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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1233rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 22 August 1983, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. KOROMA (Sierra Leone)

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Special Committee decision of 4 August 1982 concerning Puerto Rico

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE DECISION OF 4 AUGUST 1982 CONCERNING PUERTO RICO (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The first speaker is Mr. Juan Antonio Corretjer of the Liga Socialista Puertorriqueña.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Juan Antonio Corretjer (Liga Socialista Puertorriqueña) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Corretjer.

Mr. CORRETJER (interpretation from Spanish): In my country when a fire starts in a field, the peasants set fire to the adjoining area, creating a fire break; they stop fire with fire.

On 25 July 1898 my country was invaded by the United States Army. They landed at the port of Guánica, in Caribbean waters, in the south of Puerto Rico. Minutes later, they were greeted by a guerrilla band of patriots, led by José Maldonado, the legendary "White Eagle" of our struggles for liberation.

In the face of the Yankee invaders, White Eagle automatically became the initiator of the struggle for independence of Puerto Rico and, at the same time, the first anti-militarist of our country. The legendary guerrilla leader set the pattern for the genuine struggle for independence of Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican antimilitarism in the face of Yankee imperialistic militarism - armed struggle.

Today the status of a nation invaded by Yankee armed forces persists; and the militarist régime imposed on the country governs the colonial life of the Puerto Ricans. The struggle for independence is basically an armed struggle, in keeping with the classic model of White Eagle's guerrilla struggle, brought to its highest expression by Albizu Campos and represented today by the clandestine organizations for armed struggle both in the invaded national territory and in the rearguard actions on the soil of the imperialist federal State of the United States. It is an honour for me to name these organization: the People's Revolutionary Commandos, the Boricua People's Army - popularly known as "Macheteros" - the Armed Forces of Popular Resistance (FARP), the Organization of Volunteers for Puerto Rican Revolution (OVRP, Volunteers)

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in occupied national territory, and Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), currently active in the United States.

The Liga Socialista Puertorriqueña takes pride, through me, to name these organizations in this Committee, so that it be understood that no decision in connection with the colonial case of Puerto Rico could be reached and action taken without recognition of the existence of these organizations, since they reflect the highest expression of the will of the Puerto Rican people. And this positive will expresses a whole philosophy for the future life of the Puerto Ricans - anti-imperialist, socialist, anti-militarist and, consequently, democratic.

In paying a tribute to the memory of the Liberator Simón Bolívar on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of his birth, we recall that Puerto Rico was part of the Liberator's grand design. Also, this staunch soldier of war-to-the-death left us this warning - and it was not the only one - of a clearly democratic character: "Woe unto the people, when it is armed men who deliberate." In the last analysis, both the decree of war-to-the-death and this warning I have just recalled spring from the same historic necessity and the same national concern.

To the constant aggression of Yankee militarism against my country is added today what that same interventionist Power is unleashing against Nicaragua and El Salvador. Nicaragua is not attacking anyone; even less so is El Salvador. Peoples whose fate was deliberated by armed men of the kind condemned by Bolívar and protected by the United States are today fighting either to gain freedom or to retain their recently-gained independence in order to reorganize their lives and their economies, and to develop their cultures while freely enjoying the full benefits of international brotherhood, unhampered by foreign interests.

What is occurring in Nicaragua and in El Salvador confirms the experience of Puerto Rico, which, without independence, cannot but continue to be a colony. In its bitter, bloody quest for national liberation, we see that "The struggle for independence is a specific form of class struggle". This fact at once enriches and hinders the development of the struggle for

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emancipation in El Salvador and Nicaragua; what hinders that development is Yankee imperialism and the horrendous vestiges of its national oppression. In Puerto Rico, the phenomenon is recurring, albeit belatedly; but there again Yankee imperialism cannot disclaim total and equal responsibility.

