

# OBREROS EN MARCHA

September-October 1979

Political Organ of the Puerto Rican National Left Movement (M.I.N.P.-El Comité)

Vol. 4 No. 7



Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores, Lolita Lebrón and Oscar Collazo. free after 25 years in federal prisons, salute the thousands of admirers

that received them at Saint Paul's Church on September 11.

photo: LNS

## Editorial

# The Four Nationalists: Examples of Commitment and Sacrifice

"Our intent, after our release, will be to dedicate ourselves to Puerto Rican national unity, completely confident that this historical moment will serve as a stimulus to the Puerto Rican people to put aside partisan flags and struggles for the only solution—to recover the inalienable political rights of our people, so that the Puerto Rican nation can soon take its place among the free nations of the world."

Oscar Collazo, Sept. 10, 1979.

After more than twenty-five years of imprisonment in U.S. Federal prisons, Lolita Lebrón, Irving Flores, Rafael Cancel Miranda and Oscar Collazo are free.

El Movimiento De Izquierda Nacional Puertorriqueño (MINP-El Comité) unites its voice with all progressive and revolutionary forces in rejoicing in this historic moment. More fundamentally, along with many people in this country and in particular within the Puerto Rican community, we reaffirm our commitment to a

free Puerto Rico.

During the late 1940s, the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, under the leadership of Don Pedro Albizu Campos, emerged as the major political force on the island, raising the demand for the end to U.S. colonial domination. But Puerto Rico was too important militarily and as a source of profit for the U.S. to give it up.

Confronted with the situation of rising discontent and growing popular support for the Nationalist Party, President Truman ordered the liquidation of the party and the imprisonment of Don Pedro. On October 30, 1950, the Nationalist Party went on the offensive. An uprising was begun in the town of Jayuya and in towns across the island. U.S. reaction was swift and deadly. For six days, the U.S. air force bombed Jayuya; U.S. tanks rumbled across the island brutally repressing the uprisings. Hundreds were massacred and thousands thrown into prison. The U.S. imposed a news blackout on Puerto Rico, attempting to keep from the people of the U.S. and the world the news of the uprisings and the

(Continued on Page 2)

### In this issue:

<b>PUERTO RICANS IN THE U.S.</b> P.R. and Hispanic Coalition, Luis Baez Case .....	3
<b>P.R. INFORMA</b> Puerto Rico at the United Nations .....	5
<b>PUERTO RICANS IN THE U.S.</b> Camden: Cultural-Political Work .....	7

<b>NATIONAL</b> Economy and the Recession .....	8
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b> Chile: Growth of the Mass Movement .....	10
Dominican Republic and the P.R.D. ....	11

(From the cover)

## The Four Nationalists...

slaughter.

On November 1, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola, members of the Nationalist Party, embarked on a mission to break that blockade and expose the role of U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico. These two patriots attacked Blair House, Truman's residence. Griselio lost his life in the attempt and Oscar was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The next four years were a period of intense political repression and economic penetration of Puerto Rico by the U.S. In 1954, the Organization of American States (OAS) was to take up the question of Puerto Rico's status. On March 1st, the first day of the OAS meeting, four members of the Nationalist Party, Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores and Andrés Figueroa Cordero embarked on a mission similar to the 1950 armed action. They opened fire in the U.S. House of Representatives, raising the cry of "Puerto Rico Libre!" These patriots, together with Oscar Collazo, remained in prison for more than twenty-five years, until their recent release on September 10th.

Consistent with their principles, the four Nationalists (Andrés died in Puerto Rico in March) only accepted their release on an unconditional basis, refusing to allow U.S. imperialism to impose any restrictions on their future political work. In public activities in Chicago and New York, thousands of supporters enthusiastically and emotionally recognized their heroic commitment to Puerto Rico and hailed their freedom. In New York City, 4,000 people came together in a celebration. In each event, the four Nationalists not only reiterated their commitment to Puerto Rico's independence but once again demonstrated the caliber of human beings and revolutionaries that they unquestionably are.

In humble words they spoke of their heroism and sacrifices. With conviction they spoke about their revolutionary principles and determination. With love they spoke about each other, their fallen comrades, Puerto Rico and those who joined forces to secure their release.

The release of the Nationalists served to bring together progressive and pro-independence forces in the U.S. from diverse social sectors and political views. It also brought to the fore the nationalist and independence sentiments existing within the Puerto Rican community in the U.S.

The unifying role that the four patriots have been able to play does not negate the political differences that exist among the forces. But it does speak loudly to the level of respect and profound admiration that the Nationalists have earned as examples of valor and sacrifice.

In addition to these factors, two other factors stand out. The first is that the Carter Administration has sought to utilize the release of the Four in order to legitimize to the world its position on human rights. The question of the imprisoned Nationalists always stood out as an indictment and source of exposure of the falseness of the U.S. position.

The second factor is the consistent role that socialist Cuba has played in the struggle to secure the freedom of the four patriots. This role is part of the commitment and resolve the Cuban people have to concretely aid Puerto Rico's process of national liberation.

For decades, the four nationalists have served as a rallying force for unity and common action among independence forces in Puerto Rico and their supporters in the U.S. Now these patriots are free. But the efforts to forge principled unity and coordinate common areas of work important to the national liberation process have not ended. The forces who support the independence of Puerto Rico, both on the island and in the U.S., should continue to join efforts together whenever it is appropriate and possible.

# OBREROS EN MARCHA

*Obreros En Marcha* is the central publication of *El Comité-M.I.N.P.* (Puerto Rican National Left Movement). *El Comité-M.I.N.P.* is a developing Marxist-Leninist organization which originated on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, New York. We formed in the summer of 1970 as a Latin community organization committed to the struggle to improve the living conditions of the poor, mainly minority, families who lived in that area. Our goal was to get decent, low-rent housing, quality education and improved health services for these families.

Two years after our formation we began to respond to the needs of Latin workers in the factories. We also started to organize students at the university level and to get more actively involved in the struggle for Puerto Rico's independence. Our participation in these struggles ultimately led to our transformation into a new type of organization with more defined political objective. Thus in 1974 we began a slow and complex process of transition into a Marxist-Leninist organization: an organization guided by the science of Marxism-Leninism and integrated into the struggles of working people.

As such an organization, we understand that an essential aspect of our work is to raise the level of political consciousness of workers in this country. This is one of the conditions necessary to develop the revolutionary movement capable of overthrowing the present order and building on its ruins a new socialist society. In this effort, we join with other revolutionary forces in the U.S.

Our political organ, *Obreros en Marcha*, has as its goal the development of revolutionary consciousness among our ranks, the advanced elements of the people, and among the masses in general. We attempt to accomplish this task by the examination and analysis of the developing progressive and revolutionary movements locally, nationally and internationally.

