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Puerto Rico Informa

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WOMEN IN THE
REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Part 2

THE CHILDREN

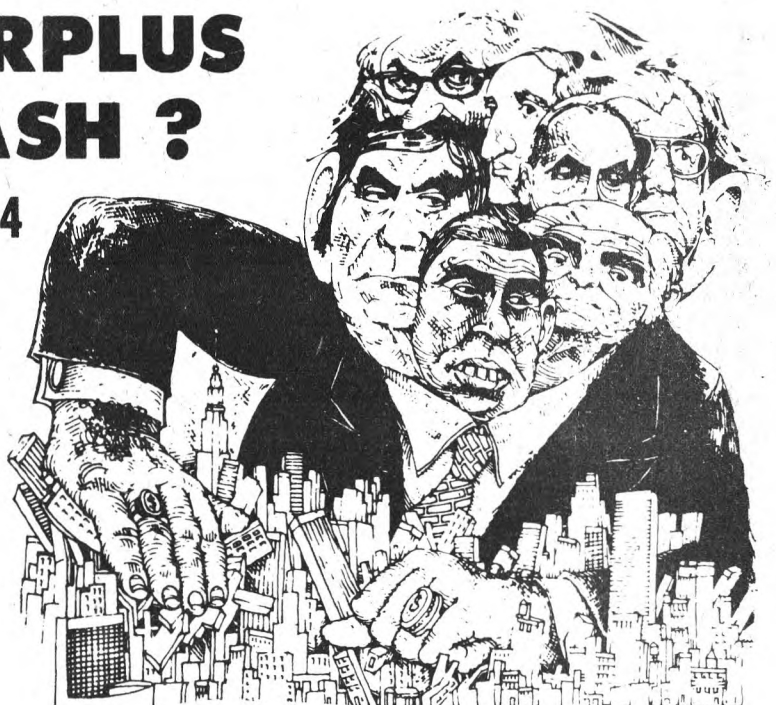
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EDITORIAL

ON REVOLUTIONARY MORALS

In the last edition of OEM we published the first part of an article developed by our Women's Commission which was entitled "Women in the Revolutionary Process". In this edition we print the last segment of that two-part article.

Both segments of the article attempt to bring fundamental aspects of the Women's Question beyond the realm of abstraction, which has characterized its discussion in a number of "leftist" publications, while at the same time the article addresses itself to the real problems that arise when the revolutionary movement and its organizations objectively disregard vital questions on the participation and role of women in the struggle. Touching on various aspects, the article focuses on two manifestations of the oppressive reality confronted by women, namely sexual oppression and the view that children are "only the responsibility of women". Both these aspects reveal and manifest the domination of the ruling class ideology in the society at large and most significantly, its presence and influence among the ranks of the revolutionary movement. Therefore, in order to deal with the Women's Question in all its ramifications and to attack the roots of women's oppression in bourgeois society, the article points to the need of developing a new morality among our ranks, internalizing the theoretical premises and translating these into social practice in our daily experiences among the people.

The history of successful revolutionary movements has shown that the capability of giving real leadership to a process for social transformation is determined by the extent to which women are active participants within the process, in our case the incorporation of working class women is of particular importance. This axiom is generally accepted and, as a theoretical premise, understood by most revolutionary organizations. Yet all too often, as with other fundamental questions confronting the revolutionary movement, the theoretical premises are not translated into social practice, either in the internal organizational relations or those with the masses. Both of these omissions have serious consequences. On the one hand, many seriously committed women, and men, have bitterly expressed that to a certain extent the Women's Question has become another "burning question", topic of abstract debate—particularly around March 8th (International Working Women's Day)—or has been totally disregarded by organizations which have included the point in their political program as "one of mere formality". On the other hand, divorced from the reality confronting the masses, and at times not truly internalizing the tasks determined by the theoretical premises (the recruitment of women, their political and ideological development, their selection and participation in leadership roles, etc), some sectors of the revolutionary movement disregard the fact that if the process for social transformation in capitalist society is to lead the working class to the seizure of political power, it is fundamental that the organizations that proclaim the task of leading the class struggle establish their political influence and prestige among the workers and the people in general. This will not be achieved merely with a "correct political program" nor by having "the

most correct political position" but with the implementation of a scientifically guided, principled and consistent, social practice. Within this context, the leaders of the class—the revolutionary cadre—must internalize that a fundamental aspect of our formation is the development of a completely new set of values in all level of our lives: a new morality.

The development of a new morality among our ranks is an important tool and is as valuable to the victory of the working class and the oppressed, as the ideological, economic and political struggles; it is an integral part of these, and at the same time this new morality could only be developed within the struggle itself. This dialectical process determines that we cannot wait until we live in a "socialist society" in order to develop the "new man and new woman"; that process, which develops itself to the fullest under socialism nevertheless has its roots in these moments of struggles, in moments of transitions.

The political and moral formation of cadres and militants has been an essential component in all truly revolutionary organizations. Shining examples of this have been the Workers Party of Vietnam whose moral integrity, as manifested by its fighters in their relations to the masses, was a confounding characteristic to the imperialist forces, as well as providing many lessons for revolutionaries the world over.

Recently, a well known leader of the independence movement in Puerto Rico expressed in a newspaper article that Puerto Rican women were oppressed mostly as a result of their consent, and that in his view this was the quid of the problem. This unexplained half-truth, which among things serves to place the burden of oppression on the victim (as well as covering the writer's own immorality) has seriously negative consequences to the struggles of the working class and the oppressed, since if we were to follow this logical form of thinking "consent" becomes the principal aspect in the relationship between the exploiter and the exploited. The absurd remark by this "leader" nevertheless points out the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie within revolutionary organizations, as well as, negative aspects of a cultural character.

In this respect, we must be constantly on the lookout for these manifestations, never losing sight in our overall struggle against oppression of the particular form of oppression endured by women. Since our founding assembly two years ago, an integral part of our organizational tasks has been our work among women and the development of their leadership potential. To a certain extent, and in accordance with our own development, we have been relatively successful in these tasks as demonstrated by our composition at all levels of the organization. Nevertheless this relative success cannot be equated with total consciousness, important remnants of insensitivity and unconsciousness about the real oppression of women still exist within us. In particular, we have failed to broaden our struggle against private property, not only in its economic manifestations, but in the realms of the family. This struggle must be waged within our ranks, if we are to create a complete human being and a new morality.

