

OBREROS EN MARCHA

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ELECTORAL CARNIVAL BEGINS ^{p3}



Puerto Rico Informa

BOSSES

CONTINUE

OFFENSIVE

p. 5

NARCISO & PEREZ **- FRAMED** ^{p9}



EDITORIAL

The Struggle Against Repression

The repressive bodies of the state have begun a desperate campaign against the supporters of the national liberation of Puerto Rico and other progressive forces in the U.S. More than nine persons have already been called to testify before the Grand Jury and are presently serving sentences for refusing to comply. Others who are presently being harassed face similar consequences. Attempts are being made to link these people with the recent FALN (NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMED FORCES) bombings. These actions on the part of the repressive agencies occur at a time when there is a low level of activity within the mass movements. Similarly, the revolutionary forces are relatively inactive as a consequence of their weak ideological formation, disorganization, divisions, etc. However, these actions also occur at a time when deteriorating social conditions provide a climate favorable to the development of a mass movement strong enough to threaten the foundations of this system.

Since the early 1970's the working class and poor people in this country have been victimized by a suffocating economic crisis. Concessions which the working class gained during the 60's have been discarded. Hundreds of thousands of workers have been displaced from their jobs. Moreover, essential services have been reduced or completely eliminated. All this has occurred without a significant response on the part of the masses and their leading organizations. These attacks cry for mass actions and protests, for higher forms of organization, and for unity and more developed methods of struggle. But the revolutionary forces have been unable to meet those tasks.

Because of its low level of ideological development and social practice, the revolutionary movement has been plagued by disorganization and isolation from the masses. The ruling class has not vacillated in taking advantage of this situation. It has further consolidated its hold of the sellout union bureaucracy in order to guarantee a subservient and dis-oriented labor movement. In the early 70's, it infiltrated and eventually undermined organizations (such as the Black Panthers etc.) that were developing a militant posture and gaining credibility—particularly within the minority communities. Other organizations were subjected to continual harassment. The state fabricated cases against these progressive elements, attempting to exhaust their energies and limit the focus of their work. They dictated the moves and the progressive movement was forced to defend itself against the attacks.

However, recognizing some of its major shortcomings the revolutionary left began a process of reflection and rectification. They began to study the science of Marxism-Leninism to guide their deepening integration into the struggles of the working class. Unfortunately, a number of forces deviated into dogmatism, ultra-leftism and isolation from the masses as a consequence of their abandonment or rejection of scientific socialism and its philosophical base, dialectical materialism. The actions of the FALN began during this period of rectification.

From the outset, our organization has criticized the FALN for its acts of terrorism which neither deal with nor meet the needs of present conditions. Their actions tend to isolate the revolutionary forces further away from the masses. In addition, they lead those forces to an uneven confrontation with the state, providing the state with an excuse to continue harassing the revolutionary movement. This has again diverted the energies of sectors of the left to defensive work and has limited its capacity to deal with the essential task of

establishing leadership within the working class movement. The acts of the FALN also play into the hands of the dominant class and the reformist elements by justifying their attempts to discredit armed struggle as the fundamental road toward national and social liberation.

Recent events have verified the correct nature of our perspective. For three years the FALN has been able to escape capture. This has frustrated the repressive agencies and has led them to strike at other activists in the Puerto Rican Liberation support movement. Two such activists were David Perez and Vicente Alba, members of the Committee for the Freedom of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Prisoners. Despite the initial claim by the police that they had "found" two of the bombers, they ultimately had to admit that there was no evidence to connect the two men with the FALN. Shortly thereafter, Julio, Andres and Luis Rosado (the last two, former members of the Hispanic Commission of the Episcopal Church) were arrested for refusing to testify before the Grand Jury.

Since then, the state has continued its campaign to discredit the independence and revolutionary movement. In press conferences, t.v. reports, and newspaper articles, they have attempted to create an atmosphere of hysteria among the people, intimidating them from engaging in struggle or supporting the victims of state repression. Their campaign has also been directed towards increasing the severity of the punishment that any "FALN bomber" will receive as well as attempting to intimidate the masses from struggling.

Faced with this situation, we must respond effectively and in an organized manner. We must support all victims of repression and develop a far-reaching campaign of education among the masses. Moreover, we must actively incorporate broad sectors of the population (workers, students, professionals, religious groups, democratic forces, etc.) not only in the struggle against Grand Jury repression, but also against all forms of repression by the state. In order to carry out these tasks we must participate in the struggle for decent wages and working conditions and for an expansion of democratic rights. We must organize and channel the discontent of the masses by providing clear and precise strategies and tactics for struggle. These must be directed not only at the economic and democratic struggles of the masses but also against the state's attempt to repress the progressive and revolutionary movement.

The crucial necessity of a broad-based struggle demands that we criticize those who define anti-repression work within a narrow political context, making as a principle of unity the support of armed struggle and the independence of Puerto Rico. Such a position goes beyond the present reality in the United States, in particular the low level of class-consciousness and organization. This position is divisive and sectarian and works to prevent the campaign against Grand Jury repression—as well as the revolutionary movement—from meeting its present responsibilities.

We urge all revolutionaries, progressive and democratic people to join the efforts against repression and to integrate into the work being undertaken by the Community Grand Jury Campaign.

For more information on the work of the committee, contact them c/o PRSC Box 319, Cooper Station, NYC 10003.

THE PRIMARIES IN NEW YORK



Mayor Beame

By the time this edition of *Obreros En Marcha* comes out, the citizens of New York City will have participated in the first phase of this year's electoral carnival. On Sept. 8, the Democratic and Republican parties will have their primary elections for the various municipal offices, including the office of mayor. Since last spring we have been urged to participate in picking the best candidate to serve our interests. A colorful display of impressive rhetoric and demagoguery by the hopeful candidates has dominated the local news for several months. Through this the candidates hoped to convince us that, given a chance, they would remedy all the city's problems. This old routine repeats itself every election.

Under the formal democracy that characterizes this capitalist society (where true freedom is only available to the capitalists) politicians have a very specific role to play. It is mainly up to them to perpetuate the illusion that by voting we have the power to bring about real changes and to cover up the fact that the working class, national minorities, and poor are oppressed and exploited by the ruling class.

