

PUERTO RICO

EL GRITO DE LARES

(This article, translated from the Spanish, was submitted to the *People's Tribune* by the Independent University Youth in Puerto Rico. In commemoration of the 23 of September, known as El Grito de Lares, and the 30th of October known as La Revolucion de Jayuya, we print this article. The struggle for national liberation in Puerto Rico is an inseparable struggle of the proletariat in Anglo-American and the Negro Nation. We salute the Puerto Rican people and pledge our unceasing dedication to the struggle for a free and independent Puerto Rico.)

One of the most important dates for those fighting for the independence of Puerto Rico is September 23. On that date we celebrate the most important and significant armed uprising in our history as a colony of the Spanish empire.

Even when that armed uprising was quickly subdued by the metropolis' armed forces, it represented the most heroic example of the Puerto Rican national bourgeoisie at a time in world history when the revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie as a class was disappearing.

It is important to note that it is in the first decade of the 19th century that the independence struggles in Latin America were beginning to develop. At a time when almost the whole continent had overthrown the decaying Spanish empire, our country was still subjected to colonial rule. Nonetheless our national bourgeoisie had attempted revolutionary struggles prior to 1868, although they were small in magnitude and importance. That doesn't mean that the Grito de Lares was an uprising of tremendous magnitude, but it certainly was the major one in all that period of our history.

In Lares, we observed the uprising process of the national bourgeoisie, of capitalism, of a new nation, the Puerto Rican nation.

Since a nation is not only an "historical category, but a historical cate-

gory in a determined period, the period of ascending capitalism." (Stalin) Puerto Rico conformed to this process of developing nations when the decaying Spanish empire was disintegrating and developing alongside of this was the international forces in Puerto Rico, the development of capitalism. Therefore, it is in the 19th century that capitalism begins to develop and that the Puerto Rican nation begins to develop.

What is the importance of the above mentioned? Since our national bourgeoisie began to rise in the 19th century, it is natural that it should be weak both numerically and economically. The inevitable result is its weak development as a class. In Stalin's words, "The strength of the national movement is determined by the degree of participation of the nation's broadest sections, the proletariat and the peasants."

Due to its weakness and lack of experience as a class in the revolutionary struggle, due to its' oppression and repression by the metropolis, our bourgeoisie conceived the armed struggle in a conspirative character apart from the participation of the broad sectors of the nation, (in our case fundamentally the peasants) and to openly confront the military forces of a decaying empire, but still strong in Puerto Rico.

With a force of approximately 2,000 poorly armed men who walked from diverse parts of the country, the revolutionaries plunged into the town of Lares proclaiming a Republic and declared a government. The following day, all the major battles were fought in San Sebastian where a battalion of 700 men was annihilated. That marked the end of the revolution, the Republic, and the bourgeoisie as a revolutionary class. The revolutionary peak of our bourgeoisie was expressed on that 23 of September. But at the same time, its ability as a class to win its independence, ended.

Since 1868 to the present, Albizu's, Hostos' and Betances' nationalist ideo-

logy has been the ideological base of the national movement. This nationalism kept alive the ideals of independence during the first decades of Yankee imperialist colonial control.

During the period from 1898 (year of the USNA military intervention) until the end of the 1950's, the predominant ideology of our separatist struggle was nationalism. Our national bourgeoisie practically disappeared because of imperialist penetration and the idea of independence became the banner of the remnants of that class and of certain sectors of the petty bourgeoisie.

Appealing to society's dispossessed sectors and making their cause appear to those below them as the people's cause, the petty bourgeoisie drags behind sectors that at one time represented a real political force of electoral importance in the country. In 1952, the Popular Democratic Party (Autonomous) won 431,409 votes, the Puerto Rican Independent Party won 126,228 votes and the Republican State Party (Assimilatst) won 85,591 votes.

During this period, the development of the capitalist forces of production began a process of proletarianization in the urban centers, of the peasantry; while it also began dispersing the peasantry to the large cities and to the USNA

The acceleration of this process, eliminating semi-feudal economic remnants, alongside the capitalist development, brings forth a series of structural changes that affect the correlation of political forces in the country.