WOMEN PART 2

THE CHILDREN, AND WOMEN AS CADRE

In the previous edition, the article "Women in the Revolutionary Process" discussed the fact that the incorporation of women in the revolutionary process is fundamental for the victory of the working class in its struggle against the exploitative capitalist system. Although no one denies the importance of this, the left in this country and in Puerto Rico has ignored or has been relatively incapable of incorporating women and their revolutionary potential into our ranks. In general the left has been characterized by its not recognizing the particular conditions of women and especially those which isolate them from active participation within the movement. In this context we discussed some of these conditions: relations between men and women and the question of morals. In this segment we will proceed to discuss other aspects of the particular conditions of women: children and maternity. Moreover, we present aspects of women as revolutionary cadre.

The Children

The attitude assumed by militants and organizations toward children has been varied and marked by incorrect conceptions. One of these is found among those who define children as limitations on their political involvement. This in itself is a variation of the idea which is predominant among many petty bourgeois couples who decide to not have children in order to satisfy their materialistic desires and pleasures. In examining this attitude more closely, we find the negation of procreation as part of human development. This is not to deny the need and importance of deciding the best time to have a child, taking into consideration one's political tasks during a given period of time. This decision making process is facilitated by the development of science providing means for birth control. The error lies in defining our children as **absolute limitations** on the revolutionary process. These limitations develop only among those who, in assuming individualistic positions, have children and then disregard their other tasks. After having children these comrades are of the opinion that their responsibilities as father/mother are above their other responsibilities. Instead of looking at and utilizing collective ways to share and alleviate the parental responsibilities they withdraw into an individualistic shell making the children their own possession, their private property—these are "our" children and they should be with "their" parents, as it is supposed to be. The question is, why is it supposed to be this way?

Being a good father or mother does not contradict the revolutionary formation of the individual. On the contrary, it should compliment it. In order to develop this formation to its fullest, we must not only struggle against private property in the production process but also in the carried over view of children as private property. In this sense the organization is an essential part of this formative process, not only because it raises consciousness around child rearing not being solely a "woman's" task but more important it must provide the basis for viewing this process as a collective responsibility. We should all be concerned with providing the love, guidance and support that each child needs particularly when one or both



parents are assigned tasks away from home. At the same time this presupposes the moral integrity of all the members of the organization as we discussed previously.

On the other hand there are those who want to have children for the sake of them "taking over" their revolutionary tasks later on. This is an extension of the feudal thought—have children to continue the clan—where tasks are imposed upon the children without the proper/adequate consciousness raising or where tasks that the parents themselves would not do is arbitrarily assigned to the children. And thus they are assured that the revolution will be "made" by their children.

There are also those who have children without assuming the political/personal responsibility that accompanies such a decision. They are those who never have time for their children or who do not explain the circumstances to them in such a way that the children can understand. Very often these children grow up resenting and even hating the "movement" that, through their perception, has totally robbed them of their parents' attention and affection.

Intimately related to the above is the attitude that defines children as the woman's responsibility. Because they are not affected directly, men do not participate in child rearing, or people who do not have children take no conscious initiative or responsibility regarding the children. Traditionally this responsibility has fallen on the women's shoulders. In general one of the major consequences of this is the isolation of the woman within the home and her political inactivity. This naturally extends to the isolation and inactivity of the children as well.

It is in response to these incorrect practices and attitudes that interfere with the development of the revolution and/or the new human being, that alternatives and solutions which would channel rather than alienate the

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CITY CRISIS

SURPLUS CASH = BURIED MONEY

Last month, the people of New York City were again subject to banner headlines crying "city default" unless Beame and his cronies were able to come up with nearly \$1 billion to pay off short-term loans that had fallen due. In a late-hour plan, the city government came up with \$983 million to pay off this obligation and thus resolve its most recent debt crisis. This latest episode resulted from a ruling by the State Court of Appeals last fall which declared that the State Legislature had acted unconstitutionally in trying to prevent the holders of one-year notes (mostly insurance companies and small banks) from demanding prompt payment. Since the current budget was already in deficit, the city claimed it would not be able to pay the debt from revenues and would have to resort to borrowing. The city turned to the commercial banks (Citibanks, Chase, Bankers Trust, etc.), but their terms called for prolonged financial control of the city's life even beyond the expiration date of the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB). The city unions, which oppose the EFCB because of its power to review and veto city contracts, rejected these terms; in an election year, the acceptance of such terms would have constituted a political liability. So to escape default, surplus cash and other financial assets were "magically" discovered.

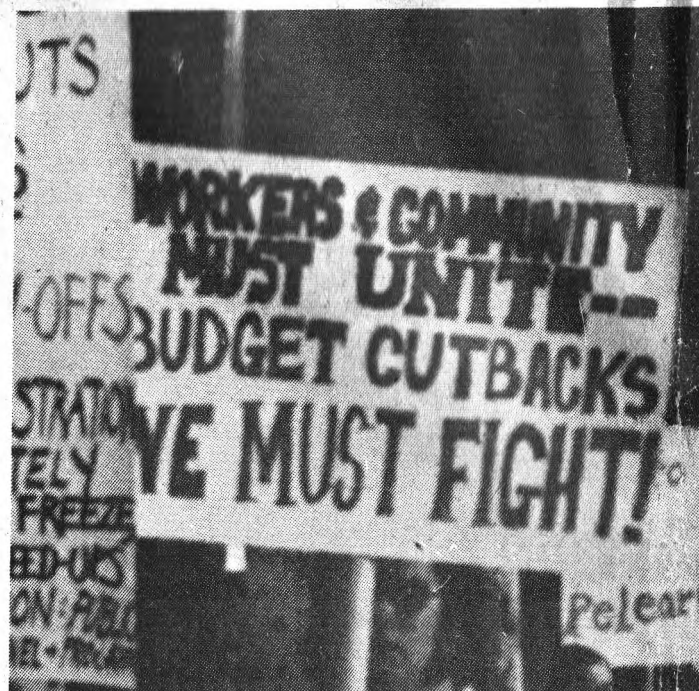
The plan devised by the city to pay off this particular debt includes \$626 million in "surplus city cash" as well as \$410 million from the accelerated sale of mortgages on city-owned Mitchell-Lama housing projects, a New Municipal Assistance Corporation bond issue and the city unions' agreement to forego payment on MAC bonds which they already held. Also, the plan would set up a committee of bankers, city union representatives and others to determine the "proper" form of an outside monitor for the city's finances. The bankers have stated that such a monitor will be necessary to enable the city to re-enter the borrowing market which is, of course, ruled by the bankers themselves.

The EFCB immediately and unanimously approved the city's plan and the U.S. Treasury advanced \$255 million for immediate use.

What is the significance of this latest plan? What does it demonstrate about the role of the city government throughout the course of the city crisis? What does it mean for the working people of New York City?

