

# EDITORIAL

## P.R.S.C. - SOLIDARITY WITH PUERTO RICO

El Comité-M.I.N.P. has consistently (based on the principles of Proletarian Internationalism) raised the importance of developing a solidarity movement—particularly among the working class—in support of Puerto Rico's national liberation and, within that context, raised the impact Puerto Rico's liberation would have in furthering the struggle here. This understanding has guided our relationship to the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee and its task of developing a solidarity movement.

### El Comité-MINP and the PRSC

Recently, after two years of existence, the PRSC celebrated its second National Conference (see article on page 7). During those two years, the PRSC has grown into a nationwide organization, with chapters in twenty or more cities in the U.S. Although not forming part of the PRSC during the period just ended, we have recognized the political significance of the PRSC and its serious efforts of solidarity with Puerto Rico. On the other hand, we have been consistently critical of its errors and shortcomings. At all times we have attempted to be principled and aboveboard in our criticisms. This has not been the practice of members of the PRSC toward our organization; some have openly engaged in slandering the political views of El Comité-MINP while others have remained silent in the presence of such unprincipled conduct. In essence the basis of our criticisms toward the PRSC were: the uncritical acceptance of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) tactical and strategic conceptions; its isolation from other forces in the Puerto Rican Liberation Movement; the negation of the role of the Puerto Rican national minority in the US, both in the struggle for liberation and for socialism in the US; and lastly, its incorrect interpretation of international solidarity. Therefore, in light of these criticisms, we consider it very healthy that the recently concluded PRSC Conference set the basis for a break with these conceptions, a situation that can very well lead toward the broadening of the solidarity movement.

### Conference debates and approves new statement

The conference was marked by intense ideological debate over: what is imperialism and its impact on Puerto Rico's social development, what does solidarity work entail, what is the role of armed struggle in the liberation process, etc.. This debate was a key instrument in reaching clarity and defining differences.

The new political statement that will guide the work of the PRSC for the next period, although having some limitations, is an improvement over its predecessor and points to the rectification of the incorrect perspectives that have hindered the work of the PRSC. This did not result magically but as consequence of the debates that arose in the course of the conference.

In the process of debate there emerged various political perspectives among the various groups, tendencies and individuals representing the different chapters of the PRSC. The original draft of the Political Statement, which served as the basis of discussion throughout the conference, represented the view that imperialism oppresses all countries and peoples alike, negating in the process the class character of the National Liberation struggle. Taken to its logical conclusion, this view sees the struggle of the Puerto Rican

people as merely one for independence and negates the reality that as an industrial colony both the leading and principal force in Puerto Rico is the working class, which dictates a struggle for independence and socialism. This understanding has led all organizations involved in the Puerto Rican liberation struggle to include the question of socialism within their programs.

Moreover, this view, represented within the official draft statement, negated that armed struggle will play a determinant factor in the liberation process. Both of these critical weaknesses, as well as other shortcomings of the original draft, led to organized opposition and the drafting of alternative documents which attempted to fill its voids. However, these documents also reflected errors in essence and form. Principal among these errors were the emphasizing of nationality above class and raising armed struggle outside the context of a strategic perspective corresponding to the concrete reality of Puerto Rico and its correlation of class forces.

The discussions around the original draft statement led to a number of amendments which strengthened its weak points, and resolved some of the points of debate. The final document will recognize, among other things, the centrality of armed struggle; the need to expand the PRSC relations to other forces in the Liberation Movement; the strategic significance of the oppressed national minorities and the US working class (including the Puerto Rican national minority); as well as present a clearer definition of the character and nature of imperialism in Puerto Rico.

### Toward Principled Unity

In the process of waging political struggle on the divergent perspectives, there was not always respect given by some comrades toward those whose practice has shown serious commitment to actively support the Puerto Rican people's struggle for national liberation but who may lack a consistent class perspective. In particular this was the attitude assumed toward members of the San Francisco Chapter as well as observers in the Conference. On the other hand, there were some among the latter comrades who did not practice principled ideological struggle and who substituted obstinate conduct, which at times hindered the work of the conference, for ideological struggle. Both these attitudes are in our view incorrect, and do not lead to productive results. We hope that in the process of implementing the objectives established by the Conference these shortcomings are rectified; as the conference demonstrated, ideological struggle, when properly carried out, is in the interest of all the participants.

As the PRSC enters its third year of existence, it continues to meet its responsibility toward the people of Puerto Rico and its leading forces. In wishing success to all its members and chapters we cannot over-emphasize the need of principled unity among all its components. In this context, we urge each and every member to deepen their understanding of the concrete reality of Puerto Rico, as only in this manner will we be able to educate the Northamerican working class and people on their responsibility to the people of Puerto Rico and their struggle. Anything else is to plant the seeds of an ineffective solidarity movement that will not be in correspondence with the character and nature of the National Liberation Movement.

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# WOMEN IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT



Lenin observed that: "There can be no socialist revolution without the participation of large numbers of women workers." Women constitute more than half of the population, many of whom are incorporated into the labor force and subject to the most brutal exploitation and oppression. Due to this material condition they possess an immense revolutionary potential to develop a truly proletarian consciousness.

This potential has fully developed, repeatedly showing itself in revolutionary action throughout history. Women have demonstrated their strength, capacity, commitment and desire to struggle. Examples of this exist in the processes which have taken place in Vietnam, China, Africa, etc. But we do not have to go so far. Latin and North America provide us with living examples of the feminine combativeness.

In Latin America the participation of women is apparent in the popular movements and struggles for national independence. Among the most recent examples we find: Tamara Bunke, Monica Ertl and Rita Valdivia in Bolivia; Nora Paiz Carcamo in Guatemala; Livia Gourverner in Venezuela; Blanca Luz Brum in Peru; Maria Luisa Vera in Mexico; Vilma Espin and Haydee Santamaria in Cuba; Lolita Lebron in Puerto Rico. They are examples of the thousands of fighting women within the Latin American process. Many others have participated and participate from the trenches of anonymity; still others suffer the jailings and tortures of the dictatorial regimes.

In North America we are witnesses to the combative strength of the women through their participation in the garment and textile industry strikes and in the hospital and public sector struggles. We have also seen their fights for the right to a better education, public assistance and equality. In fact, the commemoration of International Working Women's Day has its roots in the struggles of the women in the United States.

