

Up-Date



THE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT MUST EMERGE

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this UPDATE is to bring to the attention of the Puerto Rico Solidarity Committee and the North American fraternal community some of the concerns and expressions current in the Puerto Rican liberation organizations and study groups.

As such, this UPDATE is not meant to be polemical, but merely informative. However, we have not hesitated to step on toes in bringing this information to you.

May you have a successful weekend of struggle and unity...

The UPDATE collective

The emergence of Marxist-Leninist ideology as the dominant discipline within the Puerto Rican independence movement in the decade of the 60's had both positive and negative results in the process of the development of our struggle.

On the one hand, it allowed for development of international consciousness within the movement and its linkage to worldwide anti-imperialist struggle (thus broadening the international support for Puerto Rican independence begun by the Nationalist Party under the leadership of our great teacher and martyr Pedro Albizu Campos); and on the other hand, it led to the incorrect application of Marxism-Leninism as manifested in the predominance of syndicalist, burocratic, sectarian, elitist, and legalistic tendencies (with

one or another of these predominating within the movement in the course of the last ten years of struggle.

On the positive side; it was the election of Don Pedro Albizu Campos to the presidency of the Nationalist Party in 1927 which allowed the introduction of an internationalist position into the movement.

Under the leadership of Don Pedro Albizu Campos, the Nationalist Party began the methodical development of support organisms throughout Latin America and the Caribbean which resulted in the development of a strong consciousness in the continent about the necessity to support our struggle, and effectively offset North-American propaganda. The effects of that work can be seen today in the inability of even the most reactionary governments in Latin America to openly support the annexation of our country by the U.S. imperialists.

With the emergence of the Pro Independence Movement (MPI) in 1959-1960, and the support of the newly emerged Cuban revolutionary government, the movement in Puerto Rico became further aware of the need to effectively expand international support. As the contacts developed worldwide through the visits by delegations of independence cadres to such countries as the Soviet Union, China, Viet Nam, Eastern Europe, and Cuba, the internationalist principles of socialism began to find its

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own voices within Puerto Rico and significantly contributed to the development of serious study of Marxism-Leninism. The mid-sixties in Puerto Rico was a veritable example of Mao's dictum: "Let one hundred flowers bloom, let one hundred schools of thought contend." It was for us a Renaissance period of political thought in which we tried to put together the various pieces of the puzzle of our historical struggle for national liberation in the light of scientific socialism.

It was possible, during the mid-sixties to juggle the uncompromising spirit of Albizuism and its inherent principle of armed struggle at each and every stage of our development, with the concrete imperative that we organize the masses and found the workers vanguard to be expressed in the creation of a Marxist-Leninist party.

It was precisely this enriching experience that led to the broad support within the independence movement for the utilization of armed struggle, while at the same time developing a base among the advanced sectors of the working class, aimed at achieving the coherent leadership of a mass movement.

But already present within the movement were class contradictions, as were the modes of work and the sectarian emphasis on the predominance of one or another tendency.

Instead of the development of the contention of the "one hundred schools of thought" we became immersed in ideological fratricide, manifested in the consolidation of groups built around the most verbally coherent members of the petty bourgeoisie.

As each organization, each group, began the maneuver for power within the movement, the ideological struggle of the mid sixties gave way to the personalist and subjective attacks of the 1970's.

Attacks which were at once open and clandestine and sought to eliminate opposition to this or that tendency. At the open level of the attacks, personalism was often disguised as ideological arguments.

Thus under the guise of calling for a united front between the PSP and the Independence Party (PIP), Claridad would print calls for unity which contained personal attacks on the PIP leader Ruben

Berrios.

The PIP retaliated by refusing to participate in any demonstration or meeting in which the PSP played a role, and ultimately led to the PSP going to the polls in order to achieve its own electoral participation. A development, which taken only in the perspective of what may have been desirable within a parliamentary strategy, resulted in the mutual elimination of the voices the two parties had in the colonial legislature and the reaffirmation by the colonialists that the entire Puerto Rican people had expressed themselves, and once more overwhelmingly rejected independence (the main position of U.S. imperialism for international consumption).

Concerning organizations to the left of the PSP, the attacks were mutually subjective, between the PSP and these groups, with the PIP assuming a position that these left organizations were not worthy of its attention.

If the left attacks centered on the petty bourgeois character of PSP Secretary General Juan Mari Bras and reaction to positions the PSP assumed concerning party work; the PSP developed a campaign, on the other hand, of clandestine accusations of the leadership of these groups and organizations which ranged from charges of "madmen," and "covert-CIA agents," to charges that one of these leaders was a virtual dictator, almost senile, or otherwise incompetent.

The sectarianism within the movement led to the expending of energies and time in the elimination of the political influence of one or another group, or individual.

Throughout this process, both the factors of its ability to develop international links, recruit the best political activists from the Federation of University Students (FUPI), and its ability to develop a machinery to finance its work, led to the predominance of the PSP in the left.

But because the leadership confused its successes with the belief that it held the only correct line on the development of the mass struggle and the eventual development of the armed struggle, certain tendencies of a petty bourgeois character were loosened upon the movement.

First, with the transformation of the
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MPI into the PSP, a strong legalistic tendency emerged, based on a program for a working class growth of the party and suppression of armed struggle based on the temporary defeat of the guerrilla forces in Latin America.

The PSP thus developed a line which was to bring it into active suppressive opposition with the development of armed struggle in practice, despite its support for it in theory.

Secondly, a bureaucratic tendency set in following the split within the party which saw many of its best young cadres leave. This tendency toward bureaucratic organization originally was aimed at preventing any further splits, organizing the party work, and developing the cadres necessary to the growth of the organization.

