case of pig brutality or making a Reading/Study List—ideological differences would arise. While We all claimed to be totally committed to “the struggle”, it became clear that there were fundamentally different conceptions among us as to exactly what “the struggle” was about and how it should be carried on.

The content of agitation and propaganda wasn’t politically consistent and it wasn’t based on an exact appraisal of concrete conditions neither inside the kamp nor within the context of the overall struggle. It was necessary for us to connect the beating of a prisoner to the beating of a Brother or Sister by the police

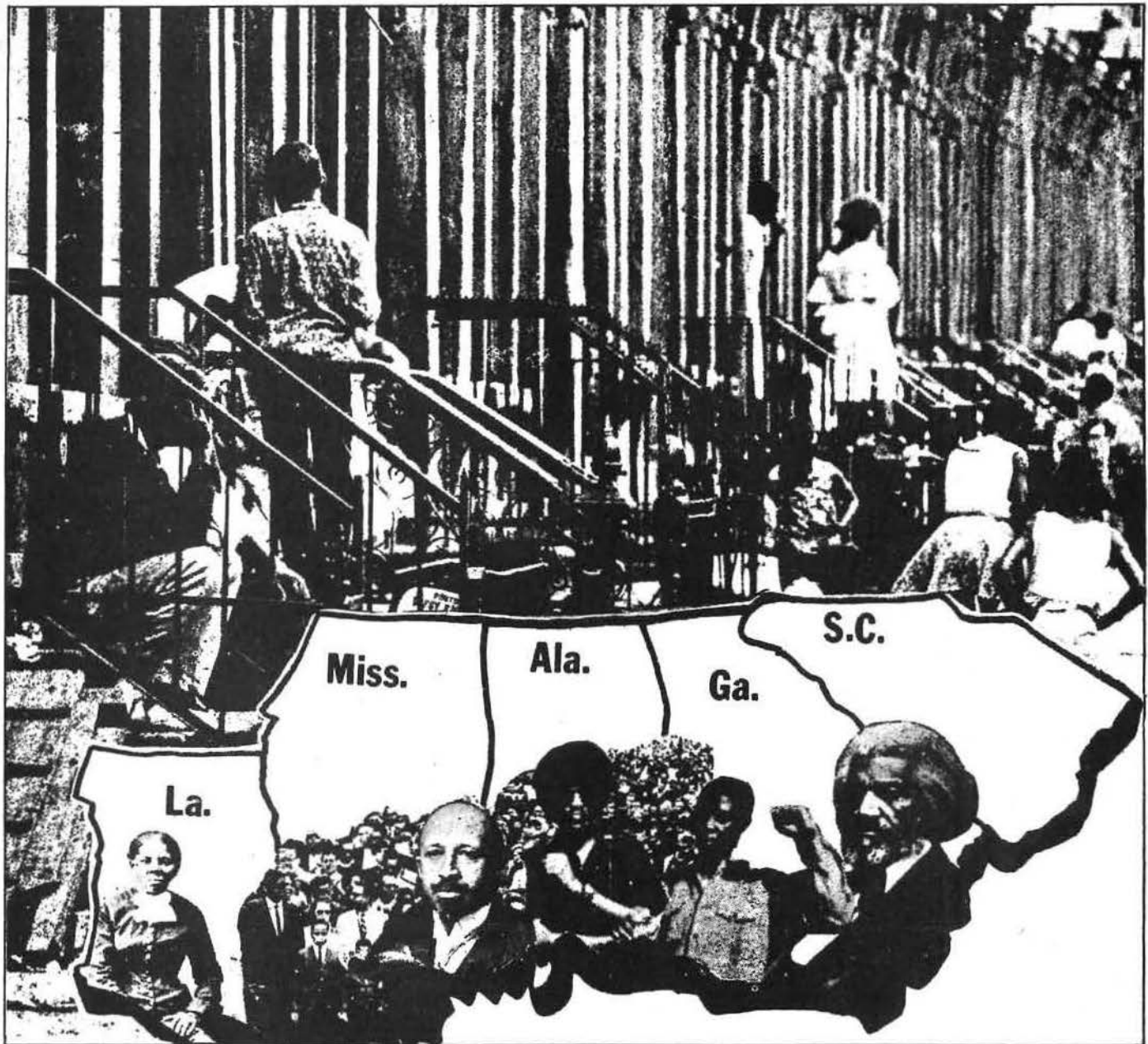
on the street, and to connect both of these to *causes*, and then to *ways and means* of eliminating these causes and creating a new situation for all of our people. We confronted problems when it became clear that simply attempting formal organization on the basis of a fragile “unity around what We have most in common” would not take us very far. We needed a greater unity on the questions of *causes* and *ways and means*. Those who believed that the struggle was one for New Afrikan national liberation could not function together, productively and with continuity, inside the same organization with those who believed otherwise. The situation might have worked out differently had We been intent on forming a coalition or a front. But We doubt it, since our study and experience had shown that even in coalitions and fronts there inevitably emerges one dominant line. The need for such a single dominant line was even greater in our situation, so *We had to engage in ideological struggle in order to have unity* inside our ranks, and based on this unity, be more successful in our practice.