To speak of "raza", "hispantry", the "culture", the "flag", etc. now gets no response from the people. Those that pretended to move the people, have lost their force. Independents start marching towards the ranks of the Autonomist and Assimilationist Movements. The petty bourgeoisie and "national bourgeoisie" are in a political crisis. The national liberation struggle without a revolutionary content, which only the working class with its ideology can give it, is not a real alternative for the vast majority of people.

Faced with the failure of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to lead

the Independent Movement, it decides to go its own way by the end of the 60's. Defending its class interests at all costs, the Independent Movement pushes towards drawing in the workers. On the one hand, its object was to give consistency to its movement, and on the other hand, to try to prevent the "masses" from acquiring real class consciousness, thereby retarding the time when these "masses" would take the lead of the independent movement into their own hands.

Veiling its nationalist essence and speaking about the "socialism" it demands for the working class, it gives the independence struggle an apparent Marxist and socialist content. It is true that their positions represent a tremendous advance, in contrast to their former positions, and it is true that their programmatic demands respond to the concept of a more advanced political order than the present capitalist-colonial one, but even so, they do not respond to a new economic form where the workers have the economic, political, and social apparatus in their hands.

The historic absence of a real working class party, equipped with scientific socialism as its ideology, has caused a tremendous vacuum in our struggle.

That is one of the principal reasons that the Independent Movement is in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie. A major consequence of the lack of a Communist Party is the relatively scarce integration of the working class in the independence struggle, and the instability and crisis that the Independence Movement is going through. An example of the low degree of consciousness by our working class is the fact that even for a mere struggle for unionization, only 20% have been organized into unions.

The major political activity with a radical content has been the universities and not the industrial centers. The former student leaders and not the workers in the main lead the principal Independent Movements; the major part of the militancy comes from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie.

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BLOODY SPAIN

The September 27th execution of five Spanish guerrillas by the Franco dictatorship, and the multiple consequences that have arisen as a result of the bloody killings, underscore the increasing weakness and isolation of the 36-year old fascist regime. Even in the face of repeated protests and pleas from European leaders (including those of Pope Paul VI) to spare the lives of those condemned after summary trials, no appeal, long imprisonment where extensive torture was used, and other legal "irregularities", the fascist dictatorship went ahead with the criminal murders of three members of the Patriotic Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Front (F.R.A.P.), a Marxist urban guerrilla organization: Ramon Garcia Sanz, Jose Luis Sanchez Bravo, and Jose Baena Alonso; and two militants of the Basque revolutionary nationalist E.T.A. organization, another Marxist liberation group which is currently struggling to free the Basque nation from fascist oppression: Angel Otaegui and Juan Paredes. As a "humanitarian" gesture the Franco regime pardoned six others, including two pregnant women yet even now, the fascist jails remain overburdened with political prisoners of which 30-32 alleged "terrorists" potentially risk the maximum sentence for their courageous resistance to Franco's totalitarian regime.

The executions no doubt were conceived by Franco right-wing hard-liners as a response to the rapidly growing democratic opposition forces in the country, particularly among labor organizations where progressive elements have grown both qualitatively and quantitatively in the last few years. As such, the government kill-

ings would have been an "exemplary" action designed to intimidate and frighten the democratic opposition, but the balance of forces is changing quickly to the disadvantage of the regime. The recently-held union elections were overwhelmingly won by the outlawed Worker's Committees, the only democratic representation open to the working classes and which contain all of the progressive labor leaders. Strikes have multiplied in recent months, and now reach sectors where such actions would have been previously unthinkable. The recent general newspaper strike in Barcelona is such an example. In addition to growing popular animosity against the repressive regime in most parts of Spain, the Basque country in particular has been the scene of a bitter struggle that has pitted Basque freedom fighters against the military occupation of those provinces. Hundreds of Basques are currently held in jails throughout the Spanish territory, for they have undergone torture "on a massive scale" as Amnesty International reported on September 29 in a well-documented paper. The strength of this Marxist led liberation movement has contributed powerfully to the country's democratic forces. The Franco regime clearly demonstrated its alarm by reviving in April 1975 the long outdated "anti-terrorist" laws of 1939; laws decreed at a critical time when the fascist victors faced continued guerrilla struggle at home.