It is important to mention that this combativeness has not always been cultivated by the movements of the left. At the same time the right and the dominant classes have recognized this strength and on occasion have known how to utilize it to protect their own class interests. An example of this can be seen in Chile where the women's movement

was organized under the direction of the bourgeoisie. Commenting on this process a Brazilian engineer explains: "Once we saw the Chilean women protesting we knew that Allende's days were numbered... We taught the Chileans to use the women against the Marxists." Chile, following the pattern of Brazil, presents a model of reactionary utilization of the women in the ideological and political structures which can be applied in other countries. Today this model can be seen in the Dominican Republic where the Balaguer government leads the women's movement, and here in the United States where the dominant class exercises, or tries to maintain its ideological control over a large part of that movement.

### The left and women-failures and tasks

In these times the integration of women into the revolutionary process cannot wait. For this reason we must begin the process of disengaging women from the bourgeois influence, of politically educating and organizing her under the proletariat banner. As we well know: victory depends on the consolidation of our forces.

It is not hard to find some of the reasons for which the total integration of women into the movement of the left has not been achieved. It can be said that here, in the United States, and definitely in Puerto Rico, the left has characterized itself by its incapacity to recognize the revolutionary potential of women. In fact the question has been delegated to a secondary level where commissions and "phantom" federations are created to appease certain preoccupations or to create a new front for the parties or organizations.

But even within the internal functioning of the organizations we find that women are delegated to the secretarial, mechanical and clerical tasks and in the mass activities they are assigned to daycare and kitchen work. In this manner the development of women in the revolutionary process is stifled because she is not permitted to enter the terrain from which she has always been excluded.

We in the revolutionary organizations have also remained ignorant of those conditions which women face that form barriers to their active incorporation and participation in the struggle. Family and morals, raising children, and the biological responsibility of procreation are all areas which must be examined more deeply in their practical implications for the revolutionary participation of women.

### The Family: Questions of Bourgeois Morality vs. Proletarian Morality

Engels demonstrated that the family, as we know it today, is an historically determined formation that corresponds to the capitalist society. Engels could not state how the socialist family could or should be because it could only be defined within a socialist society. However, he did point out that the monogamous couple constituted a superior form of family relations over those which preceded it (polygamy, polyandry, group marriage, promiscuity). This superiority has been proven in practice in those countries that are building socialism where it has been shown that the monogamous couple is superior over any other form for the construction of the socialist family.

Living in a capitalist society we find ourselves in an

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# OBREROS EN MARCHA

# NATURAL GAS SHORTAGE ?

The gas monopolies have seized the opportunity to create a "gas crisis" in the midst of the coldest winter of this century. In order to undermine the federal regulations controlling inter-state gas prices and to increase profits, the gas producers have deliberately held back gas supplies from the market. In this move, the gas producers and suppliers have been aided by the Carter administration. The American people are being asked to swallow the pretence of a "natural gas shortage", but this they are finding hard to accept.

## WHO SAID THERE'S NO NATURAL GAS ?

The natural gas resources of the United States are owned by some of the major petroleum companies (Exxon, Gulf, Texaco, etc.), who tap natural gas reserves while drilling for oil. In fact Exxon, the largest petroleum



producer in the country, is also the largest gas producer. Once the petroleum companies discover the gas, they usually sell it at the well-heads to pipeline companies, such as El Paso Natural Gas or Texas Eastern Transmission, who in turn sell to the major utility companies throughout the country.

These companies, together with their friends in the press and the government, have been trying hard to convince us that there is a "critical and even desperate" situation in the available supply of natural gas. The truth is that there is plenty of natural gas for our needs, but, in order to extract more profits out of the consumer, the gas is greedily hoarded or just not being drilled.

The roots of this "crisis" can be traced back to 1954 when the Federal Power Commission (FPC) set a maximum price on the gas sold between states (interstate gas). This was a major victory for the working class and the consumers who had struggled long and hard against the gas monopolies. However, gas sold within the state in which it was produced (intrastate gas) was not made subject to any federal controls.

Although there are several prices for FPC-regulated interstate gas, the national average is 45 cents per thousand cubic feet. On the other hand, those people who live in the states where the gas is produced pay up to \$2.25 per thousand cubic feet—5 times as much! This produces tremendous profits for the gas monopolies, and they want to rob the rest of the country in the same way. How do they go about doing this? Simple, create a "shortage" and blackmail the country!

This campaign was begun in the 50's, soon after the FPC regulations were instituted. In 1955, a representative

of the Texas Independent Producers Royalty Owners Association declared: "the supply of natural gas available in years past was priced artificially low at the well and will fall short of growing demands unless allowed to reach normal competitive levels." This statement clearly laid out the strategy that was being plotted by the gas producers—deregulation of interstate prices as soon as possible. New gas reserves were continually being discovered and the utility companies offered all kinds of inducements to homeowners, businesses, and industry to switch to gas. These companies constantly searched for more customers in order to increase the demand for gas. (Today, natural gas supplies more than 30% of the total energy requirements in the U.S.) At the same time, the oil and gas companies were lobbying in Congress for legislation which would eliminate Federal price regulations.

In 1968, the Supreme Court relaxed the restraints on gas companies. The court authorized the compliant FPC to increase the price of new gas whenever the figures showed that new discoveries had decreased. The figures are provided by the American Gas Association/AGA—the gas producers' lobbying organization—who receive their data from the gas companies. In 1968 the AGA announced, for the first time, that new gas discoveries were on the decline, and have similarly reported every year since. But the AGA's role in perpetuating this lie was revealed in 1974 when the independent U.S. Geological Survey, on making a secret survey of gas fields in the Gulf of Mexico, produced data that showed the presence of 63% more available gas than that reported by the AGA.

In general, the statistics supplied by the AGA serve to confuse the consumer and to justify the actions of the FPC and the tall tales of the press. But the fundamental tactics of the gas companies are much cruder. They simply hold back what they have. "There is a deliberate withholding of natural gas from the market in order to force deregulation of interstate gas," charged Sen. Howard M. Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), testifying before the House Energy Subcommittee in the recent hearings on the so-called crisis. And this was confirmed by James C. Gotham, Executive VP of the Nashville Gas Co., who stated "The producers are withholding gas from the market. There is absolutely no question about it." And in fact, Antonio R. Sanchez, Jr. of the Sanchez-O'Brien petroleum group in Texas went even further, when he stated very frankly, "Why should I sell my gas out of state for \$1.42 (the present ceiling), when Texas buyers are waiting in line to pay \$2.00 for it. I wouldn't even go out and drill the holes. We wouldn't even consider it." There it is, plain and simple—profits before people. Sanchez's Texas office has just discovered what may be the largest domestic natural gas reserve in 20 years. But not one cubic foot is being pumped out. Vast deposits in the Gulf of Mexico remain untapped. Thousands of wells have been classified as "dry" until prices are deregulated.