In this particular mayoral race, the road which the candidates must follow has already been set for them. The campaign is taking place against the backdrop of New York City's objective reality: high unemployment, deteriorating living conditions, insufficient services, a rising crime rate, loss of jobs, etc. Despite the rhetoric of the mayoral "hopefuls" to the contrary, NYC's economic crisis is not over. The cutbacks have not ended and the banks have not loosened their clutches on the city's government.

We must closely examine this whole electoral process, beginning with the primaries, as an objective lesson for the working class. We will see how the politicians, as agents of the ruling class and dominated by their own self interests, attempt to confuse and deceive the voters. They distort the conditions in NYC and do not speak to the real needs of the working class and the poor. They play a direct role in our oppression and denial of democratic rights.

THE CANDIDATES

The field in the mayoral race began with nine contenders, seven Democrats and two Republicans. State Senator Roy Goodman is running with the Republican party's blessing. His opponent is Barry Farber, the ultra-

conservative radio talk-show announcer. But the focus of the primary campaign is within the Democratic camp, since it is the Democratic Party that dominates NYC politics. Of those vying for the Democratic party's endorsement, all are established politicians save one. There is the incumbent, Mayor Beame, former Congresswoman, Bella Abzug, Manhattan Borough President, Percy Sutton, Congressmen Herman Badillo and Edward Koch, and New York's Secretary of State, Mario Cuomo. The 7th candidate is Joel Harnett, former president of the City Club, who has never held an elected position before. In spite of the diversity in style and political orientation, all the candidates have very similar positions on all the basic issues. Since the liberal years of the Lindsay administration, the character of the office of the mayor has changed. Anyone occupying or wanting to occupy that seat is forced to take more conservative and hard line positions. This reality is reflected in the candidates' platforms.

THE EFCB IS HERE TO STAY

It was during Mayor Beame's term that finance capital (the big banks and Wall street) saw the economic necessity of exerting outright and direct control on the city's finances. Having trapped the city to billions of dollars of debt in loans, the banks then performed financial blackmail when their own profits became jeopardized by poor investments in real estate and super oil tankers. Refusing to lend any more money to the city, insisting that payment of the debt had to be the city's priority, the banks forced the creation of the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB) and the Municipal Assistance Corp. (MAC). Through these agencies, the banks were now directly managing the city, and the office of the mayor was transformed into a rubber stamp. The "streamlining" of 60,000 municipal employees, the closing of daycare centers, hospitals, libraries, fire departments etc, the elimination of the century-long free tuition policy and of open Admissions at the City University, to mention just a few, all originated from the same source—capital's drive for profits (interest on bank loans) at the people's expense.

From Mayor Beame on down every single candidate wholeheartedly supports and endorses the continued intervention and control by the banks. Congressman Koch reflected their consensus when he stated that the EFCB or some other outside agency must "continue to supervise



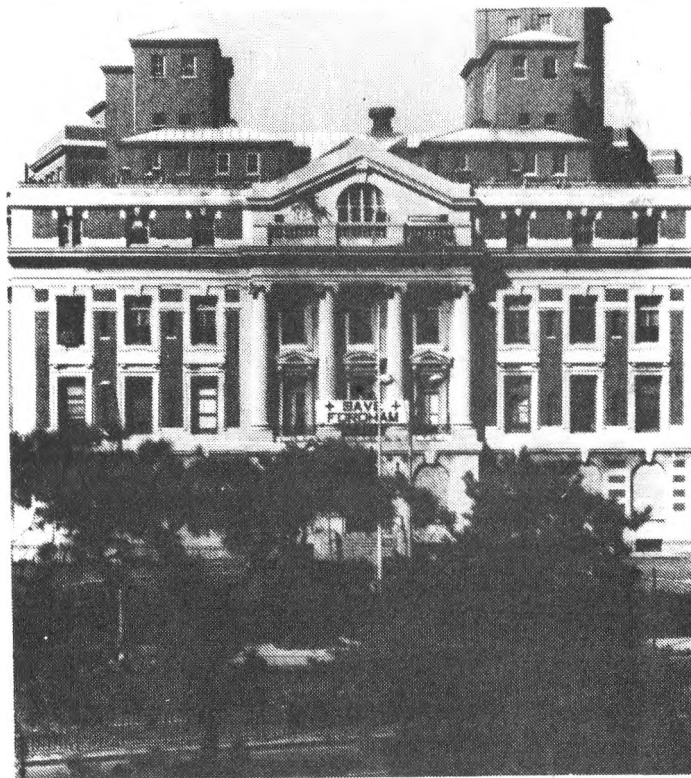
UNEMPLOYMENT LINES IN NYC

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Hospital closed during crisis

and monitor the city's finances for some time". As one of the more candid aspirants, he accompanied this by stating that the future holds more layoffs and cuts in services, such as the eliminations of 5000 so-called excess hospital beds and essential out-patient services at all municipal hospitals. But the majority of the candidates skirt the issue of more cutbacks.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER ISSUES?

The return and expansion of vital services as well as the creation of more jobs is the main issue to the city's working people and poor. But for the candidates, this issue is non-existent in their political platforms. They have all developed their campaigns around two issues: economic recovery and crime.

The class outlook and the interests these politicians serve comes out clearly in their plans for the city's economic recovery. Every single candidate has stated that in order for New York to regain economic stability, private industry must be enticed back into the city. One prime way to attract industry is to provide it with tax breaks. Thus, all the candidates strongly pushed for the reduction and eventual elimination of both the occupancy tax and the corporation tax. Mayor Beame has gone one better. Consistent with his close ties with real estate interests, he proposed that corporations opening offices in the city receive an additional \$300 tax credit for every employee hired; manufacturers should receive a \$500 tax credit for every employee. In addition, Beame proposed that real estate taxes be maintained at the same level for at least the next 10 years and longer if companies signed new longterm leases. The corporations would escape from paying millions of dollars in tax revenues, and the costs of running the city and providing the necessary services would fall heavier and heavier on the working class.