BT: Didn’t the fact of creating a revolutionary organization inside the prison increase the prospect of repression against it?

NAPO: It would have, if We had been attempting to build a more-or-less “traditional” organization. You have to remember We were politically active before We were imprisoned. Cointelpro revelations were just becoming more widespread, but many of us remembered the late 60’s and early 70’s, where We’d hold conversations with people expressing our beliefs that organizations were being infiltrated, comrades framed and railroaded; that phones were being tapped on a massive, systematic scale; that We were being watched and manipulated—and We would then be called romantic and paranoid, and given long lectures explaining to us why things like that just couldn’t happen in Amerikkka.

So, We didn’t set out to become an open, mass organization. We saw no reason why We should ask the kamp authorities or any arm of the imperialist state, for permission to organize and carry on activity. We saw no reason to announce our existence and to expose our members, and We began very early to gain experience in learning how an essentially clandestine organization can engage in mass work.

We were in effect born in clandestinity, and We tried to apply those basic principles of clandestine practice which were known to us, and deemed by us to be appropriate for the type of war We fight and the concrete conditions of this war. We have of course made mistakes, and We’re bound to make more of them. But We take ourselves, our beliefs, and our words and deeds



credit: NAPO

very seriously, so We take our mistakes seriously, too, and We try to learn from them in order to prevent more of them in the future.

BT: Could you talk about the relationship between struggle in the northern cities to the struggle for land, independence and socialism in the National Territory? How does NAPO see this developing in this period?

NAPO: That is now being discussed inside our ranks, and there are only a few things We have definite positions on and which We're willing to discuss openly at present.

The National Territory is clearly the strategic area of struggle, and We believe that much more of our thought and practice has to reflect this fact. We're already encouraging more of our cadres to take up residence in the National Territory and to contribute to the development of programs based there or to be based there at some point in the future.

Viewing the National Territory as the strategic area of struggle implies that all activity outside its boundaries is basically of a tactical nature. It also has very heavy inter-relationships to all other questions, and to all forms of struggle.

BT: What is NAPO's view on the role of Marxism-Leninism in the development of Revolutionary Black Nationalist politics and strategy?

NAPO: First of all, We aren't "black" nationalists, We're New Afrikans. If, as New Afrikans, We're dealing with revolutionary nationalist politics and strategy which is truly in tune with the concrete conditions We face as a nation, then We're dealing with *New Afrikan* revolutionary nationalist politics and strategy.

We use the term "revolutionary scientific socialism" rather than Marxism-Leninism, or Mao Tsetung Thought. We find that it helps us be more creative, less dogmatic, and more Afro-centric in its application.

We also believe that revolutionary nationalism is inherently socialist, and cannot be articulated or practiced without incorporating the general theoretical principles of revolutionary scientific socialism.

BT: What does NAPO view as necessary to advance the consolidation of New Afrikan national liberation struggle? How do you view the question of unity in the independence movement and the struggle taken as a whole?

NAPO: Our primary concern in this period is the consolidation of a center of leadership for the movement. And, more particularly, we're concerned with the consolidation of our organization. We believe that such consolidation is necessary to insure continuity in the thought and practice of the movement, the winning of national independence, and consistency in the pursuit of the ultimate goals of the struggle.

We believe that this consolidation, for our own organization and for the movement, is the most appropriate organizational form for protracted, people's war. Such a center has to have ideological homogeneity and organizational centralization.

In the past—and even in the present—many cadres have confused the organizational form required by a center of revolutionary leadership ("vanguard formation") with the types of organizational forms more suited for mass organizations. Such confusion led to such things as the widespread condemnation of theoretical struggle, and the "mass work vs. armed work" debate. In the latter instance, it became a question of choosing one form at the expense of the other, rather than seeing that they both must be carried out simultaneously.