**MINP-El Comité**  
**577 Columbus Ave.**  
**New York, N.Y. 10024**  
**(212) 874-9162**

**I want to subscribe to your publication. Enclosed is \$6.00 for 12 issues of OEM.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip

Coalition in Defense of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Rights:

## Step Forward Against the Budget Cuts

For the past five years, budget cuts have eaten away at every essential service in New York City, drastically affecting the standard of living of the poor and working class. Since 1974, city officials have laid-off hundreds of teachers and paraprofessionals; reduced "special services" such as bilingual, remedial reading and math programs; closed schools; laid-off thousands of health workers; reduced monies for medicine and life-saving equipment in city hospitals; closed-off entire sections of city hospitals; laid off transportation workers; reduced the number of buses and subways in service; laid off sanitation workers; reduced the frequency of garbage pickups; cut or closed many branches of the public library; sharply reduced salary increases for city employees, so that inflation now rises much faster than income.

At the beginning of 1979, the planned destruction of people's lives through budget cuts reaches a new level. The areas picked for further devastation were the city hospitals and the public schools. Mayor Koch and his general staff singled out Metropolitan and Sydenham Hospitals in Manhattan, Cumberland and Greenpoint Hospitals in Brooklyn and 25 public schools as the specific targets of his bureaucratic hatchet. All these institutions, providing vital services to thousands of people, were to be closed or severely cutback.

The working people of the city, the majority of the population, would once again be sacrificed for the sake of reaching that elusive and sacred goal: balancing the city budget. Within the city's working class, the ones most affected would be the poorest communities. And these were predominant-ly black or hispanic.

### THE COALITION IN DEFENSE OF PUERTO RICAN AND HISPANIC RIGHTS

It was this escalation in the war against the city's working class and oppressed minorities which led to the creation of the Coalition in Defense of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Rights. The city's Hispanic population is made up mostly of Puerto Ricans with large numbers of Dominicans, Colombians and Ecuadorians. Deeply injured by the barrage of cuts in social services, this sector had been unable, like the rest of the city's poor and working population, to effectively resist or protest. Its representatives in government, such as Deputy Mayor Badillo and a handful of elected city and state officials, had acted as accessories to the crime by not raising one strong voice of protest.



*En el Este de Harlem la Coalición ha sido una fuerza dirigente en la lucha por salvar el Hospital Metropolitano.*

In January, a small group of Hispanics—outraged by the continuing spiral of cuts, the constant incidents of police brutality in minority communities and, in particular the racist attacks against Puerto Ricans in the media (see OEM, Vol. 3#11)—formed a coalition to organize a fight-back. Veterans of past struggles against the budget cuts as well as people who had never been involved before began to come to the meetings of the Coalition in Defense of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Rights. The Spanish media responded favorably, giving coverage to the coalition's initial activities. Even some of the "voiceless" politicians began to echo the coalition's protests. The coalition filled the organizational void in the Hispanic community. It quickly multiplied its membership to over 60 people.

### "EDUCATE, AGITATE AND ORGANIZE"

The coalition's first activity was held in February. A Town Hall meeting was organized for the purpose of informing the community about the impending cuts in social services. Because of the Coalition's inexperience in dealing with *politiqueros*, these opportunist politicians were able to dominate the Town Hall meeting. Thus the Coalition's message of the need for members of the Hispanic community to begin to actively resist the cuts was lost in the politicians' storm of electoral verbiage and empty rhetoric.

Several other community meetings were organized in March and April which also were dominated by the politicians. These experiences served as the basis for a series of debates within the coalition. Through these debates, the members of the coalition discussed different perspectives on how to build the Coalition and focus its work. The ensuing struggle over the different positions produced a much clearer understanding in the Coalition of how to do its work. These struggles enabled the Coalition to develop and not just die away after an initial burst of energy.

The first struggle freed the coalition from the influence of the opportunist politicians. These politicians wanted to use the Coalition and the growing ferment in the Hispanic community to further their own political careers. Thus they wanted the Coalition to refrain from grass-roots organizing and to concentrate on voter registration. Their arguments found few supporters within the coalition and after a while they faded from the scene.

The second struggle which helped define the Coalition was one over form of participation. Initially many of the people coming to the meetings overemphasized the importance of numbers. The goal then became to mobilize as many people as possible not just to the public meetings—whose purpose was educational—but also to the Coalition's planning meetings, without a clear idea of how to effectively put them to work. Frenzied activity characterized this period, as the members of the coalition rushed to print and distribute leaflets for its various activities. Planning meetings were attended by large numbers of people; many people spoke impressively; yet the daily work of the Coalition continued to fall on the same small number of people. Gradually, people in the Coalition learned from this experience. The emphasis shifted from having large meetings to organizing the people willing to do the day-to-day consistent work in the community, which was necessary to build a solid base for the fight against the budget cuts.

A third and related struggle was held over the structure of the Coalition. The organization's quick growth created many problems in the day-to-day functioning. How did decisions get made? Who made them? What government officials and institutions were the Coalition's target? The Coalition's loose structure permitted a few individuals to maintain control over the organization's politics while the rest of the members had little input in the decision-

making. The same forces which had pushed for an emphasis on the quality of membership, led the struggle to structure the Coalition by geographic chapters. They were successful. Chapters were established in East Harlem and the Bronx. Much later chapters were established in Queens, the Lower East Side and the West Side. Each chapter elected a coordinator and established committees to deal with the different tasks. The way was thus paved for a democratic and full participation of all members as well as a smooth day-to-day functioning.

During the month of May, the Coalition sponsored a Hispanic Conference at John Jay College. At this conference the points of unity for the Coalition were worked out. The main elements of these are: to safeguard the democratic and human rights of Hispanic people; to unite against attacks in the forms of government policies detrimental to the welfare of the Hispanic community; to demand budget increases in vital social services; to support the same struggles by other minority groups; finally, to educate, agitate and organize within the Hispanic community.

**THE ROAD AHEAD**

The struggles to build the Coalition and define its work have made it a stronger political and organizational instrument of the Hispanic community. It has attracted many working people from the Hispanic community. It has succeeded in steering away from the influence of self-serving politicians without alienating its petit-bourgeois and professional members.

There are many indicators of its growing influence in the Hispanic community and the respect it is earning. The Bronx chapter receives many calls a day requesting information or aid. In East Harlem, the Coalition has been a leading force in the struggle to save Metropolitan Hospital. As a result of this struggle, which has received widespread support from the community, city officials have been forced to backtrack in their plans to close the hospital. The coalition's newer chapters, the Lower East Side and the West Side, have fertile ground in which to work and are preparing activities which are reflective of their community's particular conditions. The Queens chapter, where there is a large number of Hispanics from Central and South America, is taking

up issues affecting particularly undocumented workers.

