

# PRSC - From Conciliation to Outright Surrender

The following is an open letter to the Marxist-Leninist press from Marxist-Leninists for an Independent Puerto Rico (MLIP), a caucus within the San Francisco chapter of the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee, (PRSC). The MLOC participates within MLIP.

## THE POLITICAL CHARACTER OF THE PRSC.

What is the political character of the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee (PRSC)? Does it play a progressive role in the struggle to liberate Puerto Rico? Does it link this struggle effectively with the struggles of working people and national minorities in the United States? The view of Marxist-Leninists for an Independent Puerto Rico (MLIP) is that the PRSC has failed in the tasks that it set for itself, and that this failure is a direct result of PRSC's complete surrender to the line of modern revisionism and social-imperialism.

The Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee grew out of the Puerto Rican Solidarity Day Committee which organized the Puerto Rican Solidarity Day Demonstration on October 27, 1974, in Madison Square Garden. The stated purpose of the PRSC is to build support for the independence of Puerto Rico and for the self-determination of the Puerto Rican people.

The organization is headed by a National Board and the Interim Committee which functions between National Board meetings. Supposedly, the National Board is the policy making body while the Interim Committee is supposed to execute that policy. In reality, the I.C. makes and sets whatever policy it so desires. The role of the chapters is entirely subordinate.

Our differences with both PRSC are differences of the outlook and political line. The following points represent the most fundamental differences which we have with the PRSC. In order to understand what the political views of the PRSC represent, it is necessary to analyze them in the context of the present international situation, and in terms of the national reality of both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Only in this way can we understand how thorough is the PRSC's surrender to modern revisionism, U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism.

## THE HAVANA CONFERENCE

Since the PRSC has openly endorsed all the resolutions and actions that came from the "International Conference in Solidarity with Independence for Puerto Rico" held in Havana, Cuba, in September of 1975, it is important to understand what went on there.

In order to understand the significance of the Havana Conference, it is necessary to understand the role of the U.S.S.R. in organizing the conference.

Further, it is necessary to understand the role of Soviet economic and political penetration in Latin America.

The rapid growth of the U.S.S.R.'s role in the economy of Latin American countries is reflected on several levels. It is clear from its role in the United Nations that the Soviet Union is opposed to all the major moves by Latin American countries to gain greater economic self-reliance through the regulation of their raw materials. The U.S.S.R. has opposed the formation of all the major multi-lateral economic confederations such as O.P.E.C., the Andean Pact, the Economic System of Latin America (SELA) and the Latin American Energy Organization. In Panama, rather than supporting the just struggle of the Panamanian people to regain the canal, the Soviet Union has called for the "internationalization" of the canal. The call of many Latin American countries for an extension of the territorial waters to 200 miles to safeguard their fishing industry had met with fierce opposition in the U.N. by the U.S.S.R.

In its dealings with separate Latin American countries, the U.S.S.R. has also revealed its intentions. For the first time, in 1975, the U.S.S.R. sold heavy ground military hardware to Latin American countries. Its penetration into the national economies of Latin American countries has primarily taken the form of investment in joint construction in the public sector. In countries like Brazil, it has registered a huge trade deficit from year to year in order to make national economies of these countries dependent on the U.S.S.R.

Militarily, the U.S.S.R. also reveals its intentions. The Soviet Union has persistently refused to sign Additional Protocol II to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. The Soviet Union has also escalated its military presence in the Western hemisphere. In September of 1974, the Soviet fleet made a show of force in the area by for the first time including the "Kresta Class II" missile-carrying cruiser. By the end of February of 1975, the Soviet Union had made its thirteenth cruise in the Caribbean Sea.

Why doesn't the U.S.S.R. support these efforts of Latin American countries to gain greater independence from the parasitic domination of U.S. imperialism? Clearly, it is because these efforts are linked to the policies of self-reliance and non-alignment which would thwart the U.S.S.R.'s goal of replacing U.S. imperialism in the saddle in Latin America. It is in this light that the policies arrived at by the Havana Conference take on ominous meaning.

The Havana Conference was organized at the initiative of the U.S.S.R. through its front, the World Peace Council and such other fronts as the Inter-

national Student Union, the World Press Federation and the World Women's Federation. All of these organizations had played a direct role in the destruction of the unity of the international communist movement. Their betrayal of the world revolution is openly documented (e.g. The Moscow World Congress of Women, 1963, "Speech and Statements by the Chinese Women's Delegation", reprinted by the August Twenty-Ninth Movement) and their cowardly role in attempting to isolate People's China and Albania cannot be forgiven.