An example is the BPP, altho it's not the only organization We can point to as an example. The Party split over the question of armed struggle—but the split didn't resolve the contradiction for those on either side, nor for the movement.

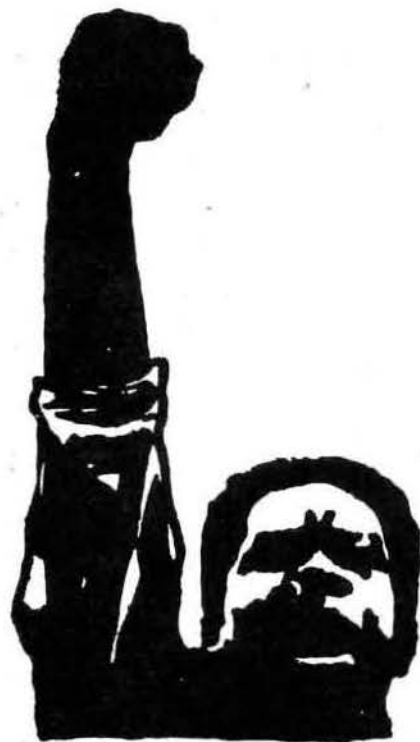
The contradiction reached the point of the split not only because there was no dominant line inside the Party to which all members would subordinate themselves. But each side of the contradiction presented a one-sided analysis of its position, and after the split, neither side carried its analysis further.

So, there was no legitimate center of revolutionary leadership inside the Party. In the absence of such a center, there was an absence of ability to develop a political line and strategy which could apply the simultaneous practice of armed and unarmed revolutionary struggle. Because there was no line, there was no development of appropriate organizational forms for carrying out both forms of work, and allowing all work to be coordinated by a single center of leadership, according to the principle that centralization of the organization does not mean centralization of the movement, and the struggle.

In view of the present emphasis on consolidation inside our ranks, We view the question of unity with particular focus on class analysis, the dialectical and historical materialist method, and the general principles of revolutionary scientific socialism.

"Unity" has been, is, and will remain a problem for us as long as We fail to understand the existence of class divisions inside the nation, as well as inside the movement and even inside each organization.

A more firm grasp of dialectical and historical materialism and revolutionary scientific socialist principles will help us to rid ourselves of naivete, idealism, and primitiveness in our thought and practice.



The tendency now seems to be that "unity" means uniting with *everyone*, at one moment in time, around a "common objective" which specifies both short and long range goals. We don't think this is realistic, possible, or desirable.

The New Afrikan Independence Movement is composed of several class forces which have general unity around the national reality. Like any other movement of this type, ours has been led by the dominant petty-bourgeois force. Also, each of the class forces interprets the objectives of the struggle differently, and moves to realize the objective according to their own vision and interests.

Our view is, the politics of the movement must shift, so that they represent the mass, or proletarian, vision and interests. Because of this, We're developing not only a minimum program, but a maximum program as well. The new society We struggle for takes its shape *during* the fight for independence, not after. Those who think they can wait until after independence before devising and implementing policies and programs for building and defending the newly liberated nation, can surely not lead it.