But the candidates really expose their anti-working class views when they address the issue of crime. Crime is a

direct consequence of the material conditions of people's lives. Massive unemployment, especially among minorities and youth—40%—, increasingly deteriorating services, housing, health care, schooling etc., and the overall degrading and dehumanizing living and working conditions are the objective base of crime in the U.S. In New York, as in many other urban centers around the country, there is a direct correlation between the deepening crisis of the working class and the rapidly expanding rate of crime. The candidates fully realize that as living conditions become worse, they must bring the repressive forces of the state (police, courts, prisons, etc) more and more into play. This is why Herman Badillo and Beame and Ed Koch are pushing to reinstate the death penalty. Badillo recommends abolishing parole as "the one real way of keeping criminals off the street." The "liberal" Bella Abzug is campaigning to get 3,000 more policemen on the streets. But Mario Cuomo sums it all up when he states "We must reinstitute the rule of law and the expectation of order—on our streets, in our schools...in our lives."

The layoffs and cuts in services have temporarily eased up since the primary began last spring. But the fiscal crisis is not yet over and the banks are still demanding payment on their loans. Once the November election comes and goes—or perhaps even before that—the attacks on the standard of living of the working class will begin again. At the moment, there is a big lull in the pickets, demonstrations and marches that had been an everyday occurrence. This is due to the frustration resulting from the lack of organization, direction and unity that characterized our past struggles. But these actions were not useless. They point out our weaknesses and show us the problems that must be resolved to wage successful struggles in the future. We must strengthen our mass organizations (tenants groups, PA's, community organizations etc) and organized ourselves as widely and militantly as possible. Then realizing that all of our different struggles are related and stem from the same source, we must unify ourselves to struggle collectively. In this process, we will begin to throw aside all the bourgeois politicians and poverty pimps who serve the ruling class, conscious that the real power to change things in this society lies in the working class.



Puerto Rico Informa

POSSIBLE STRIKE AT A.M.A. AND MANAGEMENT OFFENSIVE

The present economic crisis in Puerto Rico is being used by the bosses and the colonial government to muzzle and dismantle the labor movement. The latest of these attacks is directed against the workers of the Metropolitan Bus Authority. Because of the importance of this sector, "Puerto Rico Informa" addresses the issues involved in this struggle.

CONTRIBUTION OF M.S.P. IN PUERTO RICO

As this article goes to press, it is almost a certainty that the workers of the Metropolitan Bus Authority (AMA) will have to go on strike as a result of the obstinate attitudes assumed by the management. The Metropolitan Bus Authority Union (TUAMA), the union which organizes the drivers and mechanics of this agency, has made substantial efforts to reach an agreement through collective bargaining in order to avoid paralyzing the principal mechanism for mass transportation in the capitol of Puerto Rico. These efforts, however, have only met with the inflexible positions of the Bus Authority Administration which is trying to eliminate the gains that the workers have achieved through their struggles and sacrifices in previous collective bargaining agreements. It is becoming increasingly clear that only through a strike will the workers be able to force the administration to come to reason.

THE AMA WANTS TO PROVOKE A STRIKE

It is evident that the administration of the AMA wants to provoke the workers into a strike. Not only has the administration assumed inflexible positions, but it has also engaged in unprecedented acts clearly with the intention of driving the workers into a strike.

On August 8 of this year, the AMA's president and general manager, Jose E. Rossy, announced in a press conference a measure which violates the Commonwealth Labor Relations Laws. Specifically, Rossy announced that the AMA declared the contract with the union to be void and as such, the agency would discontinue its obligations and responsibilities toward the union. This decision in effect implies that:

1. The AMA will discontinue collection of workers' union dues in an attempt to economically strangle the union.
 2. The AMA will illegally stop contributions to the union medical plan and education and welfare fund as called for by the existing contract.
 3. The AMA will not pay drivers who refuse to drive buses which have been determined by inspection to be defective, and as a consequence, hazardous to drivers and passengers alike. This measure violates not only the collective bargaining agreement, but it further violates public ordinances which call for inspection and safety for the general public.
- These illegal and flagrant violations of the contract expose management's intentions to wrest back from the AMA' workers gains they had achieved through 25 years of struggle.

MBA is charged



AS EXPECTED, GOVERNOR BARCELO SIDES WITH MANAGEMENT AGAINST WORKERS

Interviewed by the press, colonial governor Barcelo said that the problem stemmed from the workers having too many rights and benefits, and that unless these rights were eliminated, the AMA would be unable to continue operations.

Undoubtedly, this corporation is one of the most inefficient "public" corporations, as well as the one with the largest deficit of operation. These facts cannot be denied. What our governor does not say is that this inefficiency is not the fault of the workers, but rather, the result of, among other things:

1. the fact that this corporation, far from being "public," is in fact owned by North American stockbrokers. As a consequence, the AMA must pay large dividends to its Wall Street owners.
2. the inefficient management which yearly engages in wasteful expenditures of thousands of dollars.
3. the high salaries received by the incompetent administrators. With his remarks, Governor Barcelo unmasks the populist image he assumed during the elections, revealing his true nature as an enemy of the Puerto Rican workers.

WHY THE PROVOCATION?

The steps taken by the AMA administration and the position assumed by Barcelo make evident their intentions to provoke a strike. But why are they taking these positions at this time?

The TUAMA—the union representing the AMA drivers and mechanics—is perhaps the second or third most powerful union in the country. Transporting over 180,000 passengers each day, it has the capacity and unity necessary to almost completely paralyze mass transportation in San Juan, Carolina, Bayamon, and Guaynabo. This would

affect commerce, industry, and the functioning of government in the Metropolitan area.

After long years of militant trade union practice, its membership has achieved substantial economic gains. In an economy characterized by low wages for all workers, the drivers and the mechanics of the AMA are among the highest paid. They are also the only major union to have gained in their contract a clause of closed shop (the workers must be unionized in order to work for the AMA). These, as well as other benefits wrested from management, make the TUAMA one of the strongest unions in the country.

To the previously described positions assumed by the AMA administration and the governor, we add the recent declarations of Romero Barcelo that there is a "communist conspiracy to infiltrate" and control the labor movement and to cause harm to his administration. These statements, as well as the existence of a well-known government plan to use its repressive police forces against the organized labor movement help to give us a more complete picture of what the AMA and the governor are up to.