In the preparatory conference in March of 1975, the organizers stated that "colonialism is dying... the forces of peace, social freedom and socialism impose an international detente". In September of 1975, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party newspaper "Claridad", printed a statement by PSP leader Mari Bras that supported such a view and spoke of the taking shape of the parameters of detente (Claridad, Sept. 1, 1975, vol. 17, #657). It is important to understand that consistent support for the conference

was based on the recognition of detente as an international strategy. This condition was consciously decided on in order to promote splits and to foist PSP upon the Puerto Rican people as the vanguard of the independence struggle. This was clearly revealed in the sectarian manipulation of the composition of the conference.

In Puerto Rico, PSP with its sectarian politics prevented participation in the conference by the Partido Socialista Revolucionario (PSR-ML). None of the other major independista groups such as the Puerto Rican Independence Party, the Nationalist Party, the Socialist League or PSR took part in the preparations Committee for the conference. In fact, if not in word, the basis for participation became not support for independence for Puerto Rico, but rather agreement with the politics of detente.

In the U.S., a number of organizations such as the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization were excluded from participation in the preparations for the conference.

On the international level, the sectarian character of the conference was reflected in the choice of location, Cuba. The leadership of the Cuban Communist Party has been most vicious and deceiving in its attacks against People's China and Albania and has willingly covered for the U.S.S.R. in such places as the Algiers Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, where the Canadian and Arab delegations bitterly criticized the Soviet Union's betrayal of the liberation movements.

The PRSC's support of the Havana Conference does in fact make support for Puerto Rican independence conditional on recognition of the politics of detente.

## THE U.N. RESOLUTION

The PRSC has taken a stand in support of the U.N. Decolonization Committee resolution on Puerto Rico. This resolution, which was sponsored by the Cuban delegation, stated that: 1) Puerto Rico is a colony; 2) Puerto Rico has the right to independence; and 3) that PSP is the legitimate representative of the Puerto Rican people and should be granted observer status. By linking support for Puerto Rican independence to the recognition of the PSP, this resolution created a split internationally over the question. The resolution narrowed the base of support for Puerto Rican independence to those countries which were willing to recognize the "vanguard" role of the PSP. Again, support for Puerto Rican independence was sacrificed to the pro-Soviet, pro-detente politics of the PSP.

## THE CASE OF FEDERICO CINTRON-FIALLO

Federico Cintron-Fiallo is Executive Secretary of the Movimiento Obrero Unido (MOU) and the leader of the Puerto Rican Guild of Workers. Companero Cintron was arrested on August 13, 1975 by agents of the FBI and the colonial intelligence service (CIC) on a frame-up for bank robbery. Yet, to read "Puerto Rico Libre", organ of the PRSC, he hardly even exists. During the recent wave of repression in Puerto Rico, Cintron's case was mentioned only once, in an article in the October 1975 "Puerto Rico Libre" in connection with his release from jail on reduced bail. In Volume 2, number 8 of "Puerto Rico Libre" in the article on "MOU: The Struggle for Labor Unity", Cintron's role as Executive Secretary of the MOU is not even mentioned while the article totally credits Pedro Grant with founding, organizing and leading the MOU.

Why is this?

It is because Grant is a leader of the PSP and Cintron is not in the PSP at all. Further, it results from Cintron's trenchant criticism of the PSP. Again PRSC tailed behind PSP which initially did not support Cintron's defense calling the repression against Cintron an attempt to divert attention away from PSP. PRSC must take responsibility for its unilateral support of PSP which in this case became a prop for colonial repression.

## THE JULY 4TH COALITION

PRSC has been one of the initiators of this coalition and has both nationally and locally focused its attention on building its "counter-bicentennial" program in Philadelphia on July 4th. At a time in this country's history when the ruling class is moving rapidly to stream-line the governmental apparatus (fascization of the state); when the



government is focusing on preparations for another imperialist war and when the ruling class is the first to trumpet the "viability of American Democracy", for people who call themselves anti-imperialists to engage in such a patently reformist coalition is a direct betrayal of the working class and oppressed nationalities. It is capitulation in the face of the growing trend toward fascism.

Lenin, in his writings on the U.S., clearly indicated that one of the fundamental features of the U.S. working class movement was the absence of any big, nation-wide democratic tasks facing the proletariat; this feature confronted the proletariat with purely socialist tasks. (Lenin, *On the United States of America*, Progress Publishers, p.23-24).