But in fact, the program itself led to the creation of a superstructure which, even in its incipient stage, already practiced bureau control to the degree that one section often did not know what the other section was doing.

With the emergence of a combative working class struggle, the PSP fell into a pronounced syndicalist position which led it to negate the emergence of independent armed struggle in an aggressive, and often subjective and vicious manner.

And despite claims to internal democratic centralist practices, in effect the superstructure of the party became manipulative of both the Central Committee and the base of the party, thus stifling ideological struggle and leaving the party unable to give effective direction to methods of work once initiated or acting constructively and unequivocally when presented by such developments as the surprise emergence of an armed group in the U.S. (FALN).

But it was to the left of the PSP where sectarianism was most pronounced, and where opportunism reared its head most dangerously.

If it is true that there is much to be criticized in the PSP, the tendency to its left has been the proliferation of groups basking under the sunlight of Mao-Tse-Tung's great thought. Nor can responsibility be laid on the great architect of modern China.

The emergence of these groups find

cause, correctly, on the development of the bureaucratic chauvinism of the PSP leadership and their intransigence on not allowing ideological debate within organization.

As a result, several of the most brilliant minds left the PSP. Some became inactive others formed small groups whose influence often does not extend beyond small towns in Puerto Rico, or beyond a small group within the university or the particular neighborhood in which their offices are located.

And yet, very often it has been from within these groups that the most interesting positions and clearest definitions for struggle have been launched, Only to be dismissed by the main independence groups as so much "left infantilism."

Nor has the position on armed struggle as part of the mass organization process been given a proper airing.

Perhaps the most neglected of the Marxist theorists who favor armed struggle at this stage is Juan Antonio Corretjer. A former vice-president of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico under Pedro Albizu Campos, Corretjer spent five years at Atlanta, Georgia Prison, with Don Pedro. It was during this period that he began his lifelong study of Marxism Leninism. Upon his return to Puerto Rico he founded the Socialist League, and has continued to advance the Albizuist concept of "we are at war" within the framework of a socialist analysis of struggle. His thesis, "The Problems of Popular Warfare in Puerto Rico," is a must for every serious student of the Puerto Rican liberation struggle.

Corretjer was one of the architects of the 1976 Anti-electoral Front which posed the only serious opposition to PSP opportunism and legalism prior to the quadrennial electoral farce in the colony. The Socialist League was joined in the Front by the Communist Party of Puerto Rico and the Popular Socialist Movement (MSP). Together, they had a profound effect on the debate around the electoral question and the post electoral re-examination of the struggle. The result of the post-electoral debate was the emergence of an

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Anti Imperialist Front (FRAI).

This development is important, because while other independence organizations have spoken of the unity of forces, only the Socialist League, the Communist Party of Puerto Rico and the Popular Socialist Movement (MSP) have carried this principle into practice.

The contradictions between the sectarianism inherent in the work of the two major pro-independence forces in Puerto Rico (PSP/PIP) and the unitary practices of the Anti-Imperialist Front (FRAI) requires that we re-evaluate the content of the Puerto Rican liberation movement at present.

We must review incorrect methods of work: the predominance of syndicalist positions which has led to giantism (the belief that 51 per cent of the working class in Puerto Rico must be organized before revolutionary armed struggle can succeed); the bureaucratization of party work which divorces the leadership from the base; the sectarianism brought about by suggesting that only one organization is presently the vanguard of our national liberation struggle; the elitist practices that prevent the development of unitary work; and the overdependence on legalistic work which brings some sectors in the movement to support armed struggle in theory and oppose armed struggle in practice, all of which are stumbling blocks to the development of the National Liberation Front.

We must insist that the leaders, cadres and sympathizers of all the organizations within the independence movement need to abandon petty bourgeois practices and open the entire movement to ideological debate.

Equally, a commission to study a joint strategy for national liberation must be named from among all independence sectors to study both the points of unity and the differences which exist at the present moment, and make serious recommendations on the correct strategy which would allow a broad united front to come into existence. This united front should be flexible enough to embrace all tactical possibilities, from parliamentarism to armed struggle.

Let us once and for all learn the lesson of Viet Nam, Angola, Cuba and those countries which have effectively answered Lenin's question: What Is To Be Done?

and have solved the complex problem of the means to the SEIZURE OF POWER.

Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom..
..Let One Hundred Schools of Thought Contend!!!

NEW YORK COMMUNITY GROUPS DEMAND RELEASE OF THE 5

The United Front of Puerto Rican organizations of Brooklyn (UNPOB), a coalition of 52 community organizations, has approved a resolution demanding the release of the FIVE PUERTO RICAN NATIONALIST PRISONERS before July, 1977.

The UNPOB also approved resolutions in support of the Dellums Resolution now before the U.S. Congress on self-determination for Puerto Ricans, and another calling for a halt to the Grand Jury system, which UNPOB described as a tool of the F.B.I. and Justice Department for the repression of the Puerto Rican liberation movement and their allies.

NEW COLONIAL POLICE CHIEF IN TROUBLE

Puerto Rico colonialist Chief of Police Luis Maldonado Trinidad, a rightist just named to the post by reactionary Governor Carlos Romero Barcelo, is under investigation for covering-up reports on an attempted frame-up of an independence supporter in 1968.

According to press reports, a bomb was manufactured at Police Headquarters early in 1968 and then was placed inside the home of an independence activist.

A short time later, police raided the place and claimed to have found the bomb. A police technician, however, said he had seen the device earlier at Police H.Q.

The technician reported the facts to police officials, and the new police chief, Maldonado Trinidad, suppressed the report. No charges against the independentist activist were ever filed.