Other organizations from the Hispanic community are beginning to support the efforts of the Coalition. Recently, two lawyers representing the Coalition served Mayor Koch with a summons to appear before a public meeting, a People's Tribunal, in the Bronx. In retaliation, Koch wrote the New York Bar Association requesting that the two lawyers be debarred for involving themselves in "political activities." An ad-hoc committee was quickly formed for the purpose of protecting the rights of the two lawyers. The Puerto Rico Legal Defense Fund and many professionals joined the committee. The Puerto Rico Bar Association also spoke out in favor of the two lawyers.

In its brief nine-month existence, the Coalition in Defense of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Rights has managed to develop and direct the resistance of the Hispanic community to the undemocratic and inhuman attacks of the city administration. This is a big step forward for the organization of the working class in New York against the budget cuts. •

**Luis Baez Case:**

**Proper Procedure or Police Brutality?**

On Wednesday, August 22, five policemen from Brooklyn's 79th Precinct fired 24 shots at Luis Baez. Sixteen bullets hit their intended target and Baez died instantly. Because of Baez's history of mental illness, his mother called the police to help her subdue him when he started tearing up the kitchen floor. Instead, he was summarily executed when he tried to flee, frightened by the appearance of so many police.

Once again, as in the police choke hold that killed Arthur Miller (see OEM, Vol. 3 #7) one year ago, an internal investigation found that the police had utilized "proper procedure." Luis Baez, a five-foot-one Puerto Rican weighing 130 pounds, clutching a pair of scissors, had to be subdued by a hail of gunfire.

The response of the Brooklyn community surrounding the precinct was strong and angry. A day after the killing, a crowd of about 200 hundred protestors marched in front of the police station. Then the police announced the results of their internal investigation. On Monday, August 27th, Hispanic politicians led a picket at the precinct. By early evening, more than 2000 people had gathered to express their outrage at the evident racism and arrogance of the police forces. Represented were numerous community, religious and labor

organizations from throughout the city: the Black United Front, the National Coalition of Human Rights, United Tremont Trades (a construction group for minority workers), the Coalition in Defense of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Rights and many others. Our organization, MINP-El Comité, participated in the protest also.

Later in the same evening, the police brutally showed the same disdain for the protestors that they had shown for the life of Luis Baez. During a march throughout the community, unlit squad cars waited on side streets to drive into the crowd. Police in full riot gear were hidden in the alleys, basements and rooftops. People who took refuge from the rioting police in apartment hallways were dragged out by the hair and clubbed. Anyone who attempted to help the demonstrators was threatened with drawn guns.

The death of Luis Baez pinpoints once again the attitude and policy of the ruling circles in this country which is implemented at all levels of government. The life of a Puerto Rican, or a Black, or any other minority or poor person is inconsequential. Here in New York City, while Koch does the killing by slashing the budgets of services crucial to the well-being of poor and working people, the police are there to con-



Blacks and Hispanics unite to protest the recent killing of Luis Baez in Brooklyn.

trol and repress the protests of people forced into some of the worst living and working conditions in this country.

Out of the demonstrations and protests, a new organization was formed: Blacks and Hispanics Against Police Brutality. This developing unity between the two largest minority groups in the city is potentially a great step forward in the fight against both the increasingly severe attacks on the people's standard of living and the increased social repression that generally accompanies such attacks.

**Puerto Rico at the U.N. 1945-1979**

**In August, the question of Puerto Rico came before the Decolonization Committee of the United Nations. The result was a strong resolution affirming the right of Puerto Rico to self-determination. The struggle to win recognition and acknowledgement of Puerto Rico as a colony of the U.S. has taken many years.**

**As World War II drew to a close in 1945, 51 nations met in San Francisco to draw up a charter for a new world organization. The Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, at the time headed by Don Pedro Albizu Campos, sent a delegation to that world conference. In the atmosphere of liberation and democracy created by the defeat of fascism, the delegation from Puerto Rico was granted observer status in the newly-formed United Nations.**

**Since then attention to the colonial status of Puerto Rico by the U.N. has depended primarily on the changing correlation of forces in the world. The growth of the island's independence forces has not yet been able to assume the dominant position in the struggle to liberate Puerto Rico from U.S. imperialism.**

**1945-1960: U.S. WORLD HEGEMONY**

The period immediately following the end of WW II was one of unprecedented power for the United States. Its chief allies, the countries of Western Europe, were economically devastated and totally dependent on the U.S. for reconstruction. In addition to the huge investment benefits in Europe, the U.S. business empire profited by taking over many of the economic and political relations that western Europe enjoyed with Africa and Asia. U.S. military and economic power was paramount, for the USSR was also recovering from the war's devastation. This hegemony enabled the U.S. to impose its policies on the international community. Thus, for many years, it was able to keep Puerto Rico off of the U.N.'s agenda.

In 1950, after the Nationalist-led rebellion in Puerto Rico the U.S. had the Nationalist Party's observer status at the U.N. revoked. In 1953, after commonwealth status had been imposed on the island's population, the U.S. maneuvered to remove Puerto Rico from the list of colonial territories for which reports had to be submitted. This meant that Puerto Rico was no longer considered a colony by the U.N. In its resolution on this issue—resolution 748 (VIII) (referring to the eighth session of the General Assembly)—the General Assembly stated, "... in choosing its constitutional and international status the people of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico have effectively exercised their right to self-determination." Both the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) and the Nationalist Party asked for but were refused an audience to refute these lies. With its overwhelming power, U.S. imperialism included outright lies in these resolutions.

The "effective exercise of self-determination" was the 1952 referendum in which the citizens of Puerto Rico were offered a choice between direct colonialism and indirect colonialism (commonwealth). Furthermore, the referendum was carried out only after the Nationalist Party had been brutally crushed.



"We must be able to utilize the successes at the U.N. as tools to educate workers and the progressive sector of U.S. society around the issues and struggles in Puerto Rico and build concrete support for those struggles."

This resolution represented the low point of international recognition of Puerto Rico's colonial status.

**1960: U.S. HEGEMONISM DECLINES**

In 1955, the first conference of non-aligned countries was held. The foremost concern of this conference, known as the Bandung (Indonesia) Conference, was decolonization. At the request of this conference, the U.N. General Assembly passed in 1960 the Declaration for the Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples—Resolution 1514(XV). This resolution took a strong position against all forms of colonialism. At the request of members of the PIP and the Pro-Independence Movement (MPI), the drafters of the resolution included a point which stated, "... in all other territories which have not yet achieved independence measures shall be taken immediately to transfer all powers to the peoples of these territories..." This point assured that Puerto Rico would be covered. But the struggle to place its colonial status on the U.N. agenda for discussion would take several more years.

In 1961, the U.N. General Assembly established a committee on decolonization to implement the mandates of Resolution 1514(XV). The first petition this committee received was from the MPI of Puerto Rico. Yet the power of the U.S. was still such that it pressured the president of the committee, so that receipt of the petition was not even acknowledged.