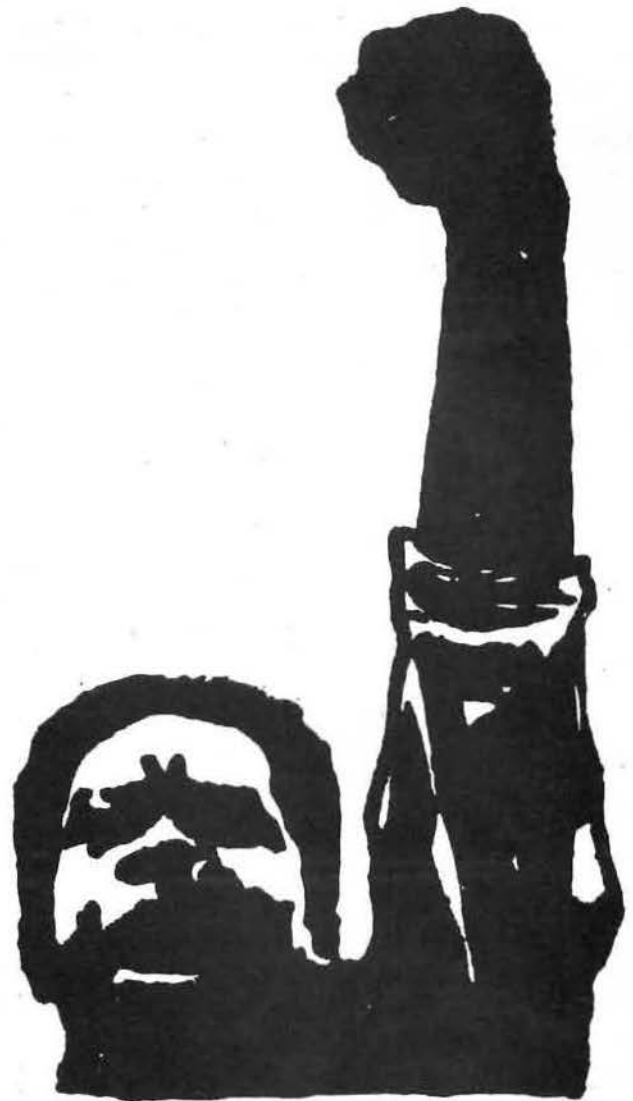
So, We can unite as one organization around both a maximum and minimum program, and unite as allies and patriots around only a minimum program. Our primary base of support will be the class forces which are most consistently revolutionary, and will see it as in their interests to creatively apply the principles of revolutionary scientific socialism during the national liberation struggle, and after independence.

BT: There's a lot of struggle over questions of leadership and the kinds of formations and organizations that can and will lead the New Afrikan national liberation struggle. This is the question of the development of the vanguard—How does NAPO see this process happening?

NAPO: Clandestinely, and basically following the route discussed above.

BT: What role does the strategic unity of internally-oppressed nations play in a strategy to win New Afrikan national liberation and defeat imperialism? On what principles and strategy should/must this unity be based?

NAPO: The struggles of all internally oppressed nations and peoples have been historically inter-related. We all have a common enemy in imperialism, and the advanced sectors of each of our movements also target capitalism as an enemy. Land is another factor held in common, which implies the dissolution of the empire and the drawing of new boundaries. And of course We have in mind the movements in Canada and Central



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America as well as those inside present u.s. borders. From here, protracted people's war becomes a commonly held strategic method of realizing our objectives.

We believe there should be greater cooperation and coordination between our movements, but We also believe that the greatest expression of solidarity and the best contribution to the defeat of imperialism is when each movement escalates from its own struggle.

BT: What is the relationship (white) North American revolutionaries and anti-imperialists need to have to the internal national liberation struggles, and to the question of unity among the internally oppressed nations?

NAPO: We believe unity among oppressed nations is a question concerning those nations, and not North Americans.

We also believe that North Americans must de-emphasize their material support, and begin to place greater emphasis upon political support for national liberation struggles, both inside and outside u.s. borders. We believe that the "proximity" of oppressor

nation organizations is harmful to the ideological and organizational development of our struggle. White folks are always underfoot, and under the guise of providing support for the movement, and accepting leadership from the national liberation movements, they usually end up determining the course of the movement or the particular organizations that they attach themselves to. While claiming to be revolutionaries and anti-imperialists, white folks end up avoiding anti-imperialist struggle and avoiding the awesome tasks of making revolution inside the oppressor nation. White/North Americans must find your own peculiar forms for armed and unarmed revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle, inside the oppressor nation—that's political support for national liberation struggles. Genuine revolutionary, anti-imperialist solidarity, unity or support, is not philanthropy, but physical confrontation with your mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, and those who rule the imperialist state.

BT: What are the main strategic lessons to be learned from the history of the struggle in the 60's and early 70's, specifically from the BPP? What are the lessons to be learned from the first wave of the BLA? How do these both relate to the development of a strategy of protracted people's war inside u.s. borders?

NAPO: While We think there are several outstanding factors We can easily point to, We don't think the period has been studied thoroughly enough to enable us to say "*these* are the main strategic lessons". For example, most of the public material relating to the BPP concerns only one region, the West Coast, and not more than a few pages has been done concerning the positive and negative aspects of the early BLA.

There was, with hindsight, no genuine, experienced, revolutionary scientific socialist leadership, but rather a petty-bourgeois leadership which was largely student-based. Spontaneity and primitiveness characterized nearly everything We did, seen mainly by the absence of sober, well-thought out plans for carrying on a protracted people's struggle.