It is clear that they are planning to destroy this strong union in an action that can serve as a basis for further attacks against the rest of the organized labor movement in this country. This conspiracy of the government is nothing but a preamble to what they plan to do against the rest of the organized labor movement in this country. This conspiracy of the government is nothing but a preamble to what they plan to do against all sectors that are organized and dare to raise their voices against the interests of the ruling class.

The immediate future of these compañeros will affect the future awaiting all those people in our nation who have no other means of subsistence but the sweat of their labor.

the fruits of which enrich the bulging pockets of a small group of capitalists.

THE TASKS DEMANDED BY THE TIMES

The bosses' conspiracy has been set into motion. The well-oiled machinery of the state in Puerto Rico is moving with all its force toward those sectors of our labor movement which have traditionally maintained firm positions in defense of the economic interests of the working class. We, the workers of Puerto Rico, must respond with determined support of the compañeros of the TUAMA.

The workers of the AMA must be prepared, if need be, to wage the strongest and most militant struggle in defense of their demands. They must be cautious, but if the strike is to develop, they must be prepared to wage a long and tedious battle, in order to defeat the obstinate positions of the government and the bosses. Struggle, militancy, and firmness must be the slogan leading the battle of these compañeros.

We call for the resolute support of the people of Puerto Rico. The sectarian and provincial attitudes which have permeated our labor movement must be overcome. The socialists, workers, and student organizations must contribute as much as possible to this support. Organization in order to channel the support of the most advanced sectors of our people toward the TUAMA is essential as well as an intense orientation and propaganda campaign in order to gain the support of the vacillating sectors, to clarify or neutralize as much as possible those that are confused, and to isolate enemies of the class. These are the tasks of the moment.

The future of almost 2,000 drivers and mechanics of the AMA is the immediate future of the progressive and organized labor movement. Its defeat will be our defeat, and its victory will be our victory.

The significant thing about this meeting is that the information will be provided by highly placed representatives of the repressive bodies of the U.S. government (the CIA, FBI, etc.)—agencies of the capitalist whose essential function is to assure that the interests of the capitalist run no risks of destruction.

We, of El Comité-MINP, categorically denounce this meeting where the presence of the major vultures of U.S. imperialism signals nothing other than the repression of the Puerto Rican people and the theft of their natural resources without any thought given to their interests or the ecological balance of the environment.

We call on all revolutionary organizations in the U.S. to give their firm support to the Puerto Rican people and protest the presence of these blood-thirsty gorillas in Puerto Rico. We do this with the firm conviction that the Puerto Rican people will say: Stop plundering our natural resources; united we will confront all ravages of our resources.

FEDERAL AGENCIES DISCUSS REPRESSION

At the end of September, the annual conference of the Federal Bar Association will be held in the hotel properties of the Rockefeller family in Dorado, Puerto Rico. This conference will bring together the representatives of the major multinationals involved and interested in pillaging the natural and human resources of Puerto Rico. From this conference will develop policies intended to protect the interest of U.S. imperialism.

The representatives and lawyers of the major capitalist corporations of the U.S. at the conference are interested in Puerto Rico because of its rich deposits of petroleum, nickel, copper, gold, etc. These companies have their major capital investments in Latin America and Puerto Rico which is where they obtain the raw materials used for production and the cheap labor power used to obtain superprofits.

This meeting is going to address itself specifically to the present situation of the Puerto Rican labor and liberation movements as well as measures to combat these two movements. This is extremely important to the capitalist, particularly those connected with the major U.S. multinationals interested in the plunder of the island's natural resources (Exxon, Gulf, Mobil, Anaconda, Kennecott, etc.). They need to receive a clear and detailed report of the current situation in Puerto Rico. This would enable them to plan repressive measures in order to continue the present state of "industrial peace" which is nothing more than the efforts to try and maintain the level of consciousness and development of the labor and liberation movements at a point where there would be no threat to the multinationals and their interests and investments.

CHILE - 4 YEARS OF DICTATORSHIP



General Pinochet

Following, the compañeros of NICH (Non-Intervention In Chile) contribute to OEM their analysis of the current situation in Chile.

"The more freedom is extended to business, the more prisons have to be built for those who suffer from that business."

Eduardo Galeano wrote that simple truth six years ago in a powerful book called *Open Veins of Latin America*. In the same book he praised the efforts of Salvador Allende, the newly elected Socialist Party president of Chile, to take away the power of the great foreign businesses which had been dominating Chile for decades.

It is now four years since Allende was assassinated by Chile's military leaders, during a coup supported by the U.S. Tens of thousands of Chile's best people have been killed, hundreds of thousands have passed through hastily constructed concentration camps, and a million Chileans, one tenth of the population, have been forced to leave the country.

General Pinochet, Chile's ruling dictator, has chosen to extend maximum freedom to business, and so the prisons have been built.

For the first year after the September 11, 1973 coup, all the world focused on the shocking events that were unfolding in Chile. In the newspapers the bloody repression brought down on the politically conscious working class was painted to be the work of a tyrannical general. People joined in solidarity to protest the excesses of the military dictatorship and to express

support for the resistance movement.

Today we understand that Chile is not alone. In Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, in most of the countries of South and Central America military regimes have installed themselves for the long haul, and the struggle of classes has taken on a new and more bitter character.

Why has this shadow spread its wings over Latin America? How are we to understand this new oppressive phase after the heightened popular struggle of the sixties, when the masses were becoming mobilized by the promise of the Cuban Revolution?

Chile was special in one way only. It carried forward the Cuban promise and thus threatened to become a new model for revolution in Third World countries. The U.S. couldn't let that happen. Henry Kissinger laid it out in all its nakedness: "We cannot stand by and watch a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people."

Economically though, Chile was an example of the failure of imperialism's plan for Latin America over the last 40 years. During the Depression of the '30's the Latin American countries had found a new role. No longer would they be just a series of port cities for the outflow of natural resources like copper, tin, coffee, and beef, which were owned by foreigners, and for the inflow of manufactured goods, which were produced by foreigners. Countries began developing for themselves simple industry to manufacture these goods themselves.

As the decades went by this industri-

alization process became more complex, requiring more sophisticated machinery, technology and money. This resulted in two things. It meant that foreign investors controlled the more profitable sectors of production, and that governments became increasingly indebted to the imperialist countries as they borrowed ever greater amounts of money to pay for the unprofitable but necessary support services like roads and electricity.