## Jimmy Carter to the Rescue

The stranglehold that the gas and oil companies have on us has produced a real crisis for the working people of this country. This winter's terrible harshness was just what the gas monopolies needed to pull off their coup. So what does Jimmy Carter, the friend of the people, do after being in office one week? He rushes legislation to Congress which

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## Puerto Rico Informa

# THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

Contribution by JSM

In the previous edition of OEM we pointed out that one of the alternatives of the left in Puerto Rico was the feasibility of creating a National Liberation Front in order to confront the proposed plans of statehood for Puerto Rico. Due to the character of the article we did not expand on the principles which would guide that structural formation. We will attempt to fill that void on this occasion.

A National Liberation Front (NLF), by definition, develops in countries where the struggle is geared toward the expulsion of an exploiting foreign force from the national territory, in our case the U.S. In occupied countries (colonies), the majority of the people manifest contradictions—at different levels—with the occupying forces (imperialism). These contradictions which take place at different levels, depend on the position that each class, group or sector has in relation to the dominant economic structure. The classes, sectors or groups in contradiction with imperialism are, in general, susceptible to be unified around the NLF. However, it is not sufficient to achieve unity. Fundamentally, the basis of the unity must be defined. If we affirm that national liberation struggles are manifestations of class struggles, we then must point out which is the leading force and which are the principal forces. In Puerto Rico, a colonized and bourgeoisified country, the leading class is objectively the working class. This reality, from the very beginning of our presentation presupposes that inevitably the liberation struggle in Puerto Rico will develop into an uninterrupted process toward socialism. Therefore, the NLF will not only struggle for independence but also for socialism. This characteristic of our struggle is determined by the leading role of the proletariat, unless this class or its vanguards were to betray its most vital interests.

## The Principal Forces

We have spoken of the leading force; let us now touch on the principal force.

The principal force in the process of a struggle is quantitatively defined, in other words, a numerical character. In our country, the principal force is also constituted by the proletariat. In this respect, in Puerto Rico the leading force and the principal force are one and the same: the proletariat. We know that a few dogmatists are bumping themselves against the wall since our reality takes them away from their sacred scheme; unfortunately for them, that's the way it is. In industrial colonies, therefore modern colonies, the experiences and schemes applied in non industrial colonies (classicals) do not apply no matter in whose name we pretend to defend such premises. Therefore, the Puerto Rican NLF will be guided by the ideology of the proletariat, and within its social composition, the workers will be a majority. Does this mean that the NLF will be composed solely by the proletariat? No! In our society there is another class which plays an important role in the production process and has objective contradictions with imperialism: the petty bourgeoisie. In fact, the only possibility of survival for this class is aligning itself with the proletariat. When we speak of the petty bourgeoisie in Puerto Rico, we do not include the whole class. There is a sector of that class which is a shameful ally of imperialism: the Cuban "gusanos" petty

# N.L.F.

bourgeoisie. This sector is composed of those that betrayed the Cuban nation and have succeeded in obtaining some capital which with yankee aid, they have invested in various enterprises of small scale in our nation. The other sector of the petty bourgeoisie, the Puerto Ricans, are susceptible to an alliance within the NLF. These in our view are the principal classes (proletariat and petty bourgeoisie) which would compose the NLF. There are other social sectors, which we give this name as they do not play a direct role in production, but more or less accessory, i.e. students, professionals and intellectuals. This group to a certain extent, and for different reasons, supports the national liberation struggle. Historically they have shown great militancy in the sporadic struggles that have developed in Puerto Rico. In summary, the composition of the NLF would be proletariat, petty bourgeoisie and other social sectors (students, intellectuals, professionals, etc.). In between these there are other progressive elements such as the Christian movements. These elements, although basically from an individualistic perspective, are in essence anti-imperialist.

## NLF or Popular Front?

Now we must respond to the original question, namely, What are the tasks of the front? Once the composition has been defined, we must outline its course of action. In stating that the ideology of the proletariat must guide the politics of this formation we are guaranteeing that: 1) the basic class objectives will not deviate 2) we reject the idea of the Popular Fronts. Due to the character of our society, we repeat that the NLF struggles both for independence and socialism. The Popular Front as defined by history, is composed of all sectors and classes in contradiction with imperialism or the local bourgeoisie. In this respect it does not differ with the NLF. However, as history illustrates, these Popular Fronts never have guaranteed that the leading role remains in the hands of the most advanced elements. Moreover, in the few occasions in which the proletariat has played the leading role, its control has been precarious. In moments of sharp tactical twists, when decisions are needed, conciliations have been made with the most backward elements in order to conserve a fragile unity leading to opportunism and defeat. This degenerative seed resides not only in the ideological plane but in the structure that animates it. Popular Fronts are often

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# THE N.L.F. cont.

consolidated to achieve minimal objectives (for instance democratic rights, elections, unionization, etc.) or in the best of cases to struggle against an interventionist force. But in the best of cases the limitations are evident. Once imperialism has been expelled it does not provide an alternative. Further, product of its eclecticism at all levels, it is the bourgeoisie who remains in power after imperialism has been expelled. Needless to say, in the long run, the bourgeoisie reestablishes its alliances with imperialism. It's precisely these Popular Fronts, which advocate alliance with the bourgeoisie, that allow for this class to assume the leading role. The NLF does not allow for such stupidity. It does not look for alliance with the bourgeoisie, nor does it conciliate its principles. We ask ourselves what was the experience of the Popular Front conceived in 1928 by the Chinese Communist Party and the Kuomintang? What were the reasons that led in 1932 to the brutal massacre of the CCP by the Kuomintang the "great ally of the Chinese proletariat"? What were the experiences of the Popular Front in France? Closer yet, what has been the experience of Popular Unity in Chile? The organizations or parties that at this date call for the creation of a Popular Front have undoubtedly translated defeat into a virtue or are the greatest opportunists in the world.

The NLF is built on the basis of politically isolating imperialism. It serves the function of a Liberation Army in the political sphere. Its strength lies not only in its short range objectives but in its long range projections. The creation of this structure to a certain extent does not depend on whether or not the party exists, but it is precisely the party that gives reason to its existence. When we affirm that to a certain extent the NLF does not depend on the existence of the party, we make that statement in order to make it clear that the tasks of these two organizations are not the same. The NLF realizes tasks that the party, due to its own limitations, cannot accomplish. Then again, it is just not any party that gives significance to the NLF. In Vietnam the NLF assumed great significance when the Workers Party was leading the struggle. If this had not occurred the NLF would have been important but less significant. We affirm that the NLF develops as its politics the war, and the party develops the war as its politics, and it is this integral relationship of these formations that leads them to higher levels of achievements.