We talked about the "colonized nation", about police as an occupying army, but We didn't build our formations or carry on our work as if We believed our own words.

We dealt mainly with two forms of struggle, but rather than seeing those forms as two aspects of one whole, We pitted them against each other—armed and unarmed struggle—and the relation between open and clandestine cadres, organizational forms and styles of work were never balanced. Armed actions in particular were carried out in a one-sided manner.

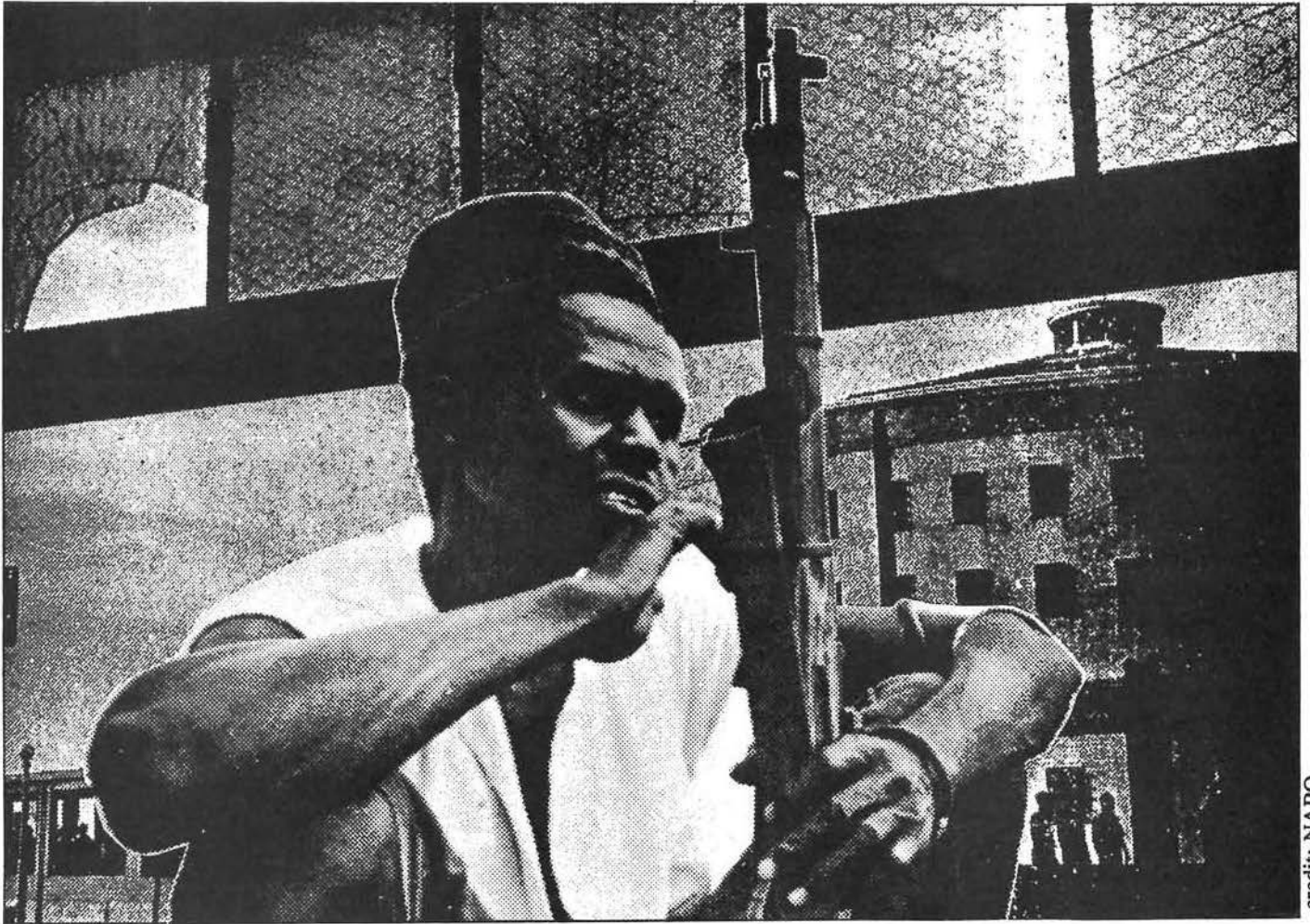
Mass work was generally restricted in terms of the kinds of issues addressed, and narrow in the way it was conducted.