By the 1970's this import substitution plan was in big trouble. The Latin American market was just too small for the big capitalists to make as much profit as they wanted to. The workers were becoming more organized and militant and were demanding an end to foreign domination and a greater participation for the masses in the national economy. In Chile Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government nationalized the U.S.-owned copper companies that had taken billions of dollars in profits away from the Chilean people. Workers began to take control of the factories and farms and the poor and homeless started building new communities.

After three years of Allende it became clear that his support was growing, despite everything the CIA and the Chilean bourgeoisie could do to undermine it. The coup was the last card in imperialism's hand, and they played it.

When the smoke cleared and the bodies were dragged away, the extent of the crisis became clear. Capitalism was in a worldwide recession, the price of oil was doubling, and Chile's



The Military Junta

working class was stunned and angry. Some serious changes had to be made.

General Pinochet addressed all these problems, as Galeano predicted, by extending vast freedoms to business, and building prisons for those who suffered from those freedoms.

In order to make more profits the big businesses in Chile decided to ignore the internal market and instead concentrate on exports. To do that the companies had to become competitive with other countries. They had to lower their costs. That was easy, just cut wages in half. The workers were superexploited to squeeze the last drop of profits from their labor. At the same time costs of goods inside the country went up like a rocket, and the workers found themselves unable even to feed their families on their new earnings, that is, when they could find a job.

All legitimate means for protesting this treatment—political parties, trade unions, etc.—were outlawed, and potential unrest was met with severe and arbitrary repression. Within the first year one in every hundred Chileans had been arrested.

This has not stopped the Chilean people from resisting however, just as it has not stifled the struggle of people in other Latin American countries where the pattern has been the same. Resistance has taken many forms in the past four years. At first it was chaotic and spontaneous as the political leaders of the left were imprisoned or killed and people were forced to defend their patria as if from an occupying army.

But this was not an occupying army. It was the Chilean military and they know their country well. Families were divided in their loyalties, polarized perhaps by an uncle high ranking in the military and a son underground in the resistance movement. The pain and confusion was coupled with an economic repression that one former Chilean cabinet minister called "economic genocide." Yet this was countered by the belief that the working class would triumph soon. The successes of the Allende years were fresh in the minds of the working class, and that spirit carried them forward.

Now we understand that the road is longer and harder. With U.S. support the military regimes have consolidated their iron-fisted control throughout Latin America. And the resistance movement has adapted itself to the longer struggle. People are regrouping in new clandestine forms, or using the few legal forms of organization—such as mother's centers and the "popular

kitchens" set up by the church—to meet and plan activities. A clandestine press has developed, even though people can be shot for passing the small, palm size leaflets. The "R", symbol for Resistance, is now found more and more frequently painted on walls and sides of busses, an act which can cost people their lives. In the poblaciones, the poor neighborhoods women come together to form day care centers for the many children orphaned by the repression, or for the children of political prisoners. They create common soup kitchens, organized along socialist lines, to share equally among all the meager provisions their salaries can provide. Always the forms of resistance conform to the vision of socialist organization that people were learning under the Popular Unity government.

In the last year, with leadership reasserting itself and organization developing, more open forms of resistance are taking place. Workers in important sectors of the export economy have challenged the silence imposed on them, demanding an end to the super-exploitation. Families of disappeared prisoners have formed into an organization, which, with the help of the Catholic Church, have made known internationally the phenomena of "disappeared" or "non-recognized" prisoners, those who have been kidnapped by the DINA, and never seen again. In an open and courageous act, twenty-six relatives of disappeared prisoners, twenty-four of them women, occupied United Nations offices in Santiago in June and carried out a ten-day hunger strike, demanding that Pinochet answer the demands for an investigation into the disappeared. That act

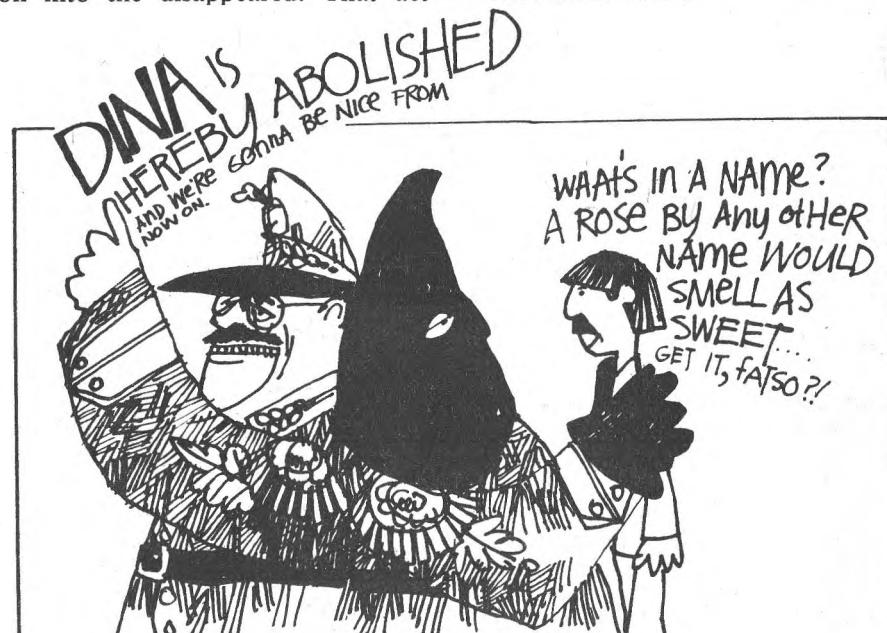
gained worldwide support, with some ten solidarity hunger strikes taking place in the United States and Europe.

As the resistance and international solidarity consolidates its work and deepens its understanding of the real conditions in Chile, Pinochet, supported by the international rightwing press, attempts to secure his control in Chile. In recent months U.S. newspapers have carried stories whitewashing his now bloody image. He is pictured in the New York Times holding a child from a working-class neighborhood and the accompanying article speaks glowingly of his nutrition program for children of the poor.

The press has also presented as if true the news that Pinochet has released the last political prisoner, and that he is dissolving the DINA.