There are other important elements in the current Spanish political situation. The events in Portugal have alarmed Spanish "ultras" and there is

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FREE OLGA

It is almost a year since Olga Talamante, a Mexican national minority woman was arrested with 11 Argentinians in the wake of the State of Siege declared by Isabella Peron's government. The State of Siege legalized what had already been going on under Peron himself—mass arrests and shootings of workers, trade unionists, political activists, students and peasants.

Olga's story is similar to that of other courageous fighters of our class. A farmworker's daughter, Olga was raised in Gilroy California, living the harsh life of most farmworkers picking the produce with cold numb fingers in the mornings while sweat and thorns covered her by the afternoon. But she fought back against that kind of life. She was an active fighter in the farmworker's struggle, and for the rights of the Mexican national minority for a better life without fear of speaking Spanish, or of being thrown off the land that was once theirs—a life that all workers should have with jobs and without fear of dying in a war that only the capitalists will gain from.

Her struggle against the unjust suffering of capitalism's victims was not confined to this country, for in Argentina she and her companions participated actively in literacy and educational programs in the low-income neighborhoods of Azul. It was in Azul that the police raided a bar-b-que with the excuse that under the State of Siege no more than four persons could be gathered at the same place. They accused Olga and her companions of possessing "subversive literature" and two .45 caliber pistols—an unproven charge since there was evidence that

the weapons were planted by the police. Last week Olga and her companions were convicted and given three years in jail. She is appealing her sentence, for her real "crime" was her battle for a better life for the Argentinian people.

The torture Olga endured being strapped naked to a bed while the police applied electric shocks to her body and beat her are examples of the cold-blooded tortures that the Argentinian people are subjected to. Under the fascist regime all progressive sectors of society feel its blows. Reporters attempting to cover the recent army activities have been arrested. Two lawyers appointed to defend Olga received death threats and declined to take the case. Fascism means decay and death. But workers do not accept it idly, the support for Olga and her 11 companions is an example of that. Throughout Mexico, the USNA, and Argentina, outraged masses have demonstrated their support for Olga and the burning desire for freedom that she represents.

When her family heard of her arrest they mobilized and appealed to the US State Department to act on her behalf. Due to mass protests by workers, labor leaders, farmworkers, church people, congressmen, professors, and the press, the USNA government promises to release her, but has done nothing about it.

The workers must do something about it. The Olga Talamante Defense Committee is asking people to do the following: 1) send letters and telegrams demanding Olga's release, 2) pass resolutions of support from your organizations, 3) inform others

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OCTOBER REVOLUTION

This November 7 will mark the 58th anniversary of the world-changing October Revolution that established the Soviet Union in 1917. Joseph Stalin, in a speech on the 10th anniversary of the revolution, put forth its basic significance:

"The October Revolution cannot be regarded merely as a revolution 'within national bounds.' It is, primarily, a revolution of an international world order; for it signifies a radical turn in the world history of mankind, a turn from the old, capitalist world to the new, socialist world.

Revolutions in the past usually ended by one group of exploiters at the helm of government being replaced by another group of exploiters. The exploiters changed, exploitation remained. Such was the case during the liberation movements of the slaves. Such was the case during the period of the well-known 'great' revolutions in England, France and Germany. I am not speaking of the Paris Commune, which was the first glorious, heroic, yet unsuccessful attempt on the part of the proletariat to turn history against capitalism.

The October Revolution differs from these revolutions in principle. Its aim is not to replace one form of exploitation by another form of exploitation, one group of exploiters by another group of exploiters, but to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, to establish the power of the most revolutionary class of all the oppressed classes that have ever existed, to organize a new classless, socialist society.

It is precisely for this reason that the victory of the October Revolution signifies a radical change in the history of mankind, a radical change in the historical destiny of the world proletariat, a radical change in the methods of struggle and the forms of organization, in the manner of life and traditions, in the culture and ideology of the exploited masses throughout the world.