The discussions in the Decolonization Committee during the years of 1965, '66 and '67 on Puerto Rico centered on the contradiction between resolutions 748(VIII), which stated that Puerto Rico's status was no longer under U.N. jurisdiction, and resolution 1514(XV), which stated that Puerto Rico's status was still under U.N. jurisdiction. The diplomatic struggle that ensued had the socialist and progressive countries on one side and the United States and other imperialist nations on the other. In 1965, Cuba succeeded in having Puerto Rico mentioned for the first time in a declaration of the Decolonization Committee. Strong pressures from the U.S., however, forced the Committee to conclude that the question "... required more detailed study..." In 1967, the United States almost succeeded in having a resolution passed which would have stricken Puerto Rico from the list of territories under the study of the Decolonization Committee. As a tactical move, Cuba and other progressive countries had the vote on the issue of Puerto Rico postponed.

Four years passed before the case of Puerto Rico was again mentioned in the documents of the Committee. In late 1971, the Cuban delegation to the U.N. addressed a letter to the Secretary-General urging him to take note of the increasing repression against the island's independence forces and the need to reinstate hearings on the case of Puerto Rico in light of Resolution 1514(XV). In 1972 the Committee passed a resolution which recognized its jurisdiction over Puerto Rico reaffirming, "... the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and freedom, in accordance with Resolution 1514(XV)..."

In 1973, representatives of the independence movement were allowed for the first time to make presentations before the Committee. Both the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (MPI-PSP) and the PIP sent delegations. The '73 resolution had more strength in that it asked the U.S. to "refrain from any measure that would impede the people from exercising freely and fully their right to self-determination and independence." But by 1974 neither of the contending forces had enough votes and the question of Puerto Rico was thus postponed until the following year.

1975 saw a heated struggle over a resolution on Puerto Rico. The resolution drafted went beyond the '73 resolution in its admonitions to the U.S. government and also recognized the national liberation movement of the island as the legitimate representative of the Puerto Rican people. The U.S. threatened members of the Committee with economic and diplomatic reprisals to their countries if they supported the resolution. As a consequence, a resolution introduced by Australia to postpone the vote was passed. In 1976, no vote was taken and in 1977 the U.S., through Australia, once again succeeded in postponing the issue.

During the 1978 session of the Decolonization Committee, events in Puerto Rico, particularly the increased wave of repression against the independence and workers movements (Cerro Maravilla, the Cabrera case, etc.), were issues that the committee could not but address. These factors, and the loss of credibility by the U.S. over issues in areas such as the Middle East and Southern Africa, provided firmer ground from which friendly countries and pro-independence forces in Puerto Rico and the U.S. could combat or neutralize U.S. imperialism's tactics of political and economic blackmail.

But an easy victory was by no means assured. There were no illusions among any of the pro-independence

forces regarding the continued power of the U.S. However, given the weakened state of the independence movement in Puerto Rico as well as the ebb in the U.S. solidarity movement, these forces understood it was key that another postponement be avoided and a resolution passed.

Thus, the resolution that finally was passed was ambiguous in addressing the crucial questions around Puerto Rican independence. The resolution pointed out the increased repression on the island and it at least raised the question of the Nationalist prisoners. But on the important question of the transfer of powers, it did not specify under what conditions this transfer of power should take place.

**1979: A STRONG RESOLUTION IS APPROVED**

Last month, the Decolonization Committee approved its strongest resolution on Puerto Rico. This resolution affirmed the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and freedom. Self-determination and full independence were pinpointed as pre-conditions to any legitimate plebiscite regarding Puerto Rico's future. This was true for all options, including "free association." Any transfer of powers that took place would have to take place under these conditions for it to be considered a concrete step toward self-determination.

It's important to point out that representatives of the pro-statehood PNP and the pro-commonwealth PPD, who had been present at the U.N. in 1978, were notably absent from this year's hearings. Neither organization saw any political advantage in attending the sessions.

**CONCLUSION**

The history of Puerto Rico at the U.N. shows us that the growing level of international support is not so much a response to the increased strength of the independence movement on the island; rather, it is a reflection of the growth in anti-colonial forces, resulting from the intensifying and successful struggles for national and social liberation throughout the world.

The history and the most recent victory pinpoint the need for solidarity forces here in the U.S. to play a more active role in support of Puerto Rico. We must be able to utilize the successes at the U.N. as tools to educate workers and progressive sectors of U.S. society around the issues and struggles in Puerto Rico and build concrete support for those struggles. The efforts of the Puerto Rico Solidarity Committee continue to be a key aspect in building this work around the country. Campaigns on the status question, Vieques, repression, and the efforts to strengthen ties between U.S. and Puerto Rican workers are also issues that have to be taken up. The work at the U.N. is only one aspect of the total work.

The work of education, organization and mobilization is the basis on which to develop a broad-based solidarity movement. Placed squarely within the context of U.S. reality, these efforts will complement the successes in the diplomatic arena. More fundamentally, it can make these successes a living part of the daily lives of the masses of workers, oppressed minorities and in particular, the Puerto Rican sector of the U.S. working class.

A broad-based solidarity movement must bring to the fore at all levels of U.S. and international institutions the colonial status of Puerto Rico and affirm its right to self-determination and national liberation. But we cannot substitute this work for the more strategic work which must be done among the masses of U.S. people, which is to root the solidarity movement within the working class and oppressed minorities. This is what will ultimately determine the qualitative contributions that we in the U.S. can make to the Puerto Rican struggle for national and social liberation.

Camden and Alma Latina:

**An Experience in Cultural-Political Work**



"We decided to organize ourselves and learn about Puerto Rico, about our culture"

The scene: Farm labor camps and a community in Camden, New Jersey. The plot: the birth and development of *Alma Latina*, a popular theatre group made up of youths and migrant farm workers. . .

Camden has a large Hispanic population, the majority of which is Puerto Rican. Almost everyone is a farmworker. The changes brought about by the mechanization of farming and the high rate of unemployment in the area has forced many of the farmworkers to emigrate to other parts of the state for part of the year in order to keep working. During these times, the workers live in migrant camps. While in the camps, the workers live in miserable conditions and suffer a high rate of exploitation. The reality of these Puerto Rican migrant workers is part of a process which began many years ago.

Forced to leave Puerto Rico by the changes produced by U.S. imperialism in the island's economy, thousands of Puerto Ricans, mostly workers, came to the U.S. in search of a better life. Begun in 1920, this process has seen the majority of Puerto Rican migrants integrate themselves into the economy and working class of the U.S. Thus they participate in the economic, political, cultural and social life of the U.S. At the same time they have retained certain cultural elements, a common language, psychological traits and common historical experiences which distinguish them from other sectors of the U.S. working class. (See *The Process of Puerto Rican Migration and the U.S. Working Class—El Comité-MINP 1975*).

It is within this context that we place the

experiences which *Alma Latina* has shared with us.

**ACT ONE: OUR ORIGINS**

The *Alma Latina* Theatre was organized in 1974 in response to the needs of the communities of South Jersey. The majority of the area's population is made up by Puerto Rican farm workers and their families. Several youths came together to learn about Puerto Rico and about its culture; thus we began to meet in a community center.