None of this is accurate. Pinochet's genocidal economic policies continue to bleed the working class, even if the situation is beginning to open up a little for sectors of the bourgeoisie that have not had it so good these last four years. These policies have been responsible for the malnutrition of untold numbers of children. Unemployment or subsistence wages for the employed continue to be the norm. Thousands of political prisoners have been reclassified as common criminals, and newer detainees simply "disappear." Few believe the DINA has lost any of its repressive powers. It has just changed its name.

On this fourth anniversary of the coup in Chile, we must pledge to continue our support of the popular resistance in Chile, as we join to struggle against capitalist exploitation everywhere in the world.



NARCISO AND PEREZ - FRAMED !

On July 13, 1977, two Filipino nurses, Filipina Narciso and Leonora Perez, were unjustly convicted of charges of poisoning, and conspiracy to poison, seven patients who suffered mysterious breathing failures in July and August, 1975 at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan. After a ten-week trial, during which time federal prosecutors presented contradictory and conflicting testimonies of 82 witnesses—with not one of them able to place the nurses at the bedsides of the victims at the time of their breathing failures—the jury shocked the nurses, their attorneys, the court audience, and the thousands of supporters by issuing the verdict of guilty.

At no time during the trial was the prosecution able to prove that the two nurses were actually involved in causing the breathing failures of the victims which resulted in two deaths. Nor could the prosecution establish a motive for



the "crimes." Yet before the trial, Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard Yanko stated that the "prosecution is under no legal obligation to show a motive" and that it would not supply one. The prosecution kept its word. Its entire case against Narciso and Perez was based upon circumstantial evidence. The prosecution alleged that the nurses committed the acts by injecting a muscle-relaxing drug, Pavulon, into the intravenous tubes of the patients in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). However, the nurses were never seen with syringes in their hands and medical reports were not able to prove that the breathing failures were in fact caused by this drug. In addition, reports by an ex-patient and other witnesses disclosed that a man in a green scrub suit was seen lingering in the room of a victim before the breathing failure occurred. This man has never been identified nor did the F.B.I. ever pursue this lead.

WHY WERE NARCISO AND PEREZ SINGLED OUT?

Conditions at the Ann-Arbor V.A. Hospital were very poor. The hospital was understaffed and had a shortage of essential supplies. Yet its administrators were highly paid. Its security system and disorganized procedure in emergency situations, as demonstrated during the period of the respiratory failures, were extremely deficient. Patients were not receiving the quality health care and services which they were supposed to receive. The administration claimed that funds were not available for improvement of

these conditions, yet the Chief of Staff, Dr. Lindenauer, was vacationing in London during the time the breathing failures occurred. It was in the interests of the government and the hospital administration to cover up the poor service and corruption. In addition, the government had already spent \$1 million to defend six suits which families of victims had filed against the hospital. Thus, the hospital and the government were seeking the quickest possible resolution to the case with the least possible exposure to the public of the hospital's negligence and misuse of public funds.

The FBI was also interested in seeking a fast solution to the case. The investigation took place at a time when the FBI was under a lot of public pressure because its image had been severely damaged by such events as the disclosure of the Watergate scandal, the Patty Hearst kidnapping, and the disappearance of Jimmy Hoffa. In fact, public opinion of governmental agencies and institutions in general during this period was very low due to the exposure of the corrupt character of these institutions. Wire-tapping, cover-ups, and conspiracies were revealed as common practices of the FBI and the CIA in domestic and international affairs. The credibility of the government was further weakened by the unfolding of the criminal role of the CIA in the attempts on the life of Fidel Castro of Cuba and in the overthrow and murder of President Allende of Chile in 1973.

It was within this national climate that the FBI proceeded, with the assistance of Dr. Lindenauer, to intimidate and harass Perez and Narciso, ignoring all other possibilities such as doctors, medical students, visitors, etc. One witness testified while she was undergoing questioning in 1976, that two FBI agents told her that they had "orders from Dr. Lindenauer that he didn't want his doctors harassed." Betty Jakim, a supervisor of nurses at the time of the breathing failures, had an emotional breakdown in 1975 and confided to a psychiatrist that she was responsible for the breathing failures. As evidenced by the various testimonies of other nurses, former patients, visitors, medical experts, etc., the FBI, in search of a quick and "viable" solution, arbitrarily chose the most vulnerable of all possible suspects—two Filipino women. The FBI, in collusion with Lindenauer and the prosecution, was able to "convince" the jury that Leonora Perez and Filipina Narciso had poisoned more than seven seriously-ill patients with no apparent motive. At one point in the trial, the prosecution attempted to imply that the nurses' motive in poisoning the people was to call attention to hospital under-staffing. Besides the absurdity of this charge, the prosecution neglected to bring out that in June, 1975, many nurses working at the VA Hospital submitted a petition to protest the shortage in staff and the poor working conditions.

WHY THE GUILTY VERDICT?

In light of the lack of evidence, contradictions, and inconsistencies which were revealed in the course of the trial, how then could the jury return a guilty verdict? We do not pretend to be psychologists nor can we read people's minds. We can, however, make an analysis based on historical conditions and the conditions which exist in a given period. The two nurses and the jurors are not isolated from U.S. society—a society in which racism, sexism, and national chauvinism are bred by the ruling class and forced into the minds of working and oppressed peoples through

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

WORKERS GAIN VICTORY

On August 31st, as members of our Workers' Sector were distributing ON THE LINE (the Sector's newsletter) outside the factory of Etienne Aigner Company, several of the workers there told us of the unjust firing of an active woman worker.

Etienne Aigner Co. is a small shop located in the Garment District in New York City. It produces expensive leather products (pocketbooks, shoes, etc.). It operates with a labor force of over 300 workers, almost one-half of them women. The majority of the workers are Latin, with a smaller black population.

During the last few months, the workers at this shop had been complaining about the fact that they were not provided with enough time on payday to cash their checks and also eat lunch. The workers figured that there must be a law somewhere that entitled them to additional time on payday in order to eat. They brought this issue up to the shop chairlady and union representative, who tried to brush them off. The workers ignored this and pressured the chairlady into posting on the union bulletin board New York State Labor Law Section 192, which described the workers' right to more lunchtime on payday. Typical of the unresponsive union, the law was not translated into Spanish, which meant that most of the workers in the shop were unable to understand it.