A third form of struggle, theoretical struggle, was under-rated and almost totally neglected. Further, revolution implies counter-revolution, and revolutionary preparation anticipates repression and the forms of struggle which will be necessary in the face of it. This means a center of leadership based in clandestinity, which is able to provide overall coordination to the whole movement and struggle. It means that being underground doesn't imply halting all activity, simply that the forms of certain activity must change while the leadership remains constant, and the momentum and development of the struggle maintains the highest level of continuity possible. Also, repression has two sides, the velvet glove, as well as the iron fist. Most of us don't think of repression in this way, since We aren't used to dealing with the essence of things, and concern ourselves primarily with the form. This is also seen in the fact that most of us still base our strategies on "legality" rather than "illegality," even though we claim to be engaged in a "war" which the enemy regards as "criminal" and "illegal."

"Education of the masses" was seen and carried out in a narrow way. Some of us believed, for instance, that our people instinctively understood Black Power, so there was no need to explain it in any depth, even after it came under attack by the imperialist state and its lackeys inside the nation. Our people were willing to move, on the basis of their understanding of Black Power in particular, and national liberation in general, but that understanding was largely emotional, the consciousness embryonic. We had no sense of exactly what the goal was or how to reach it, and what the sacrifices and obstacles were.

This problem was related to one involving mass work inside mass organizations. The "education" was not designed to prepare us for making the long haul, and security inside mass organizations was almost totally neglected and generally considered unnecessary. Of course, the main aspects of security in mass organizations is political education—but again, political education was seen and conducted in a very narrow way.

The idea that "the masses must learn from their own experiences" was and remains very widespread. Not so widespread is knowledge as to exactly how the masses were/are to learn from their experiences. While some folks evidently believed then, and continue to believe now, that the lessons would fall from the sky, others believed and still believe that the masses learn from their own experiences by the analyses of these experiences undertaken and provided by the vanguard.



credit: NAPO

The lessons are drawn from these analyses and the vanguard involves the masses in the process, and provides them with the method used. The revolutionary leadership insures that experience is learned from, by spreading the method of analysis among the masses; spreading the lessons among the masses, and on the basis of these lessons, raises the level of mass consciousness and the revolutionary content of the struggle.

Recent indications are that the BLA is beginning to address certain situations which have been of great concern to itself and to the entire movement. What stands out is the absence of ideology and strategy grounded in the New Afrikan experience. The BLA wanted to continue the tradition of resistance, and it did. But it overlooked the difference between resistance and revolution.

The BLA compared itself to the Vietnamese NLF, Frelimo, and the Tupamaros, but forgot or overlooked the fact that at the center of the NLF was the Party; Frelimo provided leadership for the entire struggle, not just the "armed nucleus"; the Tupamaros had a maximum program as well as a minimum program, and

were preparing themselves to replace the government struggled against. There was a one-sided, overestimation of the effects of armed actions, and an underestimation of consciously created and directed mass support. There was a general dependence for mass support upon aboveground formations which weren't subordinate to the discipline of the BLA—in other words, an aboveground apparatus composed of BLA members, and therefore not dependent upon what is essentially the "good will" of other formations. There was also a great dependence upon the so-called support of oppressor nation organizations and individuals, rather than rooting its infrastructure among our own people, controlled by its own cadres.

BT: NAPO has referred to the struggle reaching a new stage when New Afrikan women become massively political. Can you say what this means strategically in this period in terms of women's participation in the national liberation struggle, and the relationship of women's emancipation to national liberation?

NAPO: We believe that part of the reason for the movement now being so dominated by petty-bourgeois politics, is that the petty-bourgeois leadership is pre-

dominantly male and sexist. The types of discipline that they exhibit is of course petty-bourgeois, but our experience has been that Sisters inside such organizations have the capacity and the willingness to exhibit a revolutionary, a more proletarian discipline. The more politically active such Sisters become, inside their organizations, the more initiative they exercise, the more leadership responsibility they assume without regard for the sensibilities of Brothers, then the struggle will clearly take a qualitative leap. We'll have more Sisters as theorists and not just as secretaries; more as generals and field marshals and not just as figurehead chairpersons of community mass organizations.

While We don't accept the view that traditional African societies were classless, We do believe that contradictions between men and women existed in these societies prior to any foreign contact. Kidnapping and enslavement didn't eliminate this contradiction. The contradiction had its particular expressions on the Continent, and the loss of independence and national oppression gave the contradiction an expression unique to New Afrikan people.