All the above, as we previously stated, has as a basis our own particular situation. The possibility of a National Liberation Front is not to be achieved or resolved in a day's time. But it will definitely take years if we do not begin to at least discuss the matter. All too often we have allowed political opportunities to pass us by without taking advantage of them. The main reason for this, in our view, is that among other things in Puerto Rico the immediate urgent tasks—with all their noise—have not allowed for the fundamental tasks to be accomplished which necessarily are slower to develop although more solid. In the last edition of OEM we expressed how the statehood project provided an opportunity to initiate a series of necessary steps in our country. These steps were geared to investigate if such possibilities existed in our country. From our point of view the conditions are favorable, because the political juncture is favorable and, on the other hand, the social discontent is evident among the people. If the possibility for a Front is viable, it is a conclusion that must be reached after profound analysis, not before. We hope this article, although superficial due to limited space, serves as basis of serious discussion on this important aspect of our struggle.

# GAS SHORTAGE(cont.)

will fulfill the long awaited plan of the gas barons—the deregulation of interstate gas.

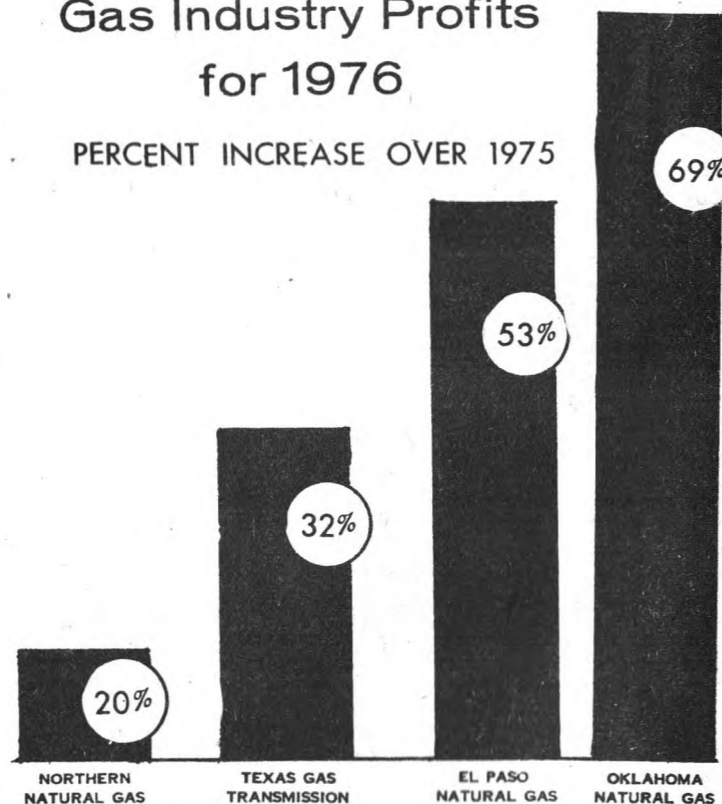
In the process, the increasing profits of the monopolies are translated into increasing oppression and suffering for the working class and poor. Across the country, over two million workers were laid off during the height of the "crisis" and many continue unemployed. Millions of school children were turned away from unheated schools; and the utility companies snatched bigger bites from the meager pension benefits and social security checks of the old and retired. The actions of the gas monopolies have also led to the death of scores of people, such as the two elderly tenants who froze at the Hudson Hotel in Harlem. From this misery, the capitalists reap their blood profits.

With this Emergency Natural Gas Price Decontrol Bill, Carter allows interstate gas to be sold at intrastate prices until July 31, 1977. This will result in hundreds of millions of dollars more squeezed out of working people. And the gas companies will attempt to make them permanent. The OPEC "crisis" is still fresh in our minds and pockets. Gasoline prices are still rising and will soon pass 70 cents per gallon in New York City.

This situation clearly shows the fallacy of the artificially created gas crisis. Scarcity is not the cause of this crisis. What actually created the crisis was the continuous drive of the monopolies to gain total control over natural resources, production and distribution. By having control of the industry, the monopolies can hold back supply, demand higher prices and utilize the government to eliminate price regulations, which results in super profits. All this is done at the expense of the majority of the people. This situation proves once again that under capitalism making profits always comes before the most basic human necessities—food, clothing, and adequate warm shelter.

## Gas Industry Profits for 1976

PERCENT INCREASE OVER 1975



# P.R.S.C. - SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE

On the weekend of February 18-20, the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee (PRSC) held its second Annual conference in the city of Chicago. The objectives of the conference were to analyze the work of the PRSC during the past two years, to formulate and approve a political statement and program to guide the work of the organization for the coming period and to elect a new national leadership. Present at the conference were delegates and observers from 20 PRSC chapters and guests from other political formations in the U.S. as well as representatives of different political forces from Puerto Rico (the Puerto Rican Peace Council, The Institute for Trade Union Education, The Puerto Rican Socialist Party-PSP, The Popular Socialist Movement-MSP and the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front-FRAI).

The conference opened on Friday night the 18th with a report that evaluated the work of the PRSC during the past two years. Rosa Borenstein made the presentation for the PRSC National Board and described the achievements of the PRSC during the July 4th mass mobilization to Philadelphia, the role of the organization in the UN deliberations, the Havana Conference and the national tours of the US by the PRSC, sponsored by Puerto Rican labor leaders.

The evaluating report was followed by an address to the gathering by the Secretary General of the Popular Socialist Movement, Luis Angel Torres, who on behalf of his organization and the newly formed anti-imperialist

front in Puerto Rico saluted the PRSC for its efforts of solidarity with the cause of the Puerto Rican people. In his message the representative of the MSP described existing conditions in Puerto Rico, outlining the renewed attacks by the imperialists against the island-nation's natural resources and pointing out the existing divisions among progressive forces, particularly after the recent electoral fiasco. He made clear that this situation demanded serious study by both the liberation forces and its supporters. Moreover, Luis Angel Torres expressed the need for the PRSC to establish relations with all the liberation forces and analyze their diverse positions, since there is not one organization, at this point, that can be labeled the vanguard of the Puerto Rican people. He then proceeded to express concern with aspects of the draft political statement to be discussed and implemented by the PRSC. In this context, he expressed particular concern for its incorrect definition of imperialism and solidarity, as well as its failure to recognize armed struggle as a determinant factor in the national liberation struggle.