As time passed, workers from the farms began to visit the center and we began to learn about the problems which workers faced in the migrant camps. Through conversations with them, we found out about the miserable housing and health conditions, of the chronic unemployment. Since many of the workers didn't speak English they suffered more exploitation at the hands of the farm owners. Many of the workers did not know about their rights and the bosses would force them to work from five in the morning until eight at night. Aside from the inhuman living conditions—barracks with leaks in the roof, poor heating, broken windows and rats—the salary which they received was below the minimum wage. To complete the picture we have to add the problems of alcoholism, drug-addiction and prostitution, which are rampant in the camps. This situation was a challenge to us. We had to examine the most effective form to denounce these conditions.

**ACT II: WHAT'S TO BE DONE?**

Some of us had worked in California

where we had received training in popular theatre from *Teatro Campesino* which was then dealing with the problems of Chicano workers and the strike led by César Chávez. We learned much from that experience. Together with some of the workers from the South Jersey area we began to more consciously look for information about what was going on in our area and in particular in the migrant camps. Thus we decided to start our theatre group. Collectively, we wrote the play *El Emigrao*, our first play.

Developed through improvisations, *El Emigrao* deals with the actual struggles of migrant workers in southern N.J. In the play, we point out the exploitation and alienation which the farm workers suffer in their daily struggle to survive. The play was the beginning of our efforts to organize and educate the farm workers about their own problems.

We began to perform in the migrant camps. Since our group included farm workers it was easy for those in the audience to understand the message. In a short play, workers just like them were presenting a problem and an alternative. Each performance was followed by a dialogue with the audience. These dialogues proved to be very fruitful for both the workers and ourselves. They proved that theatre is an effective means for developing consciousness in the community and among the farm workers. From the questions and concerns raised by the workers we realized that we could not limit ourselves to the performance of plays. In addition to the performances in the camps, we began to give

classes on the history of Puerto Rico, educational films, and workshops on different issues which affect us.

**ACT III: ALMA LATINA THEATRE BEGINS TO GROW**

At the end of a year the theatre group formed a corporation so as to involve a greater number of people and at the same time seek funding sources so as to be able to work more consistently. That same year we moved from Swedesboro, N.J. to Camden, a city which has a large community of Puerto Ricans and blacks. Many workers in the Swedesboro area had migrated to other places seeking work and we wanted to continue with our popular theatre because we were convinced of its effectiveness as a consciousness raising tool.

Some of us began to work in community programs in Camden. This gave us a daily and direct contact with the community and its problems. We were then able to integrate into our theatre issues dealing with the community. After working for one year in a program for troubled youths ("delinquents") we wrote and performed the play "Pepin." This play had a great impact on many people in the community. After a long discussion on the problem presented in *Pepin*—unemployment and drug addiction among youths—many people understood that the problem affected not only youths but everyone; and that this is closely related to the economic problems that Puerto Ricans confront when we emigrate to the U.S. The participation of the community in the discussions of the problems presented in *Pepin*, the dialogue that was established

between our theatre group and the community generated new ideas on how to present the economic and social problems that migrant workers confront. This dialogue helped us to win the respect of the community's youths.

**ACT IV: EVALUATING OUR EXPERIENCES**

Presently we are still working in Camden. This city is the center of our cultural and political work. We maintain a direct contact with the Hispanic community which lives in the city all year as well as with some of those sectors which migrate to other places looking for work for part of the year and then return to Camden for the remainder of the time. After three years of consistent work, we have recruited and consolidated several persons who today are members of the theatre group. We are high school students (what the system calls drop-outs), a mother, night students, and in general, youths who as a consequence of the conditions which we have described bring a history of problems of identity, drugs, etc. Through the experience of popular theatre, we have learned much about our cultural roots and about the principal cause of the problems which minority groups confront, in our case, the Puerto Rican national minority. The basis of our problems is the existence of a society based on the exploitation of man by man in which minority groups suffer the greatest exploitation. The lessons learned and shared in our cultural and political work have motivated many of the youths to take hold of their lives, returning to school or beginning to

work. We understand that in order to change the conditions in which we live we can not be satisfied with just going to school or holding a job but that we have the responsibility of consistently denouncing these conditions, educating and organizing our community so that it effectively struggles for its rights.

**ACT V: TOWARDS THE FUTURE**

The different activities which we have developed to date, the plays, the study of Puerto Rico's history, the workshop discussions on our living conditions, etc. have helped us understand the importance of cultural work in the development of political consciousness among our people. Through these activities we have strengthened our community's sentiment of nationality and its sense of history; where we came from, why we are here and what is our future as workers who participate in the economic and social life of this country.

Presently we are attempting to establish a cultural house. It will be a center for the community. It will serve to increase the community's participation in the development of our work. It will facilitate the process of cultural, social and political development of our community.

Perhaps the greatest lesson to be learned from our experience is that culture belongs to the people because it is precisely they who, through their struggles, create culture. What we have achieved to date gives us the self-confidence and the strength to continue with the task of raising political consciousness among the people through cultural means.

diagnosis and prescriptions but to little avail. For all their knowledge, the only consensus they have been able to reach is that their patient is sick.

The twenty-five years which followed World War II were, for the U.S. bourgeoisie, a period of unparalleled economic expansion. As the victor with the least damage to its economy, the U.S. ruling class obtained first choice of the spoils. Its corporations quickly spread throughout Africa and Asia capturing the markets left behind by the retreating European capital. The dominant role of U.S. financial tentacles in Latin America was consolidated. Throughout the capitalist world the dollar became the key to all doors. Industrial output grew at an average of 4.5% during these years. The official rate of unemployment averaged less than 5%. The bourgeoisie and their servile economists were exuberant. For them, it was the best of times in the best of all possible worlds.

**1970: DARK CLOUDS IN THE SKY**

But as the country entered the 1970s, serious breaks appeared in the capitalist structure. Inflation—the diminishing buying power of the dollar—had become a pesky problem in the late '60s. Unemployment rose steadily. Competition from the recovered capitalist economies of Japan and Western Europe became fierce. The victories of national liberation movements, particularly in Asia and Africa, and the growing influence of socialist countries diminished the number of markets available for expansion. The U.S. balance of trade—its exports minus its imports—became severely unbalanced, as imports began to greatly outweigh exports. Public and private debt grew disproportionately.

The distinctive characteristic of the U.S. economy in the late 1970s has been stagflation, the presence of inflation combined with high levels of unemployment and low productivity or stagnation. For bourgeois economists, this phenomena has been a nightmare for it defies all their standard lore. The traditional method for combating inflation has been to increase unemployment. This is logical for capitalism, a system structured for profit not for people. However, when both inflation and unemployment increase at the same time, as they are doing in the '70s, then bourgeois economists find themselves helpless to respond.

