

# YOU CAN HELP

Many thousands of people in this country and around the world have spoken out to support Marroquín's right to asylum. They include trade unionists, members of Congress, activists in the Black, Chicano, and women's movements, and numerous prominent individuals. This support has so far made it impossible for the government to send Marroquín back to Mexico, back to his death. It is only this support that can ensure his eventual safety in this country. You can help:

- Send a telegram or letter urging that Héctor Marroquín be granted political asylum to: Leonel Castillo, Director, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, D.C. 20536. (Please send a copy to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee.)
- Circulate petitions (available from the defense committee) in your community, on the job, at school. Ask unions, student organizations, political groups, and prominent individuals to endorse the Marroquín case.
- Funds are urgently needed to defray legal and other defense costs. Urge every supporter to contribute. Make checks payable to the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee.

## Clip & Mail

- I (my union/organization) endorse(s) the appeal for political asylum for Héctor Marroquín.
- I have sent a letter or telegram to INS Director Castillo.
- I want to help publicize the case. Please send me
- petitions
  - endorser cards
  - brochures (\$.03)
  - buttons (\$.50/\$.35 for 10 or more)
  - *My Story* (Spanish or English) by Héctor Marroquín (\$.50/\$.35 for 10 or more)

Enclosed is a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Organization\* \_\_\_\_\_

\*for identification purposes only

Send to: Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, P.O. Box 843, Cooper Station, New York, New York 10003. Call (212) 691-3587 for further information.



## CAN A SOCIALIST FIND ASYLUM IN THE U.S.?

### The Case of Héctor Marroquín...

On April 11, 1979, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) ordered Héctor Marroquín deported to Mexico. He is fighting to overturn that ruling.

Marroquín is a trade union activist and a member of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance. He has requested political asylum in this country.

He is seeking asylum because, for Marroquín, returning to Mexico would be the equivalent of a death sentence. The Mexican government has falsely accused him of being a terrorist and an assassin. Political activists accused of such crimes in Mexico don't get the chance to prove their innocence in court.

U.S. law provides that refugees cannot be deported if they would face persecution in their native country because of their political opinions.

Why, then, does the Carter administration want to deport Marroquín? Is it possible for a socialist to obtain asylum in this country?

Héctor Marroquín was born into a working-class family in Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico, in 1953. When he was in high school, cops brutally attacked a peaceful demonstration, at Tlatelolco Plaza in Mexico City, of more than 15,000 students and workers seeking greater political freedom and other reforms. Hundreds of demonstrators were killed. In reaction to this massacre, and to the poverty in his own life, Marroquín began to feel that there had to be a better social system. Along with many other students and young workers, he became convinced that only socialism could solve the problems of hunger, unemployment, and lack of democratic rights facing the Mexican people.

At 16, he entered the University of Nuevo León and became active in the movement for democratic rights on campus and in support of the independent trade union movement in Mexico. The movement was the target of repression by right-wing terror gangs armed and organized by the government. Marroquín witnessed police attacks on peaceful student demonstrations. His roommate was shot and murdered by the police.

Then, in early 1974, a librarian in the eco-

## Who is Héctor Marroquín?

"Marroquín has admitted from his own mouth that he is a Marxist... the U.S. does not grant asylum to those kinds of people."

--I.N.S. Prosecuting Attorney

"If the U.S. government can decide who is and who isn't welcome in this country on the basis of their political ideas, then the freedom of speech of all Americans is in danger."

--Héctor Marroquín



nomics department at the university was murdered. Two days later Marroquín was shocked to see his picture, and those of three other student activists, on the front page of the local newspaper. With big scare headlines, the papers proclaimed them dangerous criminals, wanted by the police for terrorism and conspiracy in this murder.

Marroquín consulted a lawyer, hoping to prove his innocence. But the lawyer made it clear: he could not receive a fair trial. Most likely, he would be picked up by the police and tortured into signing a false confession, if not murdered outright. There was no choice but to go into hiding.

Newspaper accusations continued. Marroquín was described as a terrorist, "armed and dangerous." He realized he was safe nowhere in Mexico and crossed into the U.S. at Eagle Pass, Texas, on April 9, 1974.

In this country, Marroquín lived like thousands of other undocumented workers, paid below-minimum wages for hard work, and in constant fear of the INS—*la migra*.

Over time, he found it impossible not to become active in struggles for social change. He participated in a successful Teamster organizing drive in the bottling plant where he worked in Houston. He got together with other undocumented workers to fight against deportations. And he joined the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and Young Socialist Alliance (YSA).