The struggle of Nicaragua and El Salvador against Yankee militarism gives irrefutable proof of the need to fight fire with fire and, in the case of Puerto Rico, demonstrates that its equivalent in Puerto Rico can be found in the White Eagle and the nationalism of Albizu Campos, who in 1954 made shots ring out in the United States Congress in Washington, the imperialist legislative body which initiates all legislation on taxes, including the quota of blood exacted by compulsory military service. Today White Eagle's legitimate heirs are the valient soldiers of the antimilitarist struggle of the clandestine organizations for armed struggle, to which I have already referred.

Internationalism has been a characteristic of the struggle for Latin American independence since its earliest days; in Nicaragua it was illustrated by the struggle against the Yankee tyranny of the Somocistas, just as it had been previously in the triumphant war waged in the 1930s under the leadership of the Liberator Augusto César Sandino against United States Marines. Puerto Ricans have watered all the fields of Latin American freedom with their own blood. This occurred in Nicaragua, and Puerto Rican independence fighters are in the field shoulder-to-shoulder with their brothers of El Salvador in that terrible inferno of blood and fire which has been imposed on the people of Agustín Farabundo Martí by Yankee imperialists. But the international solidarity of Puerto Rico with the oppressed peoples is manifested through the military struggle for independence in Puerto Rico itself.

(Mr. Corretjer)

Many years must pass and terrible things happen before we arrive at the stage of reciprocity in the case of Puerto Rico.

This Committee knows well the problem that the United States created in Puerto Rico with its base of operations known as Roosevelt Roads and specifically with its aggressive naval activities in our Lesser Island of Vieques, also part of that base, the centre of which is located on Ensenada Honda in the municipality of Ceiba in Puerto Rico proper. The study of the situation in Vieques made in 1947 by Albizu Campos still applies. It can be summarized as follows: "In Vieques the United States is practising vivisection of our country". The Puerto Rican struggle against the United States Navy has been the constant reply to constant aggression, constant abuse by the Navy against the civilian population. There have been decades of street fighting. One knows of the struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, which culminated with the imprisonment and murder of our leader and comrade Angel Rodriguez Cristobal, captured on Vieques and finished off in the Federal Prison in Tallahassee, Florida. The escalation of the struggle was then arrested more by the violence of the Navy, both in its military power and in its judicial terrorism in the Yankee Federal Court in Puerto Rico, than by the anti-independence repression of the electoral system. Today the street struggle appears once again in Vieques. We are pleased to see its reappearance, which intensifies the world's awareness of the case of Puerto Rico, as reflected in this Committee.

In the Mexican city of Puebla, a Puerto Rican independenista prisoner of war, William Guillermo Morales, was captured. The spectacular flight by this heroic Puerto Rican marked the beginning of international recognition. This cripple boxed the ears of imperialism with his mutilated hands. He gave reality to the Spanish saying of the "handless slap". In order to capture Morales, the United States violated the frontier that it had itself imposed on Mexico after its plundering in 1848. Although to this day that frontier continues to be imposed by force and violence, the United States should, out of self-respect, accord all due respect to the national sovereignty of the United States of Mexico. But it did not do this. Its Embassy in Mexico City is a nest of spies and a base for the FBI and the CIA. The latter act without respect or consideration for the dignity of the Mexican Government or people. They arrest and murder, at times supported by corrupt sectors of the Mexican police. This occurred in

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the case of the arrest of the Puerto Rican hero. The United States violated Mexican sovereignty and the most fundamental laws of international coexistence and began an illegal relationship with corrupt members of the Mexican police in order to capture Morales. In the encounter, a Yankee policeman born in Mexico died; although accredited as a member of the Mexican police, this man had been corrupted and joined the ranks of the FBI. He was a Yankee policeman, as was the CIA leader of the operation, a man by the name of Gordon.