While unable to deal with the economic crisis, the ruling circles have taken steps to minimize their losses by throwing the weight of the crisis on the shoulders of the country's working class and oppressed minorities. While prices, as measured by the consumer price index, have increased 107% since 1967, wages (after adjusting for inflation) have remained the same. The huge government budgets of this decade have not been spent on the welfare of the people.

Social services, education, health and housing, have been severely cut. The budgets have been swallowed by military expenditures.

The severity of the crisis has left its scars in the corporate board rooms. Pan American, Lockheed and more recently Chrysler have had to seek government assistance to avoid bankruptcy. Industries basic to the economy, such as steel, are stagnating with much of their capacity unused, unable to meet the challenge of foreign competitors. Many of the country's middle-size banking companies have also come close to the brink of bankruptcy.

In the throes of its fight with stagflation, with close to 6 million people unemployed and inflation surpassing the 12% mark, the government recently announced that the country's economy was entering a recession.

**A RECESSION WITHIN A CRISIS**

Recessions are an inevitable part of capitalism. Officially defined as a period of 6 months or more in which the economy's output declines, recessions serve to clean up the excess of overproduction. Since 1945, there have been six recessions which all together have lasted ten years. During these periods, industrial output has declined an average of 11%, while unemployment more than doubled. Once the excess has gone down, the economy picks up speed again. At the expense of the living standard of the working class, the capitalists clean the mess which their hunger for profits creates.

Because of the economy's weakness, the last recession—which lasted from late 1973 to the beginning of 1975—proved to be very severe. Industrial production declined by 15%; unemployment went from 4.6% to 9% of the labor force. Most recessions last less than a year; this last one lasted 16 months. It was the worst downturn since the Depression of the 1930s.

Bourgeois economists are now debating about the depth and length of the present recession. The administration's economists are, of course, arguing that this one will be mild. Ex-secretary of the Treasury Michael Blumenthal recently stated, "We need a slowdown and we're getting it the right way". Others, with the memory of the 73-75 recession in their minds, are not so optimistic. Yet there is no debate about who is going to pay the consequences of the recession mild or severe: the workers and oppressed minorities. As an example of the impact of this turndown on the working class let's take a look at the auto industry.

**RECESSION AND THE AUTO INDUSTRY**

The so-called "Big Three", the General Motors Corporation (GMC), the Ford Motor Corporation (FMC), and the Chrysler Corporation (CC) (the three major auto makers in the country) have reported

losses on their sales of new vehicles. During the spring, the whole industry had estimated that by the end of July it was going to have 300,000 more cars on hand than it did in July 1978. This is translated as "loss profits" for these corporations. But in fact the giant auto corporations did not lose profits. In the period from April to June, profits had risen by an average of more than 20% for the major corporations. General Motors experienced its most profitable quarter ever. It is not that they are not making profits; it is that the profits are not as high as the corporations want them to be.

In order to balance out the "loss," the "big three" have resorted to the same solution: massive layoffs of workers.

In the last week of July, GM announced the indefinite layoff of 12,600 workers at plants across the country and sharp cutbacks in its planned production of 1980. Out of the big three, GM is the one least affected by the sales slump.

In order to deal with its profit loss, Ford indefinitely laid off 14,000 workers and at the same time placed several hundreds of white collar workers in the affected production plants on hourly work status. Last, but not least, Chrysler has laid-off 19,500 workers indefinitely.

Aside from these massive layoffs, some of the auto makers are planning sharp cutbacks in their production plans for 1980. These cutbacks also have serious implications for the workers. One of the plans of the auto makers is to discontinue the second shift in some plants. On the one hand, this will mean even more lay-offs; on the other hand, those workers remaining in the plants will probably have to make up for the production of the laidoff workers. This is particularly the case with Chrysler Corp., whose profit rate has decreased in the past six months at a much faster rate than GM and Ford. Chrysler has demanded that the Carter administration bail it out of its trouble with subsidies. In general, speedups and the increasing exploitation of the working class will be the order of the day as the "mild" recession spreads throughout the country.

This recession within a crisis will accelerate even more the deterioration in the standard of living of the working class and oppressed minorities. Racist and national chauvinist attacks on people have already begun to increase. We must develop a fightback against these attacks on our standard of living at all levels—in our communities, in our workplaces, in all aspects of our lives. •

**NATIONAL**

**U.S. Economy:**

**1979: A RECESSION WITHIN A CRISIS**

"... It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put on trial, each time more threateningly, the existence of the entire bourgeois society. ... In these crises there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of overproduction ... And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? ... by the conquest of new markets and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby the crises are prevented."

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels  
The Communist Manifesto



There is no debate about who is going to pay the consequences of the recession. Workers line up at an unemployment office in Detroit.

The U.S. economy is ill. Its doctors, the highly paid economists of the government and the giant corporations, have swapped

# Chile: Growth of the Mass Movement

This September 11th marks the 6th anniversary of the violent overthrow of the Popular Unity Government of Chile and its replacement by a bloodthirsty military junta. The class struggle during this year has evidenced a definite strengthening of the mass movement. Slowly, underground resistance committees have been built and the movement has become bolder in its open defiance of the dictatorship's restrictions. The presence of over 10,000 people in a May Day protest demonstration attests to the mass movement's tenacity and growth.

The following are excerpts from an article written by Non-Intervention in Chile (NICH) which details the current situation in Chile. As a conclusion, we have added a summary of a speech made by representatives of NICH during June of this year in which they introduce the concept of carrying out solidarity work with Latin America from a continental perspective.

This new dimension of the Chilean Resistance can best be understood by three inter-related elements. First, neither the Pinochet Dictatorship nor the opposition Christian Democratic Party (PDC) have been able to implement the proposed process of institutionalization of the regime. The central thrust of this institutionalization is to create a new repressive social order that is capable of defending the interests of the US and Chilean ruling classes in Chile. Presently, the repressive apparatus is overly dependent on one person, Augusto Pinochet. The US clearly understands the need to build a repressive machine that will function long after Pinochet is gone, a machine that would include the active support and participation of the whole Chilean ruling class. If the local ruling classes are continually fighting with each other, as is the present situation, they will not be able to concentrate upon repressing the working class and popular movement.

Second, in the past year and a half to two years, there has been a qualitative change in the state of the mass movement in Chile. The mass movement has regained a spark of life, a rebirth after the first four to five years of the Pinochet dictatorship. Today, the mass movement, particularly the trade union and student sectors, are assuming a visible role in the political life of the country. The project of institutionalization, in addition to the problems presented by the lack of unity within the ruling elite, must also face a reemerging mass movement that is more capable of defending itself, and



The people have adjusted their struggle to the repressive military conditions. Chilean families at a mass show photos of disappeared relatives.

showing a capacity to launch limited offensives against the Pinochet regime.

Third, while the parties of the left are not responsible for all the mass movement's resurgence, they have played a significant role in both creating the conditions for the resurgence and in actually initiating this forward movement.