It is clear that the tasks facing the working class in this country are the product of the objective development of imperialism, decaying capitalism. At a time when the ruling class is prompting and promoting illusions about "democracy", trying to prop up its credibility, it is our task to unmask this "American Democracy", and to expose this rotten system of monopoly capitalism. These are crucial times. For PRSC to haze over the characteristics of U.S. imperialism is, in fact, to aid and abet the drive toward fascism and imperialist war.

**THE PUERTO RICAN SOCIALIST PARTY**

It is not possible here to present a comprehensive critique of the opportunism of the PSP's Political Theses or its practice. The view of MLIP is that PSP acts as a cover for the interests of Soviet social-imperialism. Here we will focus on one aspect of PSP's line, the divided nation theory, and on a recent example of its practice.

Basically, PSP's thesis that Puerto Ricans are part of the Puerto Rican nation regardless of whether they are living in Puerto Rico or not is an excuse for PSP's practice of organizing within the Puerto Rican minority in the U.S. The views and experience of the communist movement on this question are summarized by J.V. Stalin.

"We have still to settle the question of how to organize the proletariat of the various nationalities into a single common party. One plan is that the workers should be organized on national lines--so many nations, so many parties. That plan was rejected by the Social-Democrats (communists). Experience has shown that the organization of the proletariat of a given state on national lines tends only to destroy the idea of class solidarity. All proletarians of all nations in a given state must be organized in a single, indivisible proletarian collective."

(Stalin, *Marxism and the National Question*, Proletarian Publishers, p.106.)

Historical experience also proves that the national division of the worker's party inevitably leads to division of the other workers' organ-

izations (e.g. trade unions) and eventually to strike-breaking. It is also necessary to point out that under conditions of increasing repression and the growing trend toward fascization of the state that a political line which calls for the organization of workers along exclusively national lines represents socialism in words, fascism in practice. By not criticizing this dangerous view, PRSC has become party to it.

The political views and practice of the PSP are reflected clearly in the recent events at Hostos Community College in the Bronx and the process of development which led up to them.

On Monday, March 15 of this year, two members of Resistencia Puertorriqueña, a Marxist-Leninist organization based in the Puerto Rican national minority, distributed a leaflet at Hostos entitled "La Lucha en Hostos es Una Lucha Contra el Imperialismo", ("The Struggle at Hostos is a Struggle Against Imperialism"). In this leaflet, Resistencia criticized the reformist line and tactics of the PSP and the "Communist" Party in the struggle at Hostos, a struggle to save the community college. Rather than respond politically to the criticism, the PSP leaders at Hostos, Professor Ramon Jimenez and Leopolda Rivera organized a goon squad of some twenty people--mostly members of PSP and its student wing, FUSP, and physically attacked the two leafletters. Jimenez told them that the two leafletters were "attacking the students" rather than PSP or the CPUSA, while Rivera alleged that the leafleting was "the work of the CIA".

With all of PSP's posturing at being "un-sectarian", it behaves in the most vicious sectarian manner imaginable.

The PRSC, by acting as a "liaison" for PSP to the U.S. left, must also take responsibility for such actions.

**DOES PRSC BUILD SOLIDARITY?**

The answer to this question is a simple NO. In order for solidarity with the independence movement of Puerto Rico to be successfully built in the U.S., that solidarity must be based on proletarian internationalism. We live in the era of imperialism, when the only class in imperialist countries which has a consistent interest in the liberation of oppressed nations is the working class. We live in the era of imperialism, when the leadership of the trade unions and a small sector of privileged workers have been bought off by imperialist superprofits. This has clear implications. If solidarity is to be successfully built, it must be built among the masses of rank and file workers in this country.

Instead, PRSC has concentrated its attention on building solidarity among trade union bureaucrats (e.g. the Pedro Grant tour) and among a select group of "left" organizations with no roots in the working class. It is easy to "build support" among these groups but what about the more difficult but necessary task of building solidarity among workers?

**PRSC IN THE OVERALL CONTEXT**

Since the consolidation of imperialism in this country, the tasks that have faced the workers movement in the U.S. have been of a directly socialist character. In order to accomplish these difficult tasks, the workers' movement needs its own leaders, it needs a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party to give the movement con-

scious direction. Without such a party, the workers' movement cannot fulfill the tasks that history has laid upon it, the internationalist tasks of support for national liberation movements like that in Puerto Rico, and the task of overthrowing U.S. imperialism at home.