That is the basic reason why the October Revolution is a revolution of an international, world order." ("The International Character of the October Revolution", J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National-Colonial Question*, Proletarian Publishers, 1975, pp. 372-373)

The October Revolution has charted a new path for the world to follow. The building of socialism in the Soviet Union, the formation of the Third Communist International, the heroic victory over the fascists at the cost of 20 million lives, the joining of the proletarian revolution with the national liberation movements of the oppressed peoples; these mighty achievements of the Soviet people, the Soviet State, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik), are immeasurable contributions to the history of the world. Only fools and charlatans would now say that these contributions have now ended due to the temporary strength of revisionism in the CPSU (B).

This history and these contributions have not been forgotten or forsaken either by the people of the world or by the people of the Soviet Union. We salute the 58th anniversary of the most important event of modern times. The red banner of the October Revolution will soon fly over the entire world!

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a noticeable fear of contamination from the longtime, faithful, and passive brother, suddenly "out of hand" and on its road to socialist revolution. Likewise, in the last few months, there have been clear signs of splits within the Spanish military, and the arrests of several young officers have been reported. A secret opposition document is currently circulating

WHAT IS SOCIALISM

A revolutionary Party in the modern world can no longer be a small group of dedicated heroes prepared to sacrifice themselves to bring about the necessary changes in the social order. Frederick Engels, one of the greatest thinkers of human history and with Karl Marx, co-founder of our movement, said as early as 1895,

"The times of surprise attacks, of revolutions carried through by small conscious minorities at the head of unconscious masses, is past. Where it is a question of a complete transformation of the social organization, the masses themselves must also be in it, must themselves already have grasped what is at stake, what they are going in for (with body and soul). The history of the last fifty years has taught us that. But in order that the masses may understand what is to be done, long, persistent work is required, and it is just this work which we are now pursuing..."

For many decades, no political group or Party has made a real effort to introduce the masses of workers to the ideas of socialism, to teach them that it is their system, as surely as the capitalist system belongs to and operates in favor of the capitalists.

We of the CLP see this as a number one task of our fledging Party. We recognize that the process of building the revolutionary movement is the process of imbuing the masses with the spirit of socialism, teaching them to love socialism, to defend it and to sacrifice for it.

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

It would be almost impossible to explain socialism unless there is some knowledge of capitalism and the life of the worker under the dictatorship of the capitalists.

Why are capitalists, who don't work, rich and the workers who create all the wealth poor? To answer this question we have to look at what happened in the history of mankind. The 3 systems of exploitation—slavery, feudalism and capitalism—have a common goal. That goal is to make people work and not pay them. Under slavery this was accomplished by simply buying the worker all at once and "paying" him only the necessities to maintain his health and strength. Aside from these necessities, everything the slave produced was taken by the master.

Under feudalism, the nobility, because they had armies, simply took the land and the serfs were forced to work for them. Aside from the necessities to maintain a minimum of health and strength, to labor and produce

among the Spanish military by those who vow to refuse serving the regime's oppressive structures. This movement to "democratize" the military could well have significant consequences in a period of political transition and unrest following Franco's death.

After the execution, the public outrage has been enormous in Europe, particularly among left-oriented trade unions, political organizations and governments. Already the Spanish dictatorship finds itself in its most critical moment of isolation since the Civil War: foreign ambassadors have been recalled, European workers have called for and instituted economic boycotts of Spanish products and systems of transportation, and short general strikes have been observed in France, the Netherlands, Greece, West Germany, and in various parts of Scandinavia, as a means of protesting the continuing fascist repression in Spain and also as a means of denouncing their respective countries' support for the bankrupt dictatorship. The only silence, and an extremely significant one at that, has been that

a new generation of serfs, the nobility took all that was produced. Generally, this meant that the serf worked 3 days for himself and was forced to work 4 days for the nobility.

Under capitalism, the capitalists own all the means of production. They own the factories, mines and mills. They own almost all the farm land, the railroads, grocery stores, most of the houses and apartments. Everything the workers need to live must be purchased from the capitalist. But the worker must have something to sell if he is going to buy these necessities. The only thing he has to sell is his ability to work. He can't sell his work, because he has no machinery to work with. He can only sell his ability to work, and that only if there is a capitalist who wants to buy it.