## THE MASS MOVEMENT MAKES ITSELF FELT

The chronic inability of Pinochet and the PDC to resolve their differences has facilitated the growth of the mass movement. The growth of the mass movement is expressed not only in numbers; the forms of struggle are becoming more developed. Strikes, slow-downs, sabotage, direct actions, armed propaganda, self-defense teams, and street demonstrations are becoming more and more regular. The mass movement is demonstrating an ability to learn the forms of fighting that the conditions require.

The Chilean left, has, in part, been able to give leadership and direction to the working and poor people of Chile. Specifically, the parties, in their process of rebuilding their organizations and beginning the construction of the underground popular resistance movement, have built the springboard for the launching of the present mass movement. The close and strong relationship between the left and the mass movement must be recognized.

In fact to discuss the left as separate from

the mass movement does not accurately portray the real situation, where the left is found in the trade unions, the unemployed committees, the student movement, in the mass movement. It is the role of the party members to teach the people how to produce a clandestine paper, produce a bomb, give a speech, and to help the people study and learn about the process they are fighting in.

Still, the overall weakness of the left to give leadership must also be acknowledged. In particular, the inability to forge a popular front of the Resistance, the inability to overcome the divisions within the left, must be seen as the central failing of the left in the past six years. This failing has hurt the popular resistance movement and postponed the fall of the dictatorship.

## FUELING THE FIRE OF RESISTANCE

The last year has seen a marked development in the way the Resistance is making its presence felt. The people have adjusted their struggle to the repressive military conditions and their fears are slowly, but decidedly, being replaced by an energy and commitment to fight. This energy gives impetus to making their forms of struggle everyday a little more bold, a little more massive a little more strong. The Junta can no longer claim that the Resistance has been annihilated; the mass movement and the left have firmly established their presence in the Chilean political scene.

As Pinochet faces more and more public

protest against his regime, he has tried to establish a tighter control over the people's political participation. But the dictatorship's continued repressive actions and reprisals have not strengthened Pinochet's iron fist; they only give more fuel to the fire of the people's outcry. This loud and vocal demonstration of protest is heard not only in Chile—the Chilean people have risen up and their voices are heard around the world.

In its presentation on the need to develop a continental perspective for solidarity work with Latin America, NICH made the following points:

Latin America is of strategic importance to U.S. imperialism. Since the early part of last century, the U.S. has coveted the area for its economic and political value. Historically, Latin America has been known as the "backyard of U.S. imperialism." The popular and revolutionary movements of Latin America have a com-

mon objective, a common enemy in U.S. imperialism. A number of revolutionary organizations in the developing mass movement of that continent have recognized the need to begin to coordinate and cooperate in their work. This reality contrasts sharply with the situation within the solidarity movement in the United States. Our solidarity movement is made up of dozens of small groups, several weak national organizations and hundreds of individual activists. Thus, much of the solidarity work is needlessly duplicated; human and material resources are wasted. As a result solidarity work is characterized by spontaneity, responding mostly on the basis of emergencies, and lacking in long-term planning.

The development of a continental perspective would not mean the liquidation of tasks based on the needs of an individual country, nor the disappearance of organizational forms that have already been created

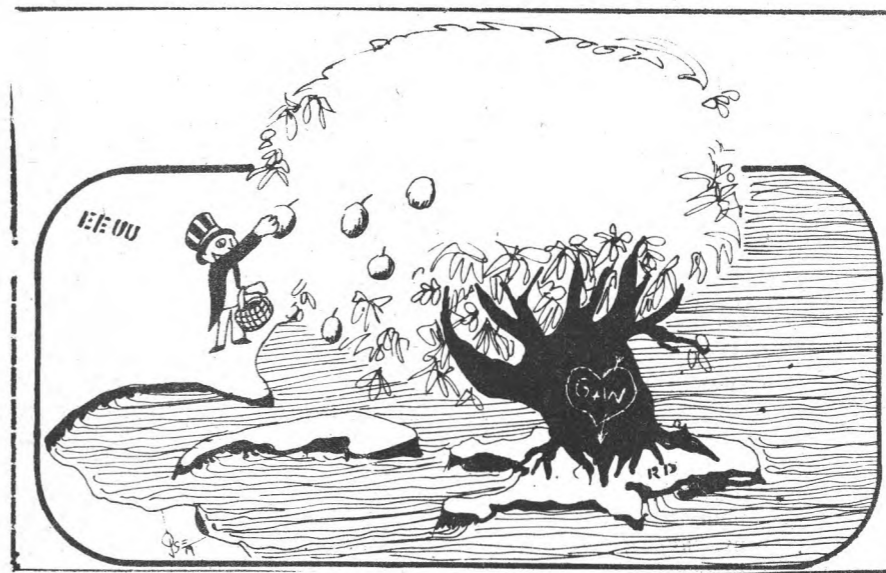
in the solidarity movement. On the contrary, the accumulation of resources and the development of a common strategy would strengthen the work being developed by the different existing organizations. In order for this solidarity work to be effective it would have to, in the long run, be based in the communities of the working class and the minorities. This would mean a closer coordination and cooperation between solidarity and revolutionary organizations in this country.

NICH presents their concept of continentalization of solidarity work as a basis upon which to begin discussion to those forces which make up the solidarity movement. It will be this process of discussion and debate which will produce the concrete forms of implementing the continentalization of solidarity work with Latin America. ●

For more information, contact NICH, 451 W. 19th St., NYC (212) 989-5695.

Dominican Republic:

# A Year of P.R.D. Government



"The Dominican economy is tightly controlled by a few U.S. multinationals, including Gulf & Western."

In the spring of 1978, democratic elections were held in the Dominican Republic, the first since the constitutionally-elected government of Juan Bosch in 1962. The *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD)* won despite last-minute interference by the military. During this period *Obreros en Marcha* ran a series of articles on the Dominican Republic, analyzing the development of the revolutionary process in that country and the domination of U.S. imperialism (vol. 3, No. 4, 5, 6). The last article focussed in particular on the historical development of the PRD, its ties to U.S. interests and the implications of its election to

power.

Today, one year after its election, the PRD has brought little change to the Dominican Republic and to the lives of the Dominican people. In the following article, we begin to analyze the present situation in the Dominican Republic.

From 1966 to 1978, the Dominican people lived under the reign of terror of the Balaguer dictatorship. Joaquin Balaguer, henchman of the old dictator Trujillo, was placed in power by the U.S. military might. The tidal wave of repression which he unleashed on the Dominican people was

directed against the popular movement that had developed in the 1965 rebellion. This rebellion, initiated by several army officers, attempted to reinstate the democratically-elected government which had been deposed by a military junta. Because it won immediate mass support, the rebellion almost succeeded. It took the landing of several thousand U.S. marines and various days of fierce street fighting to suppress the mass revolt. With millions of U.S. dollars in technical aid and many advisors bolstering his regime, Balaguer was left the task of smashing that popular movement so that it could not rise again with the consciousness and organization that it had forged during the scorching days of '65 and strike against the interests of U.S. imperialism.