This plan exposes the myth that there is no money. The "surplus cash" did not drop from the sky. It had been systematically and secretly protected to insure funds with which the bankers would be paid. It came from the "savings" obtained by cutting essential services. The money was set aside at the expense of the people's needs, for the benefit of the investors and bankers who claim 20% of the city budget, to guarantee payment to their debt service. Specifically, it came from undermining public education, from the destruction of the century-old free city university, from the loss of transportation, housing and health services, from the closing of clinics, libraries and daycare centers, from the decimation of social services.

The people affected by these cuts are the working people of New York City and their families. They are the city's employees; other union workers (none of whose unions have taken up the issue of cuts in services); nonunionized workers and the masses of unemployed. The harshest impact of both the loss of city jobs and the loss in city services has been on the people in the Black and Puerto Rican ghettos. Their gains in government employment and in government services, won through



more than a decade of struggle, have been almost altogether eliminated, especially in the sphere of public and higher education.

Plan Shows Bankruptcy of Politicians and Union Leaders

The city's plan again shows that our elected officials feel only one responsibility—their responsibility to protect capital investments at all costs, that is, all the costs the people will bear. It also exposes the bankruptcy of leaders of organized labor who in "good times" prospered by their acceptance of the principles of business unionism and learned to behave like representatives of corporations. Of course, the city workers' union leaders did protest against the firing of their members, against the wage freeze, against suspension of the terms of written contracts. But they ended up by voluntarily accepting all the terms imposed by the EFCB and agreeing to use the workers' pension funds to help the city avoid default to the bankers. That is, the city unions voluntarily served the program designed to avoid default to the bankers and investors by defaulting on essential and socially beneficial services. In the process, their fruitless protests have concealed both the fact that the real issues at stake were the preservation of essential services for the people, and the maneuvering of the banks and the city government. The municipal labor leaders were maneuvered into committing the city workers' pension funds, not to save jobs or services, but to bail out the biggest banks and to impose open banker control on the city, a control now supported by the authority of both state and federal governments.

Despite the proclamation that the latest debt crisis is behind us, the crisis of the ordinary people who must live and work in New York is not. Indeed, more devastating cuts in essential services are likely to be imposed for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1978 to make possible an additional budget cut of some \$900 odd million. In this

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Puerto Rico Informa

DIALOGUE WITH M.S.P.

As reflected in the following article, the column Puerto Rico Informa, by comrade JSM, originates on this occasion in New York.

Recently, during a ten day period (March 24th-April 3rd) leading members of our fraternal organization in Puerto Rico, The Popular Socialist Movement (M.S.P.) and the Union of Socialist Youth (U.J.S.), visited the United States. The purpose of their visit was to discuss with our leadership questions of importance for the liberation movement and to interchange perspectives on present political situation in Puerto Rico and the United States. In addition, the Comrades also participated in a series of meetings and activities in the Northeastern part of the country in conjunction with El Comité-M.I.N.P. and other progressive sectors in this country. O.E.M., in view of the opportunity afforded us by the visit of the Comrades from M.S.P. and the U.J.S., made the following interview. In this interview the Comrades expound upon aspects of their political conception in relation to Latin America, the question of unity in Puerto Rico, the Cuban Revolution, the recent events at the U.P.R., the left in the U.S., and in particular regarding the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee (P.R.S.C.). These discussions will be published in two parts, in this and the following issue of O.E.M.—Ed.

O.E.M.- Companeros, why does the MSP pose that the struggle of Puerto Rico must be placed within the context of the continental struggle in Latin America?

MSP-UJS- "As it is clearly expressed in our General Declaration, the strategic conception of the MSP is placed within the context of the international revolutionary struggle. This is so because of the very character of our struggle. That is to say, that our objective is to guide the working class toward the seizure of political power in order to bring about socialism in Puerto Rico, in this respect we are guided by the Principles of Proletarian Internationalism which are fundamental pillars of socialist ideology. The principles of Proletarian Internationalism at present find their expressions in the support of the socialist countries, on the one hand, and on the other, stemming from the perspective of the revolutionary war being waged by the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America against imperialism. However to leave the question here is to fall prey to the same error we have criticized on other occasions: not to transcend the theoretical plane of principle and to remain at the level of merely expressing solidarity. In this context then, we will elaborate on the response to your question more concretely as regards what is, in essence, our conception of continental strategy.

When we say that our struggle forms an integral part of the continental strategy we do so taking into consideration the following aspects. First, the phenomenon of imperialism, second, the revolutionary experiences at the international level and third, the characteristics of the revolutionary process in the countries which form part of Latin America.

As you well know, present day imperialism has become a system of economic exploitation, political oppression and

military aggression that by its very nature does not recognize any boundaries and affects hundreds of millions of workers and peasants the world over. From India to the most southern part of Chile and obviously including Puerto Rico, imperialism has a thousand and one ways for making its presence felt. Where there is cheap labor, raw materials, markets for the sale of its products, favorable conditions for the establishment of military bases and the investment of capital, there is where you will find present the interests of imperialism. From this it follows that the peoples who struggle for their national independence and/or socialism must necessarily confront the interests of imperialism. Cuba, Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, etc. are living examples of what we are posing here. In the particular case of Latin America the presence of imperialism is clearer still.

Following the famous thesis of "Europe for the Europeans and America for the Americans" (North Americans, of course) to date, the imperialist bourgeoisie of the United States has been able to maintain our respective countries as isolated provinces in order to be able to pillage and exploit them, thus bringing to light who essentially is our principal common enemy. In our case the blockade which exists between Puerto Rico and Latin America is enormous, but at the same time, we are conscious of the fact that imperialist policies toward Latin America will fail, faced with the revolutionary struggle that is being waged in our countries.

Now then, taking as a point of departure what has been expressed thus far about the phenomenon of imperialism, we could conclude that the countries in Latin America have before them the same common enemy: Yanqui imperialism and that against it we must direct our strength of arms because, on the other hand, the so-called national bourgeoisies in Latin America have lost, or to put it more clearly, they no longer have any revolutionary potential. As I mentioned earlier, the second aspect that contributes toward the definition of our conception of strategy on a continental scale is the revolutionary experiences internationally. These have demonstrated to us that the peoples who struggle for independence and aid. The history of the Cuban Revolution might well have been something else, if at the most crucial moment, have been something else, if at the most crucial moment, following the victory of the July 26th Movement, they could not have counted with the support of the socialist countries. The enormous bombardments of Hanoi in 1972 by the Yanqui armed forces would not have been as intense if, paraphrasing Che, the United States would have had to face "two, three, many Vietnams." We need not even look too far. The revolutionary experiences and guerrilla actions in Latin America have shown us that each country cannot struggle alone against imperialism. That against imperialist strategy, we the peoples of Latin America must confront it with the most resolute unity through the waging of revolutionary war. From this perspective, is that we view the revolutionary struggle in Puerto Rico as an integral part of the struggle being waged by the peoples of Latin America. In this way and to the extent that it is posed in the program of the Revolutionary Coordinating Council a synthesis we are

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DIALOGUE WITH M.S.P. cont.

making "we are united by the understanding that there is no other viable strategy in Latin America than that of the strategy of the revolutionary war." Revolutionary war that in its content and form will acquire continental dimensions. Being that for many years, as we have seen and the events in Latin America prove, imperialism has internationalized its war against struggling peoples then and it is only through war, as is pointed out in our declaration, that we will be able to bring an end to its dominance and that we will be able to obtain national liberation and socialism. Finally, it is important to point out that in conjunction with the support and solidarity that we express towards the comrades of El Comité-M.I.N.P., as well as, towards the Revolutionary Coordinating Council of the Southern Cone (Composed of the MIR of Chile, the PRT-ERP of Argentina, the MLN Tupamaros and the ELN of Bolivia), we understand, that the best expression of solidarity which we could render to peoples in struggle is to intensify the development among our people of the revolutionary war against imperialism.