Using military force to protect its economic and commercial -- specifically oil -- interests, the United States abuses the Mexican people and humiliates it, rendering the Mexican Government unable to prevent the activities of espionage and of the Yankee police, the FBI and the CIA within its territory. It imposes on the Mexican Government the obligation to maintain an economic situation that brings misery and poverty to the people, increasing the repressive elements inherent in the State since its foundation.

The United States is today trying to pressure the Mexican Government to extradite William Guillermo Morales. We are fighting to get the Mexican Government not to comply; we want it to act in keeping with its long history of refusing to hand over persons persecuted for political reasons by their Governments. It should allow William Guillermo Morales to leave Mexico freely for any country whose Government supports Puerto Rico's independence and would receive him with open arms.

With the capture of William Guillermo Morales in Mexico, the Mexican people set out on the path of Latin American reciprocity with the sacrifice of the lives of its own citizens, which Puerto Rico has already trodden with the peoples of Latin America fighting for their independence and freedom. I mention in all humility and with enormous gratitude the names of the Mexican man and woman insanely immolated by the Yankees in Puebla, Mexico. A Mexican revolutionary friend, Adelario Diapando Contreras, died fighting to defend William Guillermo. Another Mexican revolutionary friend, Judith Birrio Angiano, was basely murdered in her home. A 16-year-old child, Antonio Pedro Ruiz, was first shot and hospitalized and then made to disappear by the FBI and corrupt elements of the Mexican police.

In tribute to those fallen Mexican comrades, I would invite all Puerto Ricans here to accompany me in a minute of silence in their honour.

There was a minute's silence.

The PRESIDENT: The Petitioner may continue.

Mr. CORRETJER (interpretation from Spanish): It is our duty to inform this Committee that some of our friends in Mexico have been threatened with reprisals by that nest of vipers, the United States Consulate in Ciudad Juarez. We can assure those of our comrades who have been threatened that Puerto Rican patriots are always arm-in-arm with General Francisco Villa in Columbus, New Mexico.

We inform this Committee of the arrest in Chicago of comrades Alejandrina Torres, Edwin Cortes, Alberto Rodriguez and Jose Rodriguez. All four have been deprived of their freedom on the basis of mere suspicions and vengefully and repressively imprisoned, in conditions which breach all standards of human decency. This is particularly true of comrade Alejandrina Torres: Not only is Alejandrina a woman; she is also a member of the Church, a housewife and mother of two daughters. Her husband is a minister of the First Congregational Church of Chicago. They both reside above the church. Yet, Alejandrina Torres has been kept since her arrest in a cell in the men's section of prison without enjoying the minimum possible privacy. How far can Yankee judicial terrorism go in its abject fear of Puerto Rican patriotism?

(Mr. Corretjer)

The most recent act of aggression by Yankee judicial terrorism in Puerto Rico was the arraignment of Carlos Noya Muratti, the leader of the Puerto Rican Socialist League, and Federico Cintron Fiallo, the spokesman for the Comité Unitario Contra la Represión (CUCRE), before a Federal Grand Jury in Brooklyn. In its obsession with sports and with setting new records Washington has really done it this time. In its lengthy domination of Puerto Rico, Spain never arrested patriots in Puerto Rico for trial in Madrid or in any other city of the metropolis. As a result, Noya and Cintron were tried for criminal contempt in the Brooklyn Federal Court and because the Government could not obtain a conviction they will be brought to trial again on 17 October. Neither of the two men denies the charge, it might be added. The ultimate absurdity of the Yankee legal system is that the sentence is up to the discretion of the judge. They could be sentenced to life imprisonment. Is this not judicial terrorism?