Today, the situation of the workers' movement has been complicated even more by the dangers of domestic fascism in the U.S. and the threat of imperialist war between U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-Imperialism.

The responsibilities of the revolutionary movement in the U.S. are heavy. They permit no vacillation or hedging. Our movement must act decisively to break with opportunism in order to build a vanguard communist party; a party to lead the workers and oppressed nations of the U.S. toward liberation and socialist revolution.

**PUERTO RICO AND THE TASKS OF U.S. MARXIST-LENINISTS**

The Marxist-Leninist movement in the United States must break decisively with the ideology, politics and organizational views which underlie the PRSC and other such organizations. In the past, our movement has paid too little attention to the question of Puerto Rico and has thereby left the field open to the opportunism of the PRSC and PSP. Our movement must actively take up the Puerto Rican national question; it must build mass support for the struggles of the Puerto Rican people within the U.S. working class and its trade unions; it must actively promote the task of party building both in the U.S. and Puerto Rico and seek avenues to build close unity between the two. ★

**LYNCHING... (continued)**

*Negro masses with even greater intensity than they rob the white workers. Other lynchings result from the refusal of a militant Negro worker or peasant to submit to every kind of social abuse and persecution. The lynchers themselves have admitted as some of the reasons for lynching, the following: trying to vote, accusing a white man of stealing, testifying against white men, being too successful, talking back to a white man.*

Such "leaders" of the Negro people as Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.), and such "friends" of the Negro people as the upper class "educated" (as W. E. B. DuBois calls them) whites in the Interracial Commission have ascribed the savagery and brutality of lynching to the drabness of Southern life, to the desire for amusement and entertainment by "poor whites who have no radios and do not go to movies." This is but a dastardly evasion of the real cause of lynching and the desertion of the fight against lynching. It is the traditional policy of these "race leaders" and their white friends to preserve the present system of capitalism, with its segregation and lynching, by making the Negro workers and poor farmers believe that white workers are their enemies, and the "educated" white men (the bosses) their friends.

Brutality and savagery mark all lynchings. Young and old, male and female, have been tortured by fire; a pregnant colored woman was hanged by the ankles and her unborn child ripped from her abdomen. This ruling class savagery has a purpose: to strike terror into the hearts of the oppressed Negro people so that they dare not strike out for liberation.

*What is the Real Cause and Purpose of Lynching?*

Every lynching, every degradation, every social persecution and proscription, every Jim-Crow humiliation, which the Negro masses suffer in this country is the result of the fact that the Negro millions are in the position of an oppressed nationality. They are subjected to a more intense, a fiercer exploitation on the land and in the factories. While the white workers are miserably exploited by the capitalist robbers, the Negro workers are especially exploited and persecuted. They are super-exploited. They are

given the dirtiest jobs, the longest hours, and the least pay. They are the last to be hired and the first to be fired. They must work under the foulest conditions. It is an absolutely undeniable fact that today, nearly 70 years after they were supposed to be "freed," the Negro masses are in slavery, producing super-profits for their capitalist landlords and bosses.

Concentrated on the land in the Black Belt, more than three-quarters of the nine and a half million Negroes in the South live in indescribable poverty, crushed by debts and starvation. Every year, after the "settlement" with the landlord, hundreds of thousands of Negro croppers, penniless and owning no land, find that they are toiling hopelessly in peonage, chained to the landlord by debts which no toil can wipe out.

The only way that the capitalist class can preserve this extra exploitation of the Negro masses is to keep them an isolated, degraded group, subject to special persecution. For this they have created a hideous system of social persecution and Jim Crow segregation against the Negro masses, forcing them to live in squalid Jim Crow ghettos. They teach the white workers and their children that whites are "superior" to Negroes. This is the typical method used by a powerful capitalist country to drive a wedge between "its own" workers and the workers of the oppressed nation. This serves a double purpose. It cripples the resistance of the oppressed nationality by isolating it. And it blinds the "superior" workers to the fact that they are being robbed by the same capitalists as the "inferior" workers.

Here we come to the true origin and purpose of lynching. It is with the aid of such methods as lynching, terrorism and violence that this whole system of national oppression, super-exploitation and social persecution can be enforced. And the greatest victory for the capitalist rulers is to get white workers to be the agents of their campaign of terrorism. Lynchings defend profits! Lynchings are a warning to the Negro toilers. Lynching is one of the weapons with which the white ruling class enforces its national oppression of the Negro people, and tries to maintain division between the white workers and the Negro toilers.

(PART TWO: see next issue of UNITE!)