Even after Marroquín fled to this country, the Mexican police continued their accusations. At one point they went so far as to accuse him of an armed robbery in Monterrey while he was actually in a hospital in Texas in a waist-high cast, recuperating from a debilitating car accident.

Marroquín's decision to flee to the U.S. saved his life. Two of the three students accused with him were gunned down in the streets by the police. The third was kidnapped and "disappeared." He has not been seen or heard from since. None of the three were formally accused or brought to trial.

This was not unusual. In Mexico political activists and trade unionists are routinely persecuted and brutally tortured.

## The deportation hearing

In a three-day deportation hearing held in Houston last April, Marroquín and his attorney Margaret Winter presented an unassailable case for asylum. Extensive documentation was submitted, including sworn affidavits of dozens of political prisoners who had been detained and tortured by the Mexican authorities.

Expert witnesses also testified to this repression. Robert Goldman, dean of the American University Law School and co-author of a recent report based on his fact-finding mission to Mexico for the International League for Human Rights, gave detailed confirmation of the denials of due process in Mexico. Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, internationally known leader of the Mexican human rights movement, described continuing violations of human rights in Mexico. Mrs. Piedra reported the kidnappings and "disappearances" of several young political activists the previous month.

The Mexican government has passed a partial "amnesty" law, Goldman explained. But no laws in Mexico have done anything to stop the rampant political kidnappings and torture. The right-wing terror groups like the White Brigades, which operate with the knowledge, protection, and cooperation of high government officials and the cops, work unhindered.

Marroquín produced irrefutable evidence at the hearing that proved he was innocent of all the frame-up charges against him. He was in this country, he testified, at the time he was supposedly robbing and terrorizing in Mexico. He showed the judge pay stubs, rent receipts, and hospital records accumulated while he lived here. He even produced X-rays proving that he was incapacitated with a broken leg and pelvis during the time he was, according to the Mexican police, leaping a fence to rob a bakery.

## A political witch-hunt

The government made no attempt to rebut any of the evidence. Its case against Marroquín consisted solely of a McCarthy-style attack. During his cross-examination, prosecuting attorney Daniel Kahn tried to red-bait Marroquín and the defense witnesses, who ran the gamut from Socialist Workers, Democrats, and Republicans, to prominent church activists and community figures. "Are you a communist?" Kahn asked each one. "Have you read the *Communist Manifesto*?" Kahn finally summarized: "Marroquín has admitted from his own mouth that he is a Marxist. The U.S. does not grant asylum to Marxists."

In his decision denying asylum, immigration judge James Smith disparaged Marroquín's socialist views. Perhaps Marroquín would be better off "in Castro's Cuba," he wrote.

## U.N. PROTOCOL

The United Nations Protocol and Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which has been adopted by the United States and is included in its laws, states that a refugee must not be "expelled or returned in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his . . . political opinion."

## REPRESSION IN MEXICO

Amnesty International, the International League for Human Rights, and even the U.S. State Department have documented severe violations of human rights in Mexico.

These include arrests without warrant, incommunicado detention, kidnapping and disappearances, and brutal torture to force false confessions.

Physical attacks on demonstrations and strikes are also common. In July 1978, for example, Mexican officials, attempting to stop a miners' strike in Nacozari, Sonora, arrested, kidnapped, and tortured the strike leaders. They attacked striking hospital workers and university teachers at about the same time. Dozens of student protests have been attacked. The massacre in Tlatelolco Plaza in Mexico City in 1968, where the government murdered 500 unarmed students in cold blood, is only the best known.

Relatives of kidnapping victims and political prisoners have spearheaded a group in Mexico, the Committee to Defend Political Prisoners, the Politically Persecuted, "Disappeared," and Exiled. This group, led by Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, has gained international respect. Its information is relied on by newspapers and human rights groups throughout the world, and even by the U.S. State Department. Mrs. Piedra has come to the U.S. several times to speak out against the repression in Mexico and to ask support for the committee. She testified at Héctor Marroquín's deportation hearing in Houston, explaining the dangers that would face him if he returned. The Mexican committee's list names 451 disappeared persons.