### Deliberations begin

Having completed the phase of introductory remarks and messages of solidarity, the Conference began in earnest on Saturday the 19th with its first plenary. This part of the conference, designed to establish the procedures for the discussion of the political statement, set the tone for the next two days of debate around fundamental aspects of the PRSC. During the course of the plenary it was proposed that two alternative documents be discussed along with the draft statement of the PRSC National Board. One of these documents had been drafted by the San Francisco Chapter-SFC of the Solidarity Committee and the other by groups and individuals who had come together to form the March 1 Bloc.

Both of the proposed alternative documents contained errors in essence and form. Nevertheless they each included valid points which had been disregarded by the eclectic analysis presented in the PRSC official draft. Rather than struggling for their correct points to be included in the form of amendments to the official document, the SFC and the March 1 Bloc united intransigently on their demand to have all three documents discussed in workshops during the course of the conference. The unfeasibility of this procedure led to a majority rejection of the SFC-March 1 Bloc proposal. Defeated in their proposal, elements within these two groups proceed to raise a series of procedural questions which hindered the development of the conference. At that point, the possibility was developing of an organizational split even before getting into the tasks assigned to the conference. A development of that nature would have hindered rather than aided the cause of solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico. This was particularly understood by Eneida Vasquez (representative of the Puerto Rican Peace Council), as well as all the



# WOMEN cont.

**"...a new family and sexual moral must be constructed upon a base diametrically oppose to the previous..."**

epoch of transition and therefore we should put forth in the ranks of the revolutionary organizations, a morality in transition to socialism within the family. We must recognize that the bourgeois monogamous family has as its base, private property, sexism and the domestic slavery of women, in direct contradiction to the proletarian family which does not have the same base since they possess nothing. But it does exist under the ideological influence of the dominant class. Therefore, the proletarian family is built upon the image of the bourgeois family. Under this form, women, shackled in the home throughout history, is conditioned to taking no interest in politics or any of that part of the social process which takes place outside the home. Domestic chores are restricted to the woman. In order to change this situation it is necessary to combat the false male supremacy, to share the domestic tasks and to fight for the total and equal participation of the women in social production.

### Marriage

The bourgeoisie, the dominant class, proclaims that marriage is based on individual sexual love, free consent and on mutual affection—love. This is true in words only for such an existence is not possible as long as private property exists. Private property not only guarantees the constant preoccupation for the private welfare, but also makes the woman the private property of the man. In the last few years the dominant class has tried to change or radicalize their own order under a false "sexual revolution".

Let us examine this. Bourgeois matrimonial relations are characterized by the impersonalization between the couple and by the subjection of the woman to the man. As a result of this the development of the woman is impeded and the taboos of virginity, fidelity, etc., which only apply to the woman, are maintained. Through the so-called sexual revolution, the bourgeoisie pretends to impose another order—the reverse—free love with the purpose of liberating marriage and in particular the woman, from its restrictions. What the bourgeoisie does in reality is



maintain the same order under a different form—it is the impersonalization of the relationship between the man and woman, having the same result—the subjection of the woman to the man under a new disguise. It reduces and depersonalizes love to one aspect, the sexual, degrading it to its animalistic level. At the same time it allows for the utilization of the woman in a way greatly beneficial to the capitalist system—the expansion of the market, cosmetics, mod styles, publicity, etc.

### Revolutionaries and the Sexual Revolution

The sexual revolution and "free love"—has not only caused problems in the heart of the masses but in the revolutionary ranks as well. On the one hand, the low level of consciousness of the comrades at times leads to the separation of the personal from political lives and from the historical development of societies as well. In this sense there are those who incorrectly see in "free love" the solution to the narrow boundaries of the sexual relation as it is determined by the capitalist society. On the other hand, some men comrades are not victims or products of a low level of consciousness. They utilize their positions in the political organizations and the lack of development of some women comrades in order to give free reign to their own immorality. These men abuse the naivete and honest desires to contribute to the revolutionary process on the part of some women, using their so-called "political knowhow" not to benefit the struggle or the organization but to satisfy their sexual sickness. To this we must add those women comrades who, with a low level of class consciousness or a false consciousness, form part of this alienating process within the revolutionary ranks when they flirt with an unconscious or opportunist man and in the process "forget" his companion or wife. As a result these particular women contribute to the oppression of other women.

This behavior on the part of some elements within the revolutionary ranks presents serious problems for the movement in general. On the one hand the dominant class utilizes these "weaknesses" in order to discredit, in the eyes of the masses, not only the people involved, but the revolutionary movement as a whole. Besides, this is a demoralizing process for those serious members of the organizations and for those who approach the revolutionary ranks in search of an alternative to the oppressive and decadent society. But further still, this behavior perpetuates a practice and models to follow which are precisely those that characterize the capitalist society where the infamous minority oppresses and exploits the great majority, and where immorality is law.

### Towards a New Moral

A new family and sexual moral must indeed be constructed upon a base diametrically opposed to that described above. From the beginning the relation between the couple and the family must be rid of the impersonalization the capitalist society imposes upon it. All members of the family must be seen as human beings composed of multiple aspects, not purely the sexual.

From this arises another question—what is fundamental in a couple's relationship, the sexual or the social? It has

## P.R.S.C. Conference Cont.



representatives of the liberation forces.

Although having profound differences with the PRSC during the course of its existence, the representatives of El Comité-MINP, nevertheless, understood that the situation could not be allowed to continue to deteriorate in detriment to the Puerto Rican people and the PRSC itself. Therefore, we requested special privilege to address the plenary. This was granted. During our intervention—which was recently misrepresented by the comrades of the Guardian of whom we have asked rectifications—we attempted, among other things, to point out not only the errors reflected in the proposed alternative drafts but also expressed clear opposition to the eclecticism and disguised attempt by forces within the PRSC to impose their own ideological conceptions not only upon the PRSC but also the national liberation forces. In essence this tendency denies the centrality of armed struggle, projects an incoherent and simplistic view of imperialism ("it oppresses all people"—in the colony), and denies the struggle for socialism (first independence, then socialism).

In the view of a number of delegates at the conference the intervention by our representative—our First Secretary Federico Lora—was a factor in bringing back the conference to its stated objectives. Soon after a series of amendments were made to the original draft by delegates who, not satisfied with its content, understood it was more constructive and beneficial to the conference if efforts were made to improve the original document. A number of

these amendments reflect the concern of the SFC documents as well as aspects of the March 1 Bloc and of the observers present at the conference. Among these amendments were: a recognition of armed struggle as the determinant factor in the liberation struggle, and socialism as its objective; recognition of the strategic role of the national minorities in the US; a more precise definition of imperialism and a clearer presentation on the oppression of women.