Balaguer applied himself well to this task. Thousands were killed by the army and police. Right-wing terrorist gangs, such as *La Banda*, were given complete freedom to kidnap, torture and kill. All forms of opposition were quickly crushed. Thousands were forced off their jobs. More than 300,000 people fled the country. Besides the violence of repression, people suffered the violence of hunger and extreme poverty. Most of the population lived in sub-human houses, made out of cardboard or thin wood slats. Only 15% of all dwellings had running water. Illiteracy reached 40%. In the countryside, 45% of the working force was unemployed; 25% in the cities.

## OPPOSITION TO BALAGUER

The prime target of Balaguer's repression was the PRD. This bourgeois-led Social Democratic party had its greatest following

among the country's working and popular masses. Despite this potentially mass base, the leadership of this party chose to respond to Balaguer's repression through the orchestration of international campaigns to pressure the Dominican government. Even with this reformist strategy, Western European Social Democratic parties and the Democratic party of the U.S. sought reassurances from the PRD leadership because of the party's image of radicalism. Thus began the party's evolution to the right. In 1973, the more radical elements were forced to quit the party. With the liberals gone, the conservatives consolidated their power at the National Party Convention of 1974. The party's program was divested of its most radical tenets such as nationalization of foreign holdings. Antonio Guzmán, a wealthy landowner, was chosen as the presidential candidate in the coming elections in 1978 and Majulta, a businessman with close ties to U.S. multinationals, was chosen as the vice-presidential candidate.

As the elections approached, it was evident that the PRD had played its cards correctly. Balaguer had eased his repressive measures but had been unable to patch up the country's tottering economy. The PRD's campaign promised the masses an agrarian reform, respect for human rights, amnesty for political prisoners, freedom of speech, legalization of left parties and solutions for the country's economic problems. When the votes were counted, it was obvious that the PRD had won the elections. As the final dictatorial act, Balaguer seized the ballot boxes. But the PRD negotiated with him, giving his party a plurality of seats in the congress. No sacrifice was too big for the seat of power.

### **THE PRD GOVERNMENT: LESS REPRESSION BUT THE SAME MISERY**

The PRD has been in power for a year and it has fallen short of many of its campaign promises. Most of the political prisoners have been freed and the left parties have been legalized. However, there are still several political exiles who cannot return to the country. Freedom of speech has not been totally granted. This was evidenced most glaringly when the police were ordered to suppress a demonstration called in front of the U.S. embassy to commemorate the 1965 rebellion.

No steps have been taken to carry out the promised agrarian reform. Because of deterioration of the living standard, strikes have been widespread in all sectors of the economy—sugar, mines, electrical plants and education. Government workers have been denied the right to organize. When the teachers' union did not yield to governmental pressure to end a strike, President Guzmán had the leader arrested. PRD influence in the unions and the factories is used to prevent the development of rank and file groups. Patronage is widespread with the purpose of undermining unions and other mass organizations. The PRD's duplicity of appealing to the masses while implementing policies that benefit the country's wealthy classes and U.S. multinational corporations is best demonstrated by its actions around the minimum wage. A law which would increase salaries of all those who make less than \$300 a month is now in the Senate, yet there is a government-imposed two year freeze on all salaries.

The Dominican economy is tightly controlled by a few U.S. multinationals. Foreign corporations are exempt from taxes

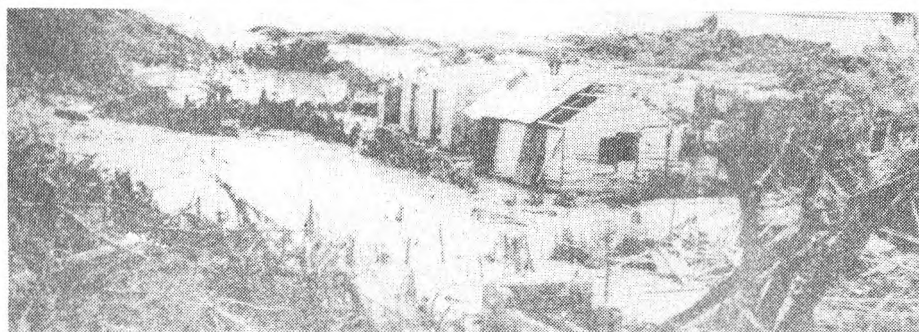
and have at their disposal a cheap labor force. The share of the exploited wealth that stays in the country is minimal. For example ALCOA gives the government 25¢ for every ton of bauxite it takes out of the country. In neighboring Jamaica ALCOA pays the government \$16 per ton. Gulf and Western owns 3% of the richest land in the country. 48% of all bank deposits are in foreign controlled banks—Chase Manhattan, Citibank and the Royal Canadian bank.

After one year in power the PRD has done much to facilitate the pillage of the nation's wealth. To pay the accumulating foreign debt, the PRD government sought and obtained a loan for 185 million dollars at 10½% from an international consortium of 24 banks. The most devastating part of this agreement was that the government sacrificed its national sovereignty. Under the terms of the loan any of the banks can sue the Dominican Republic in their own country if they are not pleased with the way the Dominican Republic is meeting the terms. The colonial nature of this pact is such that even Balaguer, the old imperialist vassal, has publicly condemned it. But the PRD continues its course. This year, 23 million dollars are due in interest payments alone. At this rate the foreign debt will be \$2 billion within three years. The present debt will be doubled and the PRD government would accomplish in four years what it took the Balaguer government 12 years. For U.S. multinationals and banks the PRD has been a perfect ally. It has undercut popular discontent while allowing for an increase in profits.

### **THE MASSES RESPOND**

The mass movement is recovering from Balaguer's twelve year reign of terror and is moving away from the PRD. Strikes and militant demonstrations are becoming more frequent. The most recent example is the recent taxi-drivers strike. Angry over the rise of gasoline prices to \$1.85 a gallon, the drivers called a strike and led massive demonstrations during several days. The PRD showed its true face by calling out the army. Four people were killed and the strike was suppressed.

The heavily-fragmented Dominican left is also recovering from the 12 years of repression. It is beginning to use the restricted legal status by integrating into the unions, holding public forums and in general increasing its propaganda and agitation among the masses. As the contradiction between the government's populist rhetoric and its anti-popular acts grow, the importance of the integration of the Marxist-Leninist forces into the masses will also grow. It will be the task of these forces to shape and direct the growing discontent so that the Dominican peasants and workers can rekindle the revolutionary flame which they lit in the days of '65.



We urge all our readers and friends to contribute to the people of the Dominican Republic which is presently in a state of emergency due to damages created by hurricane David. Please send any money, food, clothing and medicines to:

**Asociación Médica Dominicana  
(Release Fund)  
Dominican Man Power Agency  
250 W. 90th St., New York, N.Y. 10024**