OEM- Along similar lines, what steps has the MSP taken to bring consciousness about the development of the struggle in Latin America and how do you visualize the link between the various organizations that agree on this conception?

MSP-UJS- To be brief, in the first place, our organization has stressed the importance that our members study and analyze the complex and changing reality in Latin America. This, in addition to emphasizing their political grasp of the science of marxism and in the context of the dialectical method of analyzing the economic, political and social reality in Puerto Rico. In this regard, and in spite of our existent limitations, we have progressed much in terms of the knowledge which must be acquired regarding Latin America. We have been able to do this through discussions, forums, lectures, etc. Recently, for example, indepth discussions were held in some of our study groups around the origins and development of the Cuban Revolution. This is the case in terms of what we could call the study of the revolutionary experiences of Latin America. Themes such as, the study of the works of Che Guevara, the Chilean experience, Argentina: its present situation, the guerrilla experience of the Tupamaros of Uruguay among others, etc. These have been studied and discussed within and outside of our organization. The above mentioned, is what we regard as the first part of the study of the Latin American reality through the development of discussions at forums, conferences, solidarity activities, etc. In addition, we have, from the beginning, published articles in *Bandera Roja*, *El Militante*, or *Lecturas Proletarias*. These have been articles which have appeared in the *Chile Resistance Courier* in the exterior, from the *Combatiente* or *Estrella Roja* of the ERP, or the magazine *Che Guevara* of the Revolutionary Coordinating Council. The dissemination of such literature has been limited in comparison to the amount of existing materials around Latin America, and which we have little access to. This being the case, we have begun slowly to establish contacts with other organizations that have opened their doors in order to follow more closely the events occurring throughout Latin America and other parts of the world.

In terms of the second part of the question we could say, that for our organization it is a matter of principle that we express our solidarity with the peoples and organizations that struggle against the presence of imperialism in their

respective countries and for their national independence and or socialism. In this sense, and in the particular case of Latin America we recognize the necessity of coordinating the struggle against imperialism with other organizations. This is not to say, however, that we would support any and all organizations that exist. On the contrary, for us the relations on an international level and the coordination we speak of is given based on recognition and development and we place the emphasis on development, of the armed struggle on a continental level. This is why, as I referred to previously, we support without any reservations the Revolutionary Coordinating Council of the southern cone. Clearly, the other pillars which guide our international politics are the principle of critical unity and by this we mean that we reserve the right to support or criticize those actions and ideological positions that at the national or international level move forward or impedes the development of the revolutionary struggle. As regards the other, although we are disposed to receiving and would be grateful for all aid that is given toward the better development of our struggle at the same time, we would move to guarantee our independence to determine the correct course and direction of our struggle as dictated by the reality we confront. From this it follows that we are not willing to negotiate or enter into agreements that come into contradiction with our political and organizational integrity or with the development of the struggle in our homeland.

OEM- As regards the question of revolutionary unity, how do you view the question of unity within the Puerto Rican left and in particular with the PSP?

MSP-UJS- At this time, there exist good possibilities to take concrete steps toward the development of unity. Specifically, there are two points that reflect the consensus of the majority of the Puerto Rican Left. These are, first the defense of the natural resources and secondly, the development of a campaign of socialist education that would combat the annexationist propaganda that the government will be putting forth during the next four years.

In terms of the natural resources, the existence of copper, nickel and other minerals in our soil together with 85% possibility of the existence of oil in the northern coast are sufficient reason for the big multi-national corporations to pose for themselves the exploitation of this wealth. For revolutionaries, it is unacceptable that such resources would be exploited under capitalism and colonialism. The copper, nickel and petroleum are a national reserve of wealth that should contribute to the economic development of socialist society and should only be exploited when the working class has political power and can guarantee their class interests. This being the case, it is necessary that the most resolute level unity be achieved by the left as a whole in order to, respecting the integrity of each organization, be able to confront adequately any plans to pillage these. The second aspect increasingly gains more importance. The annexationists are developing an intense campaign that presents statehood as the alternative to the economic, social and political problems that affect us. Revolutionaries must take that propaganda into account and we must not limit our arguments to the cultural aspect. We must emphasize that the problems of Puerto Rico are rooted in its dependent capitalist structures and that only socialism can be the true alternative for the working class.

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STOP THE GRAND JURY

GOVERNMENT REPRESSION: GRAND JURY INVESTIGATIONS

Last month, 2 Latinamerican women were imprisoned for their refusal to testify before a New York City federal grand jury investigating the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (F.A.L.N.) in particular and the Puerto Rican independence movement in general.

The two women, Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, work for the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs



Raisa Nemikin

(N.C.H.A.) of the World Episcopal Church; Cueto is the Executive Director of the program and Nemikin is her secretary. They were subpoenaed specifically to answer questions regarding any connection between the Commission and the F.A.L.N. The supposed basis for their subpoena was the discovery in October, 1976 by Chicago police of a "bomb factory" in the apartment of Carlos Alberto Torres, a student at one of the colleges in Chicago. Discovering that Torres had at one time done work with the N.C.H.A., the FBI immediately began to look for political ties between Torres and the commission.

FBI agents not only thoroughly examined hundreds of church documents with the approval of high-level Church officials, but they also interrogated both Cueto and Nemikin several times, trying to intimidate them into answering questions about Torres and the F.A.L.N. From the beginning both women refused to comply with FBI demands; as a result they were subpoenaed by the grand jury.

Church Votes in Support of Puerto Rican Self-determination

The investigation into the work of the Hispanic Commission and Cueto and Nemikin in particular, comes only a few months after the Executive Council of the Church passed a resolution asking for the release of the 5 Puerto Rican Nationalist prisoners; the resolution also

supported the UN Resolution 154, which calls for the self-determination of all colonies, including Puerto Rico. This fact alone makes it clear that the so-called bomb factory is merely the pretext utilized by the US government to increase its harassment of individuals and groups advocating independence and socialism for Puerto Rico. The investigation has provided a perfect opportunity to discredit and silence those within the Church hierarchy who have taken progressive stands on the status of Puerto Rico.