The reaction of the management was to ignore the notice. They attempted to get around the law by saying that whoever needed a few more minutes on payday could come back late to the shop and not be docked for it. With this procedure, the company made the issue an individual problem, knowing it was in their interest to do this. Their concern was to guarantee maximum production. Without an official notice by the management, and unaware of State labor laws, the majority of the factory would work without much protest. . . and this is what management wanted.

It became clear to the workers at the shop that the union was collaborating with management and was not responding to the needs of the workers. The workers decided to organize themselves in order to change the situation. Having an additional 15 minutes on payday to eat and cash their meager pay checks is not important for the bosses and union bureaucrats, but it's important to the workers.

The workers began to meet on their own time to discuss how they could force management to provide them with the needed time. They realized that it was necessary to involve and inform all the workers on the issue. They decided to pass on verbally the information about the New York State Law. Then they drew up a petition calling on the union leadership to demand that management comply with

the law. The petition was distributed by the most active workers during their lunch break.

Management and the union bureaucrats became highly upset when they discovered that the workers were beginning to organize themselves. The day after the petition came out, one active woman was fired on the grounds that she was distributing petitions during working hours and also that she was insubordinate. This second charge was based on the fact that she responded courageously to racist and sexist comments made by the foreman.

The woman had been very active in the factory and had gained the respect and admiration of most of her fellow workers, both men and women. When they found out that she had been fired (despite the fact that the boss lied to them and denied this), the workers immediately began to discuss ways to get their co-worker rehired.

The first step was to go to the union. A delegation of 40 workers accompanied their co-worker to the union hall, where they confronted the union's business agent. They demanded that the union defend their co-worker. In characteristic bureaucratic fashion, the business agent's initial reaction was to state that they had not called him for an appointment. But faced with the workers' anger and militancy, he conceded to meet with the fired worker, who filed a grievance against the company.

The following day the workers began a slowdown in support of their co-worker. At lunchtime they were going to walk out. It became clear to management and to the union sellouts that the woman knew her rights and was willing to fight; that she had broad support within the plant and that the workers were willing to take united and militant actions on her behalf. As a result, the boss gave in and the worker was rehired the day after she had been fired.

The workers at Etienne Aigner became stronger through this victory, seeing the strength of their unified actions. The struggle continued with the workers more determined than ever to win their 15 minutes. Signs appeared throughout the factory and on the workers' clothing, demanding the extra time.

On Pay Day, September 8th, almost 300 workers at the shop took 15 MORE MINUTES FOR LUNCH. Management was able to do nothing. This fight will continue until the workers' rights under the NY State law are officially recognized and implemented by management.

This case represents a small but important victory for the workers at Etienne Aigner. This experience reflects—as the history of the militant labor movement has shown—that when workers are united and take organized militant actions, they can effect meaningful changes.



Carter's Welfare Plan Unmasked

Recently President Carter unveiled his proposal to "overhaul" the present welfare system. This latest step by the Carter Administration is part of the "austerity" plan which Carter promised to introduce to curb government spending. What is clear is that the "austerity" is intended for the working class so that the ruling class may continue to wallow in its profits.

When Jimmy Carter was running for President and was wooing the vote of the poor, he promised a "job for every American who wants one" and to reform the welfare system so as to eliminate inequities and improve the lot of the poor. In fact, what he has done with his proposed program for "better jobs and income" is to avoid radical reforms.

The "Better Jobs and Income Proposal" is in essence a forced labor proposal intended to make welfare recipients another pool of cheap labor.

THE NEW WELFARE PLAN

Essentially there are 2 major emphasis' to Carter's new welfare plan; a work requirement which forces all those who are "fit" to work, and a redefinition of the eligibility rules.

Under the work requirement, emphasis is being placed on private industries to provide jobs for welfare recipients. There are presently 11.2 million people on welfare. Eight million are children of school age or younger and their mothers accounting for 3.3 million. The remaining 150,000 are adult men. The welfare mothers are for the most part unable to work because of family responsibilities, lack of adequate daycare facilities, disability or poor health, and lack of skills or training. Welfare is the only possible alternative left open for them and their children. A good deal of Carter's plan affects precisely these women.

Under the present system a single parent (the majority of whom are women) is entitled to welfare aid until his/her youngest child reaches 18 years of age. Under Carter's plan, if a woman's youngest child is between 7 and 14, she would be forced to "accept" part-time work while the child is in school, and full-time work if daycare is available. Those who refuse to work would be forced off welfare or would find their supplements "substantially" cut. At least 28% of the adults presently on welfare would be employed in low-skilled public jobs such as street sweeping or child care at the present minimum wage. Not only would these workers continue to live under the current poverty levels (which are considerably below what is necessary to live adequately) but they would be forced to compete with and take over the jobs presently held by public employees, at less pay.

The proposed welfare plan also calls for "technical" changes in the eligibility rules, changes which effectively deny aid to:

- children living with their grandparents
- workers in seasonal jobs (canning industry, construction, etc.)
- the aged or disabled living with grown children whose income is above the welfare limit
- unmarried teenage mothers living with parents whose income is above the welfare limit.

Other "technical" changes include:

- forcing welfare recipients to report each month to their local welfare offices and state how much income they received in the previous month. (Under the present system welfare recipients are supposed to report immediately to the welfare offices regarding any changes



in income. If there is any significant increase in income—significant to the government, not to the family—a family may be dropped from welfare. Consequently many people do not report changes in income.) According to the Carter Administration the new requirement would eliminate the so-called welfare "cheats."

— changes in determining a family's eligibility. Presently a family can apply for welfare as soon as their monthly income drops below a certain level. Under the new plan, the government would look at the income the family had over the previous six months or a year in determining their eligibility. For example, if the head of the household earned \$800.00 a month for several months in a seasonal job (i.e. construction, etc.) and then became unemployed, that individual would not be eligible for welfare until several months later. The rationale behind this is that the family should have saved money to see them through the rough times. How much can a family of 4 or 5 save out of \$200.00 a week after paying outrageous prices for their basic needs of food, rent, medical expenses, etc.? To the rich and powerful whose interests Carter represents, it is simply a matter of balancing budgets and tightening our belts.