### The National Board and the tasks of the PRSC

On the last day of the conference the PRSC delegates selected its new leadership—the National Board. The election of the new board represents a qualitative change within the PRSC as emphasis was given toward expanding the social composition of the PRSC reaching toward the oppressed national minorities and those actively engaged in the struggles of the working class and oppressed sectors in North American society. Moreover, the election of members of El Comité-MINP, the Nationalist Party and the PSP can set the basis for bringing into the PRSC all those forces that can build an effective solidarity movement around the Puerto Rican National Liberation struggle—both in this country and among the liberation forces in Puerto Rico. Despite this meaningful progress, we have no illusions about the political differences that exist within the PRSC. We hope these differences are struggled through principely, free of manipulation and organizational sectarianism, and always taking into consideration the objective that gives the PRSC its reason for being—Solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico.

been found and we have seen that the relationships which are based fundamentally on sex end in failure in all aspects, including the sexual

The couple or matrimony within the revolutionary ranks (whether it be "legal" or consensual) must be based on mutual agreement, by a conscious consent and on a sincere love. All of this must be developed on the material base of the social activity, the revolutionary activity.

There are many aspects which unite the couple—relationships, common tastes, interests, etc. But we must understand that the couple is not an entity apart or separate from their political relationships and activities. Within the revolutionary ranks the couple should become a basic nucleus of political activity, where dialogue and interchange of experiences predominates, where criticism

and self criticism is practiced in order to develop each other in the process of implementing their political tasks. This means that the couple is not, nor could it be, a nucleus apart from the organization or the masses.

The revolutionary couple should not only share organizational tasks, but all the elements of life; sharing economic resources, domestic tasks, diversions, study, etc. Besides this these experiences should take place within the context of the reality in which we live, that is, the experiences should be shared with the masses in order to learn from them and to educate them. These are essential steps if, in this period of transition, we are going to forge a socialist style of life.

TO BE CONTINUED

## N.Y. - CRIME IN CITY INCREASES

**New York**—Last month, a 23 year old Puerto Rican man hung himself after killing his wife and child. The young man, who had recently been laid off from his job, left a note saying he "didn't want them to worry about money."

A few weeks ago, four teenaged boys, two of them under 16, were arrested for a crime spree on the subways in which they terrorized, beat with chains, and robbed several train passengers, including a 73 year old man.

These two incidents depict the reality of a drastic increase in violent crimes during the past few years, particularly in poor communities. The fear of being physically assaulted has become part of our daily existence. The senseless brutality of these crimes heightens the terror we experience. In particular, elderly people are most affected by this situation, due to their physical vulnerability as well as their forced isolation from society.

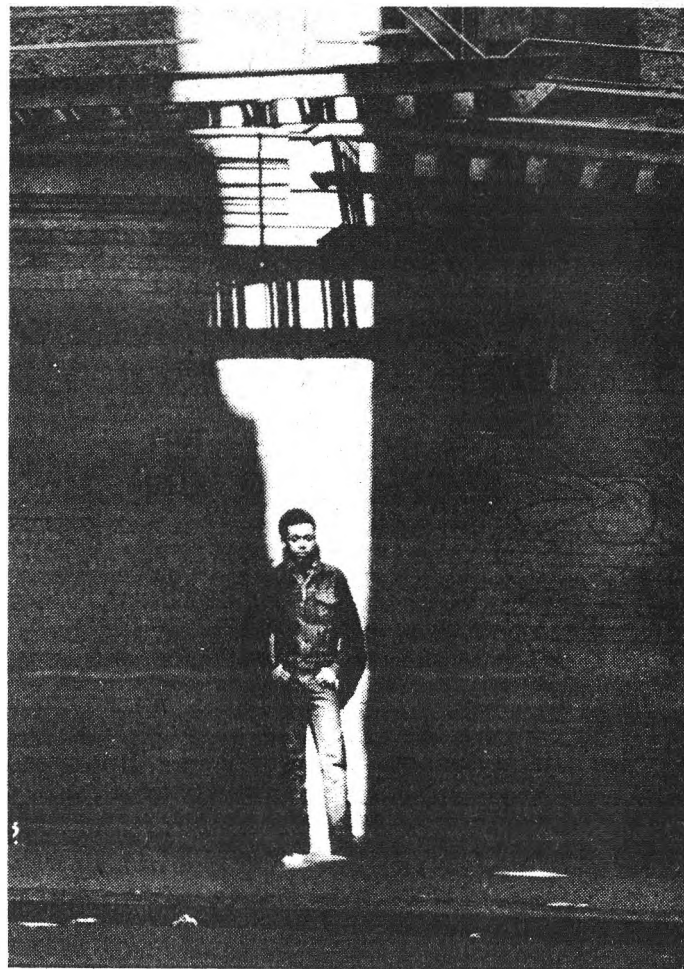
Muggings, robberies, beatings and rape have become a way of life for a growing number of people. These crimes are committed by the marginalized elements in society—those people who have learned that hustling is the only way they can survive—the drug addict, the pusher, the alienated victim of life-long unemployment; the school-aged youth, dehumanized in a bankrupt school system, with little prospect of ever getting a decent job.

There is no doubt that those who commit violent crimes must ultimately bear the consequences and responsibility for their actions. Crime, particularly crimes against people, cannot be justified in any way. But we do not accept the alternatives offered by the politicians and the mass media to deal with the problem, e.g. to reinstate the death penalty, to make youth offenders eligible for jail, to lengthen prison sentences, etc. These solutions will never lessen the rate of crime because they do not attack the problem at its root. To develop solutions that are effective, we must first understand why people commit crime, what are the reasons that lead people to crime.

### The Root Cause of Crime

Crime is caused by the material conditions that people live under: a combination of massive unemployment, degrading hard work, that barely enables workers to live at a subsistence level, schools that create illiteracy, a severe lack of job skills and training, etc. In this society minorities are most affected by these conditions. They are the last hired and first fired; they receive the lowest wages; they live in the worst housing, receive the poorest health care, schooling, etc. Unemployment in minority communities is approximately 25% and among minority youth, the unemployed figure is a staggering 64%. This is one of the fundamental reasons why so many minority youth have turned to crime.