The struggle for independence and socialism is indeed *revolutionary* because it must "overturn" relations inside the nation as well as relations between the nation and the imperialist state. For us, the struggle is based as much on the principle of anti-sexism, as on the principles of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism.

We should also say that our position on this question has been formed in part by rejection of the slogan "triple jeopardy" which some continue to use in describing the oppression of New Afrikan women. We reject this slogan because it muddles the distinction between oppressed, and oppressor, nations, and in practice is used to liquidate the reality of the nation's existence and the national liberation struggle in favor of a "multinational working class movement", which is simply unreal.

BT: Could you speak about the role of POW's in the struggle? How should they be supported, on what terms and strategies? In particular, could you address the questions of legality, reliance on the courts, the legitimacy of the state, and the kinds of campaigns that should be built around POW's and prisons, as the struggle intensifies?

NAPO: We believe the characterization of POW's is a fundamental, strategic, political issue, which shouldn't be subject to theoretical concessions or compromise of principles, especially when the support or non-support of POW's is involved. We believe POW's should be supported on the terms and strategies that they themselves establish, which in most cases will be done by the

organization or organizations to which the POW's belong.

There is no question inside this organization that the imperialist state is not "legitimate," and therefore neither are its courts and laws. It is very difficult for us to understand how organizations which have openly declared themselves to be at war with the u.s. imperialist state can deny POW status to *all* of its members, especially when members openly declare themselves as members. Everyone in prison wants to get out, but decisions have to be made as to whether the desire to get out, or politics, will be in command. . . .

We've previously stated that existence of POW's is one concrete proof of the nation's reality. In the same way We believe that the basis of support for POW's has to be support of the national liberation struggle. In particular, the terms of support and the strategies of support for POW's can't be separated from the ideology and strategy put forward for the struggle as a whole. Problems arise though, in view of the fact that there is no dominant ideology and strategy, so the present confusion around POW's is understood in this light. The BLA itself, as one example, doesn't seem to know whether its members are POW's, Political Prisoners, or amerikkkan citizens who have simply been unequally treated and unjustly convicted. This would seem to indicate that the BLA doesn't know what it is. . . . Or, the BLA knows what it is, but is willing to compromise its principles in order to obtain so-called support. If advanced elements don't know the difference between a Political Prisoner and a POW, and the political significance of each, or, if they are unwilling or unable to make the choice between the political support suited to each, then how much moreso must such confusion and/or unwillingness prevail among the masses?

As We said, support for POW's must be based on support of the national liberation struggle. Supporting the national liberation struggle involves accepting the reality of the NATION, the difference between the nation and the *imperialist* state/oppressor nation and the necessity to wage the national liberation struggle by the strategic use of armed force.

So, those who want support for POW's, and who want to support POW's, must give greater initiative to enforcing the nation's reality; to heightening the contradictions between the oppressed and the oppressor nations, and to giving greater legitimacy to the effort to liberate the nation by armed force. The basic question around support for POW's is "Why?": Either We're a NATION, or We aren't; either We're a nation at war, or We aren't. Either We define the nation, and the war, ourselves, or continue to let white folks or the negro petty-bourgeoisie define it.

If politics remain in command on this question, then the types of campaigns launched around POW's and prisons would seem to base themselves only secondarily on such things as marches, rallies, and meetings which usually involve leading cadres of organizations. We continue to ask the people to come to us, rather than us going to the people. Support for POW's is not just support for particular individuals, no matter how outstanding they may be. Support for POW's is support for a struggle in general, and for organizations or an organization in particular, and the line and practice of that organization. In this light, support for POW's becomes one aspect of the total support given to an organization or organizations, and it can begin to take both direct and indirect forms. It will have to be measured not only by the numbers of people who attend the annual rallies, but by the numbers of people who perform day-to-day tasks without any publicity; by the amounts of money given with no questions asked

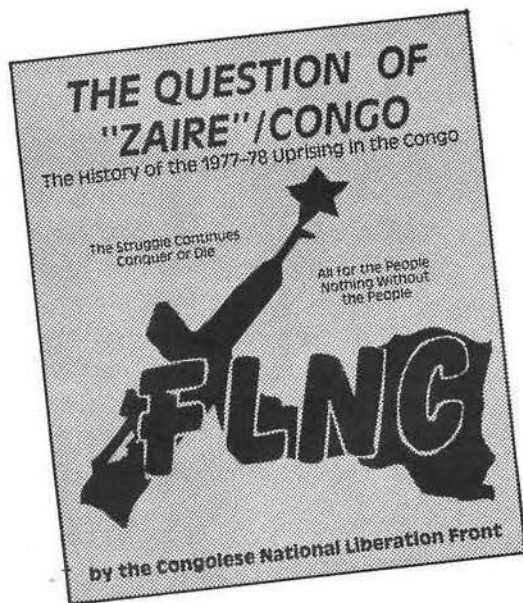
and no strings attached; by the number of people who will allow their homes to be used for various purposes, etc.