Another of Carter's proposals involves redefining what constitutes "a family." Under the new plan, all the income earned by blood relatives in a household would be counted when deciding whether anyone in the household was eligible for welfare. Therefore in a household of 7, if 3 adults with their own needs or expenses were earning \$4,000.00 each, the "family" income would be \$12,000.00. This would make any one person in that household ineligible for welfare, regardless of their particular needs or situation.

"REQUIRED LABOR" OR FORCED LABOR

The Carter plan would scrap the food stamp program and Aid to Families with Dependent Children and replace

them with a rigid work requirement for all "able-bodied" recipients. Under the proposed provisions of the Carter law, cash allotments will be so low that it will be essential for recipients to work if they should receive an income even approaching the official poverty level. In fact, the proposed new benefits will be actually lower than those currently offered in 39 states. As a result, many states most likely will decide to supplement those benefits.

According to the Carter plan, there will be two levels of cash assistance for those in the "expected to work" category. In the first category everyone will initially enter, for example, a family of four will be allotted \$2300 a year. This will represent only 36% of the 1976 poverty guideline of \$5760 (a level which is considerably below what is needed to live adequately). If the "employable" recipient is unable to find a job after a five-week period and subsequently a three week search by government agencies he/she will then be considered for employment in one of the \$1.4 million public service jobs that will be created by the government. These jobs will pay the minimum wage of \$2.30 an hour or 40% less than the present average wage for federally-created public service jobs. But there is a big question mark as to whether 1.4 million jobs will even be created.

If there happen to be no temporary slots available, then the recipient is automatically placed in a higher benefit level which could mean, for example, that a family of four would receive \$4,200 a year—62% of the 1975 poverty level. However, failure to accept a job placement would mean that the recipient would remain at the lower benefit level—in other words, \$2,300 a year.

CARTER'S PROPOSAL—DIVISIVE TOOL

Historically the welfare program was started under the 1935 Social Security Act, and was a victory for the millions of unemployed workers who had militantly fought for jobs,

relief, compensation and medical benefits to offset the devastating effects of the Great Depression of 1929. However, in the hand of the ruling class, the welfare program has become a weapon used against the just demands of the employed workers struggling for better job conditions and higher wages. This is the intent of the so-called Carter reforms. In short, the welfare system has become another tool in the hands of the rich to further divide the working class. Originally a hard-won gain, welfare is today characterized by the ruling class and its defenders as a "hand-out" while those who depend on it for their subsistence are labeled as "lazy parasites" and "the dregs of society." The millions of unemployed workers and their families living on welfare represent a vast army of cheap labor used by the ruling class to keep "cost of production down," i.e. wages.

Carter's so-called welfare reform comes at a time when the ruling class of this country is desperately seeking to maintain and increase their profits. The millions of unemployed workers and their families represent a source of cheap labor to be tapped and exploited by the owners of the banks and corporations to depress wages and keep profits up.

The Carter proposal is part of an overall policy of the ruling class over the past few years to eliminate the hard-won gains of the working class and minorities during the 60's. These systematic attacks against wages, working conditions, affirmative action (the Bakke decision)—won through militant actions—have not been resisted by organized labor which, in fact, has collaborated with the ruling class.

Clearly the Carter Welfare Program for "Jobs and Income" is an attack not only against welfare recipients and the poor but against the entire working class—particularly minorities. The struggle against this reactionary piece of legislation must be waged on the shop floor, the union hall and in the community.

NARCISO & PEREZ cont.

the educational system, the media, religious institutions, and the courts and judicial system. The judicial system ultimately exists to uphold the interests of the rich—the bourgeoisie. Its oppressive nature is expressed most explicitly in the treatment it has historically rendered to national minorities and women. These backward ideas of racism and sexism serve to divide workers, and a working class divided is weakened. As long as the ruling class can utilize these tools with effectiveness, the longer will its interests as a dominant class be preserved.

The bourgeoisie has held state power in this country for over two centuries and its agents are well-trained and highly skilled. In order to protect their interests and prestige, the FBI, the Assistant U.S. Attorney and the VA Hospital Chief of Staff used whatever tactics necessary—including trickery, deceptions, distortions, and bribery—to play on the racist fears and prejudices of the jury during the trial and of the nurses on the ward during the investigation. Federal Court Judge Pratt, who presided over the case, was also influential in prejudicing the case against Narciso and Perez by refusing to dismiss the case on the basis of lack of evidence and by continually demonstrating his support and allegiance to the prosecution.

REACTION OF THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY

The conviction of Narciso and Perez is a racist attack on the Filipino community and a blatant example of the mockery which government and court officials have made out of our so-called system of justice. Since the arrest of Narciso and Perez on June 16, 1976, Filipino communities across the country have organized campaigns to raise

legal funds and generate support for the two women. They have been successful in uniting various and diverse ethnic and racial groups and individuals who recognize that the case against Narciso and Perez represents an attack on the democratic rights of all people—not just Filipinos and other national minorities.

As demonstrated time and again in the history of the struggles of labor, women, and national minorities in this country, the judicial system will use its repressive tools on the masses *indiscriminately* whenever necessary. We must not forget Sacco and Vanzetti, the Wilmington 10, the Rosenberg executions, the Attica brothers and Five Puerto Rican Nationalists.

President Carter and his administration are currently engaged in what they proclaim to be a campaign for "human rights" world-wide, portraying as a comparison, the United States as a "democratic" society where human justice and social equality are respected. We must not allow the rhetoric of the ruling class to disguise what is actually the *denial* of democratic rights in this country.

The struggle to free Narciso and Perez is one in which all working and oppressed people must unite. We, therefore, join with the Chicago Support Group and Filipino communities throughout the country, in raising the call—FREE NARCISO AND PEREZ! DEFEND THE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS OF ALL WORKING AND OPPRESSED PEOPLES TO SOCIAL JUSTICE!

(For information on the activities and needs of the New York Support Group—Contact Mrs. Primitiva Lejarde, R.N. (212) 626-0556 or write to Narciso-Perez Support Committee (N.Y.), 58-22, 41st Avenue, Woodside, New York 11377)