In capitalist society, we are taught that the only way to get ahead is to beat down the other person. In periods of economic crisis such as the one we are presently experiencing, people struggle to survive by any means necessary. As survival becomes increasingly difficult and the degradation of people's lives intensifies, their sense of human values begins to warp. One way growing alienation expresses itself is through brutal acts of violence, particularly against the most helpless in society: the very young and the very old. The violence is unleashed not against those responsible for these conditions, but against those who are equally powerless and exploited—as exemplified by the actions of the unemployed Puerto



Minority youth: uneducated and unemployed

Rican who murdered his family.

Under heightened oppressive conditions, people have to fight harder to stay alive. Despite media efforts to blame the increased crime rate on racial antagonism between minorities and whites, the reality is that due to worsening conditions, the crime rate within minority working class communities is much higher than in white working class communities.

### The Court System

To understand the material conditions which result in crime is to grasp only half the picture. Street crime is the result of the injustices and inequalities inherent in the capitalist system. The court system which is supposed to insure equality before the law, does nothing to deter crime; instead, it favors those who have money to post bail and to hire good lawyers. The system is racist and arbitrary in its judgment of who is eligible for bail, for reduced prison terms, for suspended sentences, etc. Those arrested for crimes are shuttled back and forth between the jail, the court, and the street. This does not help to rehabilitate the wrongdoers nor does it lessen the crime rate because the conditions that caused the crime still exist. In this respect, the court system, as a pillar of the government apparatus, has a primary function not in the interest of society as a whole but rather in the defense

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## ARGENTINA - A YEAR OF MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

This March 24th marks the first year in power of the criminal military Junta of Argentina. Headed by General Videla, the military Junta has instituted the most brutal regime in the history of Argentina. Typified by murders, torture and violations of the most basic human rights, the Junta has been repudiated in many International Forums and by a number of governments. Recently the U.S. Congress has decided to eliminate open military aid to the Videla regime.

Internally the Videla regime has attempted to project its opposition as merely the actions of a "few extreme leftists". But the campaign has been ineffective as demonstrated by the continuous resistance to the military by a militant and well organized working class and the constant revolutionary activities of the PRT-ERP and Montoneros. These two organizations, true revolutionary vanguards, have suffered severe losses during this past year. Nevertheless, they continue to confront the military in the urban centers and the countryside of Argentina as well as organizing the resistance.

Following, the companeros from MASA—the U.S. based anti-imperialist organization for socialism in Argentina—contribute to the pages of OEM their analysis of the current socio-economic conditions in Argentina.

### A Year of the Dictatorship: and Now What ?

The 24th of March marks a year since the military junta seized power in Argentina. The present reality facing the country can be illustrated very well indeed if we attempt to strike a balance between the initial goals of the military and the actual results they have obtained.

Upon overthrowing the corrupt and discredited government of Isabel Peron in order to assume direct control of the country, the military proposed: a) the elimination of guerilla activity and also, the most combative sectors of the workers' vanguard; b) to paralyze the activities of the Workers' Central and the trade unions as well as the activities of the political parties—in short, to get rid of the "old and useless" leaders and replace them with those who would "carry the new line", those who would be docile and attentive to the plans of the military and of imperialism; c) upon this base of "internal peace and order", to overcome the grave economic crisis and in this manner facilitate the process of control and concentration of production and the market by the monopolies. Twelve months have elapsed. During that period, the country has experienced an average of 8 deaths per day. Twelve months marked by persecutions, jailings, exile and torture for the Argentinian people. Twelve months in which the Argentinian military, bordering on total insanity, has unleashed against the people all the methods and resources of unrestrained force and violence. Let us examine the results.

### The Figures Which Have Not Emerged

In order to effect a complete picture of this situation, we reprint a special dispatch of the Inter-Press Service Agency filed by Nicolas Esparza and dated the end of January in the city of Buenos Aires.

"The official information in terms of the key indexes of the economic activity of the country and their behavior during 1976, allow us to conclude that the effort of the government has failed in its attempt to overcome the crisis that last March constituted one of the goals stated in the plans of the Armed Forces. If it is true that the govern-

ment was especially careful not to release all the information in its totality and in a complete fashion, it is just as true that the figures prove that the economic plan of the military has failed in its totality, worsening the situation in some cases.

These facts particularly preoccupy the private economic and financial circles; the recourse to deception has been fruitless due to the scarce results of a strategy that brings with it enormous political and social cost.

In 1976, the cost of living rose 347.2%. In 1975, the increase was 334.8%. In contrast, in 1974, the cost of living was 40.1%.

The fight against inflation was one of the major objectives proposed by the minister of the economy, Jose Alfredo Martinez de Hoz; in this direction the governmental apparatus assumed the burden generated by policies which were openly recessive. Yet, in addition to the rapid increase in the global cost of living rate, in 1975 and again in 1976 the inflationary rates paralleled for the respective months following August. Similar peak periods emerged in the months of June, July and August 1975 and also in March, April and May 1976.

Another important factor is the continuing decrease in gross national investment. In 1975 there was a drop in Internal Investments by 10.7%. In 1976, it was further reduced by 12.7%.

Available goods and services in 1976 compared to 1975 were reduced by 7.9%, while in 1975 they had gone down only 0.3% compared to 1974. The 1976 reduction is compounded by a population increase of 1.4%.

Public investment also continued along a declining tendency. This type of investment was 1600 million in 1974, 1300 in 1975 and finally in 1976, an investment of 1,100. The drop is one of 48% if we consider the last two years jointly.

Monetary expansion inversely followed an upward trend and offers another important index of the inflationary course of the economy. In May 1973, the circulation of money was 1700 million dollars. In only one month—November of 1975—circulation increased to 16,409 million dollars. It again increased in a similar manner to 17,990 million in just one 15-day period in December 1975; in the 3rd week of that same month, the amount of money in circulation increased another 18,134 million dollars. In 1976, the situation did not stabilize to any notable degree: in just 3 days in the third week of December, circulation increased to 19,247 million dollars.

In all of 1976, circulation increased by 248% and on December 31st, the total was 562,494 million dollars. On an average, the circulation of money increased in 1976 to the tune of 2.9 million dollars a minute, the equivalent of the price of 4 small automobiles (Citroen or Fiat)."

Up to this point the dispatch put forth a clear panorama of the results of the economic strategy of the military. In examining the figures, it is not necessary to be an expert

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Junta troops patrol Buenos Aires

## ARGENTINA (cont.)

gobierno en mayo de 1976. Pero, a pesar de la cosecha record (12 millones de toneladas de trigo), nada ha cambiado. Una variable "imprevista", la caída de los precios internacionales por las grandes cosechas de EE. UU. y la U.R.S.S., echó por tierra los planes. Los militares deberán recurrir a dos medidas combinadas para resolver el problema: a) depreciar el dinero para reducir el valor real del precio garantizado por el gobierno a los productores y, b) emitir moneda.