The International League for Human Rights, which has consultative status at the United Nations, published a report based on a fact-finding mission to Mexico in early 1978. They describe the activity of paramilitary right-wing outfits such as the *Brigadas Blancas* (White Brigades), armed and organized by police officials. They also found that many "prisoners have been subject to torture while illegally detained at the hands of the government." This includes severe beatings, electric shocks, cigarette burns, death threats, and immersion in filthy water until the victim nearly drowns. In addition, the Mexican committee documents torture of little children and infants as a means of persuading their parents to confess to anything.

Even the U.S. State Department admitted in its 1979 Report on Mexico that the Mexican authorities there use "arbitrary arrest, detention and disappearance" against "suspected political subversives," and that the regime admits to holding hundreds of people for "politically-inspired acts."

But the issue is not whether Marroquín would be "better off" in "Castro's Cuba." The issue is whether or not he has the right to political asylum in *this* country. And that was proven at the hearing.

In fact, Judge Smith conceded that there are political prisoners and disappearances of political activists in Mexico. But, ignoring the evidence, he ruled that Héctor Marroquín would not be persecuted in Mexico.

Marroquín is a socialist. But holding socialist ideas and being a member of the SWP and the YSA is not against the law. In fact, what is contrary to the law is to refuse asylum—because of his beliefs and his membership in legal political organizations—to someone who has proven that he will face persecution in his native country because of his political ideas.

The INS also showed its racist attitude toward Mexicans and other *latinos* during the proceedings. In a press interview, Judge Smith said that "Marroquín's case paralleled that of the average wetback," a derogatory term used against Mexicans who work in the U.S.

## What is at stake

The freedom and the very life of Héctor Marroquín hang in the balance. But this case involves more.

It involves the rights, safety, and lives of countless other refugees from political repression. Just as the government denied asylum to Marroquín, it consistently denies asylum to victims of repressive regimes allied to the U.S. Although anti-Castro Cubans and refugees from the Soviet Union are routinely admitted, exiles fleeing the brutal dictatorships of Haiti, Nicaragua, and Chile are turned away.

Can an outspoken critic of the U.S. government, a socialist, obtain asylum in the U.S.? If the answer is "no," then what does that mean for the freedom of association of all Americans? Can any critic of any government policy be denied equal protection under the law?

The Carter administration's attempt to deport Marroquín is part and parcel of efforts to intimidate, harass, and frame up those whose views differ from what the government considers acceptable. The FBI, the CIA, and other police agencies have long harassed individuals and organizations fighting for social change. Thousands of documents have been released proving that they illegally spy on and try to disrupt trade unions, Black and Chicano organizations, the women's movement, and groups opposing nuclear power and weapons.

Documents introduced into evidence at the deportation hearing prove that the FBI has illegally operated a "counterintelligence" disruption program (Cointelpro) in Mexico, aimed against students, unionists, and peasants. They began keeping files on Marroquín when, at the age of 15, he joined other students at his high school in a peaceful, legal demonstration.

## ENDORSEES OF MARROQUÍN'S APPEAL FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM



I express my solidarity . . . on behalf of Héctor Marroquín to protest this infamous attempt to deport him.

Angela Davis



Brother Marroquín is both a target and a victim of that kind of governmental oppression and revenge which knows no national boundary or political persuasion. . . . I join you in your struggle.

U.S. Rep. Ron Dellums



Héctor Marroquín stands for the undocumented worker. Héctor Marroquín stands against government repression. . . . We need to stand with the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee.

José Angel Gutiérrez



I urge you [INS Director Castillo] to decide in favor of granting him the simple democratic right of political asylum.

Linus Wampler, Director, USWA District 33

### PARTIAL LIST:

Herbert Aptheker • Edward Asner • Roger Baldwin • Clyde and Vernon Bellecourt • Daniel and Philip Berrigan • Larry Birns, Director, Council on Hemispheric Affairs • Ruben Bonilla, President, LULAC • Kay Boyle • Pete Camarata, Teamsters for a Democratic Union • Rep. John Conyers • Simone de Beauvoir • Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee • Detroit City Council • Jules Feiffer • Abe Feinglass, International Vice President, United Food and Commercial Workers • Patrick Gorman, Chairman of the Board, United Food and Commercial Workers • Dick Gregory • Michael Harrington • Marge Jindrich, Region 4 Women's Director, UAW • Russell Johnson, American Friends Service Committee • Imani Kazana, Wilmington 10 Defense Committee • Roger Klander, President, USWA Local 6115, Virginia, Minn. • Joe Kotelchuck, President, USWA Local 2610, Baltimore • Rep. Mickey Leland • José Letelier • Don Luce, International Director, Clergy and Laity Concerned • Ray

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