So, types of campaigns are essentially tactical concerns which are subordinate to strategy, and will largely depend on situations as they arise. We simply believe that everything We do depends on how informed the masses are, how developed is their consciousness of themselves as a nation at war, and how firm their conscious commitment to winning the war, and that We must not depend on general calls and mobilizations, but on meticulous education, organization, and all other aspects of building to win.■

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Build the National Conference Against Repression Denver, May 28-30, 1982

On the threshold of its worst political and economic crisis in history, U.S. imperialism and the ruling class are moving to stabilize their military might, and re-establish their economic hegemony through a policy of imperialist world war and internal repression against oppressed nationalities (New Afrikans, Chicano-Mexicanos, Puerto Ricans and Native Americans) and world socialist movements. It is in this context that we must understand the present U.S. intervention in El Salvador.

Billions of dollars have been taken from social programs for oppressed people and turned over to the military budget which is now over \$256 billions, or over one-third of the national budget of the U.S.

Ronald Reagan, the current choice of the monopoly capitalists, is being used as the U.S. imperialist spokesman to consolidate a white supremacist mass base for fascism, to lead the drive for world war, and to cover up the military and economic losses around the world.

The foreign and internal policies of the Reagan administration have come to represent two faces of the same coin—wars of repression and genocide against national liberation movements, and intervention in the developing world where capitalist hegemony is being challenged by progressive liberation movements.

Within its imposed borders, the U.S. imperialists attempt to liquidate the "gains" made by oppressed nationalities (particularly the workers) in decades of struggle, strip them of their jobs, and violate their human rights. U.S. imperialism is increasing its role as a police state by waging wars of repression, violence and terror against the national liberation movements as prelude to the wholesale destruction of potential dissent.

The imperialist rulers understand well that their chances of success in the war of repression against the broad masses of oppressed people depend on the demise of the national liberation struggles within its imposed borders, on the pacification of progressive forces, and on the mobilization of large sectors of the oppressor nation. This is the U.S. imperialist strategy of bringing on a climate of right-wing conservatism, repression, and state-terror leading to the implementation of fascism. The state recognizes that armed struggle is the cutting edge in the development of a revolu-

tionary movement and practice. Because of this, the state has turned loose its police and intelligence forces on those revolutionary movements which have long advocated and struggled for the rights of the oppressed people to wage armed struggle. The state's ultimate objective is to deny the oppressed masses a revolutionary ideology.

But they will not stop here. Every dissident movement, as Samuel Huntington said in his thesis for the Trilateral Commission, "represents a danger to (the state) democracy."

The state is escalating its offensive against oppressed peoples in Third World communities, and human rights everywhere, while actively promoting police terror and encouraging the white supremacist ideology and violence of the Ku Klux Klan, the Moral Majority, and other reactionary and racist organizations.

As the national liberation movements consolidate and advance their struggles in the face of imperialist attack, they offer white people a revolutionary alternative to this fascist mobilization. It is of utmost importance that progressive white people build anti-imperialist solidarity with these struggles which are leading the overall fight to defeat U.S. imperialism. In order to do this, the white working class must reject its history of allying with imperialism through white supremacist privilege. Only by following the leadership and strategy of national liberation movements can it assume its historic role as a revolutionary class and become a partner in the destruction of imperialism.

In the face of the state's well financed and well coordinated offensive, we need to first understand clearly both the forces and the issues facing oppressed nationalities, and then conference together on the means and the programs necessary to launch a counter-offensive against repression and fascism.

We propose a **NATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST REPRESSION AND FASCISM** in Denver, Colorado, on May 28-29-30 to discuss the many ramifications of U.S. imperialist repression, and to develop a national strategy and program against fascism.

Right now a number of local ad hoc committees are being organized in cities throughout America. We call on you to build for the conference by participating in your local committee.

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