A major grand jury investigation is also taking place in Chicago, where already 6 activists in the PR independence movement have been subpoenaed—and more subpoenas are expected. Much of the information gotten from the Church files (e.g., typewriter samples, personnel records, travel records for the Commission's staff, etc.) have been flown back and forth between the 2 juries.

The Use of the Grand Jury

In recent history, grand juries have been used by the government in many different ways. In 1970, a grand jury in Chicago was convened to investigate the murders of Black Panther Party leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark during a police raid. Not only were no charges brought against the police, but 7 BPP members were indicted for conspiracy to commit murder! Another more recent example is the grand jury investigation aimed at the workers from the Washington Post, who in 1976 had participated in a strike against that newspaper. Over 85 pressmen were called to testify. By the end of the "investigation", 15 (now former) pressmen were charged with rioting and destruction of property.

The Grand Jury System: Once a Protective Right

Originally, access to a grand jury was a right won in the 16th c. by the developing merchant and business class (the rising bourgeoisie) in its struggle to protect its property against the monarchy. Under the grand jury system, every citizen had the right to have a jury of his equals determine the validity of any charge made against him. This system protected the individual citizen against arbitrary accusations by the king or other members of the ruling aristocracy. Over the centuries however, as capitalism developed and the bourgeoisie became the dominant class through their control of the factories, businesses, and banks, the grand jury system was transformed from a democratic right to a repressive instrument of the ruling class.

Today, the most important function of the grand jury is to gather information about all progressive movements, organizations and individuals, and use this information to intimidate and repress the legitimate struggles of these forces.

Why the independence movement?

The worsening economic conditions in Puerto Rico—as expressed by sky-rocketing inflation, an unemployment level bordering on 40% of the labor force, increased crime, etc.—has developed the potential for mass social discontent in the island-nation. This fact, coupled with the existence of various political forces openly advocating a social transformation toward independence and socialism, together with the international support for Puerto Rico's

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WOMEN (cont.)

family, women and children into the revolutionary process, should be presented. What must be combated are the attitudes, not the fact that children exist.

To liberate the woman from her "blessed" obligation (blessed as long as she is not needed in the labor force or while it does not become a threat to the dominant class) it must be emphasized that child rearing is a responsibility that should be shared by the couple. It is not the only and absolute domain of the woman as is handed down by "sacred decree". It should also be shared by and with other comrades in the organization, particularly those who may live in the same house, building, community or who may share the tasks of a nucleus or section. In this process we will be breaking with the individualistic distinction, corresponding to private property, as reflected in: this is "my" child and that is "yours". At the same time we will be widening the child's family boundaries and providing him/her with even more attention and affection.

In ignoring the reality of women within the family and all the demands that this makes upon her, the left has been deprived of all those women who have been forced to choose between their family and political obligations. This is particularly evident among working class women since their economic situation makes it even harder. This difficult situation must be changed into a revolutionary force transforming the family into a nucleus or unit of struggle.

We must also begin to assume the revolutionary responsibility of educating children according to their age



and capacity for understanding the situation in which they find themselves. As it is, children understand and capture much of their reality. What we must do is insure a correct interpretation. This should be complemented with special activities for children where a similar political message is transmitted and where they can share their experiences in a collective. All the organization's activities should take the children into consideration to avoid whenever possible, the family fragmentation which occurs when parents attend an activity and children don't or when the father does and the mother remains at home.

It must be recognized that children require much attention, guidance and affection. This does not mean that the only ones who can provide this are the biological parents. In order to assure that children receive what they need we should base ourselves on collective life and on the resources of the organization and community.

In Puerto Rico and to some extent in this country, the progressive "alternative" schools that arose in the last few years were an attempt in the right direction. Although this solution appeared to be a good one, in practice it became an extension of the family, isolated from the masses. In practice these schools became exclusive for the children of the "elite", children of the activists, leaders and militants. Although the teaching in these schools is more advanced and new collective values are transmitted, it takes place in a social vacuum, isolated from the reality that surrounds them. Meanwhile the proletarian women send their children to daycare centers which arise spontaneously among family and neighbors or they send them to the scarce centers provided by the educational system, or to public schools. To avoid the rupture that occurs with the masses other solutions must be proposed. These could well be opening the more progressive schools to the whole community or sharing the spontaneously arising daycare centers within the proletarian community, or sending chil-



dren to the public centers and schools where a better education for all children should be fought for. Whichever the way may be it is necessary to fight for a better education for all children making this struggle a part of the participation of the militants within the everyday life of the other workers.

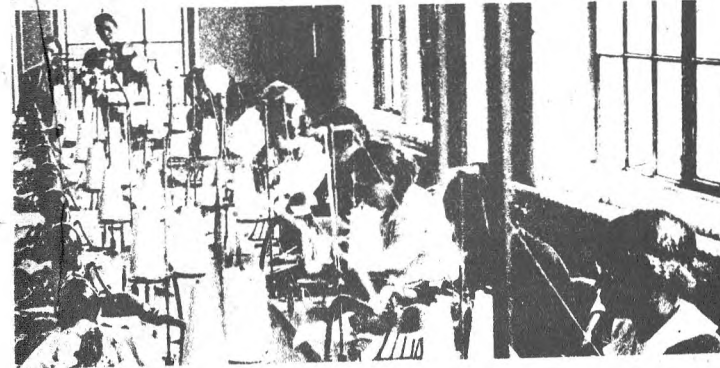
Women as Revolutionary Cadre

Women, in practice, have proven themselves capable of functioning as revolutionary cadre. This has been demonstrated throughout history. If we are going to fulfill our historical tasks—the destruction of the capitalist system and the construction of socialism—we in the left in the United States and Puerto Rico should emphasize women's development through their study and social practice and by developing a new revolutionary moral and promoting women to positions of responsibility when their development indicates it. In proposing this we do not mean to continue with the practice of tokenism, that is, including one or another woman in a false position of leadership to thereby placate the uneasiness of certain women or conscious cadre.

It is especially important to emphasize the development of proletarian women not only so that they may integrate themselves but so that they play leading roles in the struggle of the working class. It is also important to point out as an example of what we are stating, that in Puerto Rico women represent the major sector of the labor force and even so it can be asked how many are represented in the leadership of organized labor? Clearly not many. Here in the United States the situation is relatively similar.