Naturalmente, serán los pequeños y medianos productores agropecuarios, que producen a costos mas altos y tienen impostergables compromisos con la banca oficial y privada, los que pagarán los platos rotos. En 1977, este sector agropecuario se habra sumado a la oposicion a la Junta, cosa que ya puede observarse, en los hechos, atendiendo a los datos y expectativas para la cosecha de maiz: se adelanta ya que el area de siembra es considerablemente menor.

El primer mes de 1977 ilustra sobre lo que le espera al pueblo argentino a lo largo del año. En enero de 1977 quedó fijado el record de aumento del costo de vida que desde agosto de 1975 no se superaba: 13, 4%. Debe tenerse en cuenta que, tradicionalmente, este es el mes donde se produce una baja, luego de los aumentos producidos en diciembre.

### Esos Discolos Trabajadores

Es imposible, en la Argentina de hoy, suministrar ciertas cifras de la situación social. Por ejemplo, la cantidad de horas-hombre no trabajadas durante los paros obreros de la industria automotriz, portuarios, mecanicos, bancarios, energia, etc. O la disminución de la producción como consecuencia del "trabajo a tristeza"; o los daños materiales del sabotaje. Lo que si puede afirmarse, sin ninguna duda, es que la clase trabajadora encabeza, con hechos concretos, con una resistencia heroica y decidida, la resistencia del conjunto del pueblo argentino contra la dictadura militar.

Tambien que, transcurrido el primer año, la continuidad de esta lucha ha provocado serias disidencias al interior de las Fuerzas Armadas y que, en estos meses, habrá de definirse el curso de la situación para el resto de 1977.

Durante enero, esto se vió claro en el desarrollo del conflicto de Luz y Fuerza y las posibilidades de extension a otros sectores estatales, particularmente ferrocarriles. Iniciado al promediar el mes como consecuencia de la oposicion obrera a la aplicación de diversas medidas

(aumento de horas de trabajo, quita de conquistas sociales, despidos, etc.), el conflicto volvió a mostrar la firmeza y madurez de la clase trabajadora: no enfrentar abiertamente a los militares, presionar constantemente mediante el sabotaje, el trabajo "a tristeza", mostrarse dispuesta a la negociación desde posiciones firmes. En los primeros días de febrero, cuando el conflicto "se atenuaba" (segun expresiones emanadas del propio gobierno, que en realidad eran una forma de decir que, esta vez, los trabajadores estaban a punto de imponerse en algunos aspectos claves), se produjo el secuestro del dirigente de Luz y Fuerza, Oscar Smith. Una clara provocación, seguramente emanada del "ala dura" de las Fuerzas Armadas, a la que los obreros respondieron inmediatamente con nuevas medidas de fuerza.

Al momento de escribirse esta nota, no habia noticias de Smith ni se habia solucionado el conflicto, que amenazaba extenderse a los ferrocarriles, donde el malestar por el inminente despido de 20,000 trabajadores amenazaba concretarse en actos de resistencia.

Pero no es solamente la clase obrera la que sacude la estructura de la Junta Militar. El 18 de febrero, una bomba estalló sobre la pista en el momento en que decolaba el avión del presidente Jorge Videla. La guerrilla o los "duros" de las propias Fuerzas Armadas? No se sabia exactamente aun, pero cualquiera de las dos posibilidades no es positiva ni de buen augurio para la dictadura. Tanto los Montoneros como el ERP se mantienen activos a pesar de los golpes recibidos. El conjunto de las organizaciones y partidos politicos nacionales dan los primeros, pero firmes, pasos para enfrentar unidos a los militares; al interior del aparato militar las diferencias entre aquellos que entienden que la unica salida es iniciar el diálogo con los distintos sectores populares y los que son partidarios de una agudizacion de la represion (?), se hace aguda y quizá, haya llegado ya al punto del atentado a Videla. En todo el mundo, la conciencia del caracter represivo y la ineficacia de la dictadura militar, se ha extendido. El ascenso de Jimmy Carter, la necesidad de "lavar la cara" a los regimenes proestadounidenses latinoamericanos (de la cual Pinochet seria la primera "victima" en 1977), restan base de sustentacion a la Junta Militar.

Crisis economica, resistencia popular firme y en progresivo tren de consolidacion, soledad politica, repudio internacional.

Un pais asolado por la muerte, el odio y la persecución. Un pueblo decidido a resistir con los dientes apretados. Un año de dictadura militar. Y ahora, que?

## CRIMEN cont.

aquellos quienes tienen dinero para pagar fianza y conseguir buenos abogados. El sistema judicial es racista y arbitrario en su dictamen sobre quien es elegible para fianza, para plazos reducidos de prision, para sentencias suspendidas, etc. Esos arrestados por delitos son trasladados de aqui para allá y de allá para acá entre la carcel, la corte, y la calle. Esto no ayuda a rehabilitar los malhechores ni hace disminuir la taza de crímenes porque las condiciones que crearon el crimen todavia existen.

Por ende el sistema tribunal como uno de los pilares del aparato gubernamental cumple su función principal de servir no los intereses de toda la sociedad sino de defender y proteger la propiedad privada—los derechos de los ricos y no los de los pobres.

El crimen fundamental del Capitalismo que da surgimiento a otras criminalidades que ocurren es que la

riqueza de la sociedad se utiliza no para beneficio de la clase trabajadora que la produce, sino para enriquecer los bolsillos de unos cuantos: la clase dominante de bancarios y ejecutivos de corporaciones. El crimen callejero es producto de esta explotación. El hecho de que la taza de crímenes crece durante una crisis economica señala el vinculo entre la injusta distribucion de la riqueza y el crimen.

El crimen callejero es un problema serio que no puede ser tratado levemente. Fundamentalmente, la manera para mejorar las condiciones es luchando por mas trabajos con salarios decentes, luchar por una educacion y servicios sociales de calidad que satisfascan las necesidades del pueblo, tanto como luchar por mejor representacion legal para el pueblo pobre. Pero la clase trabajadora no debe perder de vista su enemigo real. El crimen continuará existiendo mientras el crimen fundamental del Capitalismo, la explotación del pueblo trabajador por una minoria privilegiada—los Capitalistas—continúe.

En ultima instancia es en contra de este crimen que debemos luchar.