Every worker knows the results of his labor power becoming a commodity. First, since the capitalist buys that labor power before the worker starts to work, the capitalist is in a position to drive the worker without mercy and all that is created by him is legally taken by the capitalist. As a class, the workers only receive the necessities of life and the wealth produced above this, is taken by the capitalist. The only difference between slavery, serfdom and capitalism is the way the ruling class forces the worker to work and not pay him for what he has produced.

The capitalists, while degrading the workers to the level of slaves, become mad dogs. They developed while fighting everything, the feudalists whom they overthrew and the modern proletarians whom they created. They fight each other over markets and raw materials, they cheat and steal from one another, but most of all they fight the workers. In their struggle over profits, they force the workers to slaughter each other. The capitalist system is a system of contradiction and struggle. The capitalist system is a process of the stronger capitalist class robbing and impoverishing the workers and the big capitalists eating up the little ones. As a result, all of the nations' wealth flows into the hands of the biggest capitalists and the vast majority of people become poorer and poorer until they are forced to overthrow the system.

What does this social revolution, led by the working class create? First of all, the workers are forced to treat each other equally since they, through the state they have created, are the owners of the means of production. They immediately do away with the source of their torment, that is that they now sell their work instead of their ability to work. Thus for the first time, those who labor thrive while those who have lived off the la-

bor of others become producers themselves or they do without food. Since every able bodied person is guaranteed a job and they own the job, no one can take it from them. Money cannot be used to force others to do what an individual may wish. Under such conditions, crime and oppression are bound to begin to disappear. At one time, Russia and China were lands teeming with dope, prostitution and criminals. The revolutions of the working class changed all that. Now there is hardly any crime in these countries. By taking power and transforming private property into collective public property, the production solely for profit is transformed into production for use.

It is this common ownership of the means of production that create the conditions for the elimination of discrimination against the weaker minorities and nations, against women and the aged.

Socialism is for the little people. It is for the masses, especially the workers whose labor has created all the wealth, but who have no voice in the way they are governed. Socialism is for the Negro whose toil and blood and suffering has created so much of this country. Socialism is for the Mexican who capitalism has reduced to an alien in his own land. Socialism is for the woman whose creativity has been strangled and who has been reduced to a plaything of bedroom despot and parlor tyrants. Socialism is for the youth whose heroic morality and bold dreams are objects of capitalist exploitation. It is for the aged who in hopeless poverty look upon the wealth they have created, a wealth now used to enslave a new generation, even as it casts them aside, as if they were used up instruments of production. Socialism is for the Puerto Rican who understands his individual helplessness before the grinding destructive onslaught of imperialism. It is for the Indian who demands more than pretified stories and photographs in exchange for the seizure of his lands. Socialism is for those who love this country and its peoples, because only socialism can save it!

LONG LIVE SOCIALISM!

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In the last years, serious, honest Communists have presented the necessity to organize a working class party. From the ranks of the working class, the independist political organizations, student organizations, etc., the slogan "Puerto Rico Needs a Communist Party" has surged. From their different fronts of struggle, those Marxist-Leninists and democratic elements who have taken up the slogan, contribute to the process of its creation.

In the realm of the above, is linked the struggle that will free both the Puerto Rican and USNA revolutionaries. Just as for the USNA working class the existence of its class party represents the guide in the revolutionary struggle, the Puerto Rican working class needs the instrument that will lead them to their complete and final liberation.

The Puerto Rican proletariat can not find its real independence within the framework of capitalist relations. An independence of such character would mean a real dependence on imperialism. In the same manner, the proletariat of an oppressor state cannot be free while it oppresses the proletariat of another nation. That is the reason why the North American proletariat takes up the slogan of Independence for Puerto Rico in its struggle to gain political power; while the Puerto Rican proletariat must resolutely support the North American proletariat in its revolutionary struggle.

Only the revolution, only the victory of the working class over capital, only the united force of the international proletariat will defeat imperialism!