The development of the revolutionary woman and leader of masses will not take place in a spontaneous form or as a result of our intentions alone. It must be a conscious act which takes into consideration the historical

oppression of women and therefore the particularities of that oppression. Upon considering the militance of women



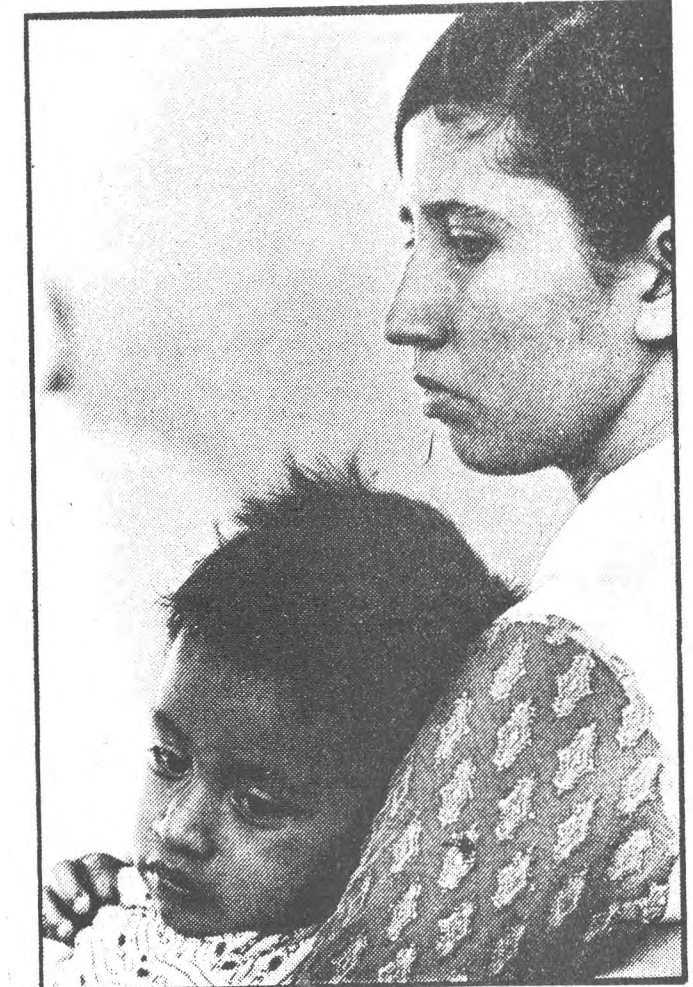
in the revolutionary ranks we have to consider the complex conditions of women. Among them we must distinguish those which arise biologically from those which arise socially. Referring to the biological reality of women Fidel stated:

"Women have other functions as well in society. She is the natural workplace where life is forged... And I say this because far from being an object of discrimination and inequality, she merits special considerations of the society." This capitalist society cannot provide these special considerations. But the movement towards socialism, in this moment of transition, has the obligation to deal with the reality of women if it wants to obtain their active participation within its ranks.

It should remain clear that maternity brings with it certain responsibilities; the term of pregnancy and nursing impose special obligations. Therefore the woman comrade who is in this situation may not participate in the same form as in the past. The solution is to work in another form which should not be considered inferior. There will be limitations in some tasks but in others she can be incorporated totally as in educating the children with new values, elevating her theoretical level, research, etc. But once these stages are over the raising of children should not fall only on the woman as was discussed earlier.

There are other conditions of the woman which do not arise biologically but are developed and imposed by the capitalist social order. Double exploitation of the woman is reflected in inferior salaries to men and in worse working conditions. There also exists the double shift. This must be combated since it represents barriers for the working woman's participation who, among other things, gets home from the factory or work place already tired only to find any number of domestic chores awaiting her. This must be recognized in any organization that takes liberation of women as a demand, especially the proletariat woman. In the particular situation of housewives and unemployed women, inertia, alienation and passivity created in them by the capitalist system and the conditions which characterize it, must be combated. These conditions must be seen as a result of the material life and the development of the capitalist society, not as absolute and eternal characteristics of women.

Although it is the responsibility of every cadre to constantly evaluate their work regarding women, women as cadre and as recipients of constant discrimination should guarantee this task becomes an integral part of revolutionary work throughout the organization. In this daily work we must clearly establish a correct position combating the deviations which occur in the revolutionary movement: on the one hand, the feminist deviation which elevates the struggle for the emancipation of women to a level above that of class struggle; and on the other the tendency which negates the particular conditions of women and its consequences.



CARMEN CASTILLO

BRENTWOOD

TEACHERS UNDER HARASSMENT

Long Island, New York—The struggle for an equal and quality education for all students has been and continues to be a very important aspect of the work of El Comité-MINP. Our work has given us a clearer understanding of the grave injustices being committed in many Long Island school districts which greatly affects the education being given to all students.

One of the lessons that we have learned in the process of the community and student struggles for a quality education has been the importance of integrating the teachers into active support and participation on the side of the community and students.

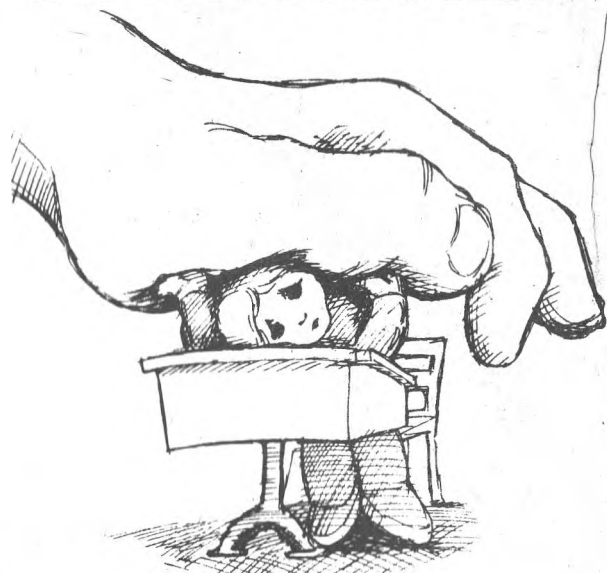
The incorporation of a progressive group of teachers into the struggles for quality education gives added strength to the movement. Teachers are part of the everyday reality in our schools, universities and communities. They constitute one of the 4 main forces in the set of contradictions that develop within the school system. These forces are; the administrators, teachers, the students, and school workers. The administrators represent the dominant force within this reality, the group that exercises control over all the others. Consequently the other three groups, as dominated groups, are in contradiction with the main force. There are contradictions among the other three groups but the contradictions between them are of a secondary nature. Within this context there is an objective basis for the coming together of students, teachers, and workers in a united effort to change the present oppressive conditions in the schools.

The incorporation of teachers into the struggle benefits both teachers and parents. With the active support of teachers the community will be in a better position to achieve their objectives: improved school buildings, better educational materials, smaller class rooms, special programs, better teachers, and most important, participation in all decisions concerning the education of their children. Teachers benefit from participation in the struggle by maintaining their employment, having better schools, more materials and resources to work with, and overall better conditions with which to best make their contribution to society. Yet teachers have failed for the most part in assuming their responsibility due to their uncritical acceptance of school curriculums and procedures and more importantly due to their material interests in holding on to their jobs at all costs.

In light of this past practice, it is highly important to present the experience of those professionals who have shown in practice what the responsibilities and professional ethics of being a teacher really means. We offer this as a guide in developing future struggles and also to properly raise the responsibility that lies with parents and students toward those teachers who do take principled positions of concrete solidarity and support.

We raise the experience of the following three teachers also to bring forth as clearly as possible a trend that has been developing throughout most Long Island schools, that is, the firing of socially active and politically conscious teachers. To fully understand the implications of this trend, we must understand the effects that the removal of these teachers has on the ability of students to develop a critical outlook of the existing reality that they live in.

Ridding the schools of such teachers leaves the students open to the influence of teachers who uncritically accept all that is going on around them, who are not concerned with the attacks made on the school programs, and whose



only real concern is the amount of money they take home on payday.

The three teachers whose experience we are detailing are: Delia Vela from Brentwood School; Joe Vocht from Patchogue/Medford Schools; and Sam Anderson from the State University campus at Old Westbury. These three teachers have all been fired from their schools. At a time when budget cuts and teacher layoffs are the order of the day, these three stand out because their removal is due directly to their active participation in and total support for the struggles being waged by students, parents and community organizations; in addition, their efforts to protect and enhance the quality of education provided are exemplary.

We find in the case of these 3 individuals the outright efforts by administrators to put an immediate end to any voice raised in opposition to the executioners' policies. These teachers are a clear example of the invisible chains placed on the ability of individuals to speak out and stand up for those things they believe in. This reflects the false democracy existing in the United States. We are told we have the democratic right to speak out. The fact is that this right is extended only so long as the interests and policies of those in control are not placed in question.

Delia Vela, Brentwood Schools

Delia Vela played an active role in the boycott of classes carried out by Hispanic parents, protesting the placement of a non-Spanish-speaking teacher into a bilingual setting. Her commitment to a quality education led her not to accept this irresponsible administrative act and to join with the parents in the boycott. Because of her involvement, she has been blacklisted from teaching in the Brentwood School district, to the point of having her name removed from the list of substitutes available to the district.

During the boycott, Vela joined with the community in an effort to insure that the intellectual development of the children would not be affected during the time away from school. Along with others, she held classes for the children outside of school, while the parents and supporters continued to push for a change in the administration's position. The parents, knowing that the children were receiving instruction from a highly qualified and caring person, kept the children out of school for 2½ weeks. The

administration was forced to give in to this firm resistance. Delia Vela represents a symbol of what a real professional is all about: to uphold the best interests of the people whatever the cost.

Joe Vocht, Patchogue/Medford Schools

Joe Vocht was employed in the Patchogue/Medford school district for 12 years and has consistently received the highest teacher evaluations during this time, except for last year. Assigned to work with non-English-speaking Hispanic children, Vocht gradually came to understand the unequal treatment being given them. It became obvious to him that these children were in need of a program that would teach them in their dominant language, while gearing itself toward making the student proficient in English as well.

His professional and uncompromising attitude led him into open confrontation with the administration's policies. Because of this, he has been the victim of administrative harassment aimed at getting him out of the school district. He is presently fighting in a suit brought against the school district to get himself placed back into a regular classroom situation.

Joe Vocht's professional conduct kept him very much in touch with the students and parents in the community. He played a crucial role in establishing La Union Hispanica in Patchogue and today continues his efforts to build a united community to serve as the determinant force in developing and overseeing educational policies in the area.

Sam Anderson—S.U.N.Y. at Old Westbury

Sam Anderson was instrumental in developing the Science and Technology Departments and is recognized by students for his accessible style of teaching. He is also one of the few faculty members on the Old Westbury campus who has been consistent in his active support of the "mission" of the school. (When first developed, Old Westbury was designated as a school specifically established to serve the educationally-bypassed student: minorities, women and older people). This was particularly demonstrated during the victorious student strike of March 1976, where defense of the school's "mission" was a key issue that the students struck over.

In the summer of 1976, Anderson was informed by the administration that he would not be rehired when his contract expired in the spring of 1977, despite the fact that the Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee recommended a one-year contract renewal. The administration arbitrarily decided to terminate his contract in obvious reprisal for active support of the ideals the school was established on.

Professor Anderson's dismissal is a blatant message to other faculty that political activity would not be tolerated. The ramifications of his dismissal are of vital importance to the student-faculty alliance existing on the campus; they must be understood and clearly exposed to the entire student-faculty body.

In all three cases the administrations have clearly taken positions unfavorable to the interests of the community and students. Defenders of justice, leaders of the poor and working masses are singled out and discredited or blacklisted, with the intent to smash the developing struggle and threaten prospective "activists" with the clear message that justice is costly.

Because teachers are a social group that suffers oppression under the present social system, they must be won over to the side of the working class. A conscious effort must be made to mobilize teachers as a group to support the needs of working class communities. In this struggle, these communities must present their own demands and support those demands of the teachers that do not contradict their own class interest.

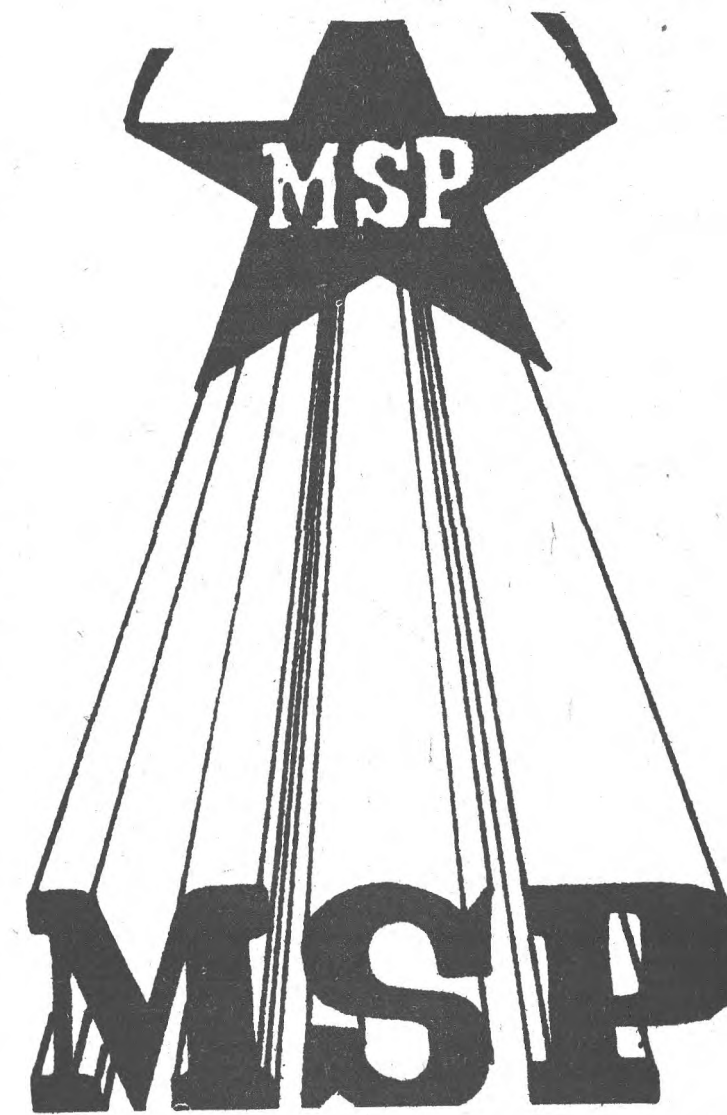
DIALOGUE WITH MSP cont.

These two fundamental points form part of the work plan of the FRAI—Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Front—which is composed of MSP, The Puerto Rican Socialist League and Independentistas who are not affiliated. The FRAI must move to broaden itself in order to be able to be more effective and it is necessary that other left organizations, such as the PSP, contribute adequately to the work of an Anti-Imperialist Front.

With the PIP, the situation is different. This party has developed as one of its basic pillars anti-communism and its political conception repudiates any type of unity with the revolutionary organizations.

To the contrary, to the PSP we will pose the need for an Anti-Imperialist Front. Although we believe there are possibilities that the companeros will participate in the same, we also understand that it is practice that will determine the character of that participation and its disposition to build a solid unitary block that will combat the plans for exploitation and annexationist propaganda.

To Be Continued



SURPLUS CASH(cont.)

election year, the mayor is trying to defer the actual cuts and to paper them over with "revenues" or "estimates" which may or may not be realized. But the EFCB which is still in the saddle has already rejected them, as it has all such efforts in the past. "Revenues" and "estimates" are obviously good only for the benefit of investors and bankers as extra guarantees that, if any of the revenues they claim should not be realized, there will be a cushion to pay them; they can never be used instead to maintain services for the people, no matter how essential the services are, even if the President himself has promised legislation to provide more money in the future.

Banks Demand Guaranteed Payment of Debt

Further, the banks' battle for more or less permanent outside financial controls is not lost, but only deferred. The city politicians and labor statesmen have already acknowledged this is in their plan, setting up a committee to negotiate with the banks which have so far provided no money whatsoever, and have not even joined in deferring payments on the bonds they still hold (as the unions did) and as bankers usually do with any debtor in distress. So long as the city counts on going to the capital market for borrowing, that is, counts on going to the bankers and their allied investors—Wall Street, its financiers and its financial institutions—the demand for fiscal control will be there. The weapon to enforce it will be what it has been throughout the crisis, simply the refusal to lend money. And yet the bankers had and still have more to lose than anyone else by the city's default, as the response to the city's latest plan shows. The financial community and the whole financial system would be threatened by a New

York City bankruptcy and the financiers would be the first to suffer indefinite postponement of any and all debt service, while essential services were maintained under supervision of the courts. This is a major reason why the banks refuse to compromise—seeking absolute financial guarantees forever.

Effective Resistance

One thing is certain, the people of New York are bound to suffer a continuing deterioration in services, as long as they will accept them. The results can only be determined by the resistance of the people and when resistance is effectively organized, a restoration of essential services also be obtainable.

What are the requirements for effective resistance? Organization of the people of New York, and primarily of the trade union members, to fight against any more reductions in services and for the improvement of inadequate services. Union leaders, not only in the municipal but also in the other unions, have betrayed their responsibility to organize the necessary resistance. Municipal workers unions have isolated their members by limiting their demands to jobs and minimal wage increases for their members. The other unions, even more progressive ones such as District 65 and 1199, have never been called upon, and have not offered, to join the issue of city services for their members with the issue of jobs for municipal workers. Only a rank and file movement which brings these issues to the unions and into the working class neighborhoods can build the necessary resistance.

We will have more on this in later issues. Meanwhile we would be glad to hear from any workers interested in discussing this article, and in doing what they can about the problem.

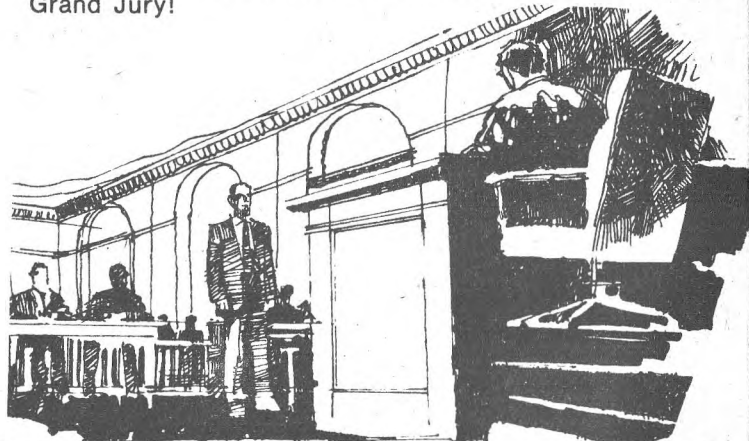
THE GRAND JURY(cont.)

right for self determination has led to a situation in which the US has unleashed its repressive apparatus against the independence movement on the island and against the developing solidarity movement in the United States.

The institution of new repressive laws in the island, such as the "Personnel Law"; the acts of provocations such as the recent imprisonment of socialists; the recent shooting of the MSP headquarters; the continuous sensationalist reportings in the national media; the characterization of the independence movement as a bunch of "crazed terrorists"; the harassment and imprisonment of individuals in the periphery of the independence movement through the efforts of the grand juries in New York and Chicago are all aspects of the US government's attempt to subvert both the development of the independence and socialist movement in Puerto Rico as well as the organized popular solidarity movement for Puerto Rican independence.

Faced with this situation, all forces within the liberation movement, and its supporters, must not let themselves be deviated by or fall victim to the provocations of the US

government whose tactics are aimed at diverting our efforts to organize and educate the working class and oppressed sectors in preparation for a period of heightened revolutionary conditions in Puerto Rico. It's within this context that we urge all our readers and sympathizers to support and defend all victims of repression, while urging those engaged in their legal defense to broaden their efforts by reaching out to all who oppose the repressive mechanisms of the U.S. government—Free Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin—Stop the Grand Jury!



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