Returning to the trial against Alejandrina Torres and her companions, I should like to refer to a very important political question in this trial. I shall quote from an article I myself wrote and which was published in 13 August this year in the important daily newspaper of San Juan, Puerto Rico, El Nuevo Dia under the heading "The impossible crime". It reads as follows:

"Alejandrina Torres, Edwin Cortes, Alberto and Jose Rodriguez, four Puerto Ricans, are charged with allegedly committing a crime that is impossible to commit. The charge of seditious conspiracy cannot be brought against any Puerto Rican. Puerto Ricans cannot be seditious. The southerners who rebelled against the Federal Government in the Civil War were seditious. It would be seditious today if the citizens of Vermont, Pennsylvania or Massachusetts were to rise up and break away from the Federal State in violation of a Constitution that does not recognize the right to secession. Because the right to secession is not granted to any of the provinces of the Federal State called states, the rebels of 1862 were seditious, just as Maine or Georgia would be considered seditious were they to do the same today.

"We Puerto Ricans cannot be seditious no matter how many conspirators there may be or what they may do to gain independence from Yankee imperialism. We are not within the Federal State; we are a separate country; we are a Latin American nation that is occupied militarily by the United States, and that occupation imposes upon our people a shameful,

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anachronistic, deceitful, disreputable and doomed form of colonialism, one that is doomed to disappear. It will disappear because of the efforts of women like Alejandrina Torres and men like Edwin Cortes, Alberto Rodriguez and Jose Rodriguez, exercising their natural right to fight for the independence of Puerto Rico with the means called for by their patriotism, no matter how violent the Federal Bureau of Investigation tries to make them look. But we stress the fact that notwithstanding the degree of violence used, the four Chicago revolutionaries or any other Puerto Ricans, in Puerto Rico or in the United States, are not seditious. This is because the right to use verbal persuasion or persuasion through violence in our struggle for independence is one we enjoy in the national occupied territory as well as in the enemy territory of the United States. That right will be exercised as long as there is one Puerto Rican left with the patriotic pride to go gun in hand and knock on the door of the President of the United States or to spray the United States Congress with patriotic lead, to dynamite Fraunces Tavern or to try and blow up military bases in Chicago, to lay ambushes in Sabana Seca, to burn Yankee aircraft at Muniz Base, or wherever the Puerto Rican patriots may choose next."

I am referring to this aspect of the charge brought against the comrades in Chicago because I wish to highlight something which is of extreme importance for the Puerto Rican Socialist League and for the independence struggle in general. I am referring to self-determination. I shall not repeat arguments expressed in the Committee before. I shall refer to a new aspect. The very basis of the lack of understanding by the Government of the United States with respect to self-determination as presented by the United Nations springs from the very root of the United States constitutional system. A State cannot grant an opportunity for self-determination when such secession is prohibited under the Constitution. Any formula to resolve the colonial status of Puerto Rico such as direct or immediate recognition of the independence of Puerto Rico by the United States Government will run into that blanket ban on secession for peoples that agree to enter the Federal State or are forced to do so. This source of their constitutional thinking makes it most unlikely that any purely legal process can lead us to independence. The mental turmoil into which the United States has fallen - turmoil apparent in the way in which it deals with the situation of nations whose sovereignty is internationally recognized, such as

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Nicaragua and El Salvador, which are seeking internal self-determination -- is clearly demonstrated here. The question is further complicated by the fact that the great mass of the people of the United States cannot be expected to bring their Government to heel. Disoriented, manipulated, they can barely think. They give the impression that they are nomads moving from one place to another motivated by anxiety, greed and madness. We should feel sorry for them, if it were not for the fact that at any moment they could join their Government and reduce the world to chaos. This is why we think it impossible for the case of Puerto Rico to be resolved peacefully. We shall achieve independence through our own armed efforts if things continue as they are, or through a world-wide conflagration, in which the so-called first world -- there must be one if there is, indeed, a third world -- would destroy itself and the third world would save itself, although it might emerge slightly battered.

That does not mean that this Committee or the United Nations is useless. Its thinking and its moral authority can help nurture our natural right to independence and our positive right by enriching with its resolutions the rights of our sovereignty recognized by the Autonomous Constitution of 1877, which was violated by the Yankee invasion and paralysed by international complicity.

Mr. Corretjer withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Jose Lopez (Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Lopez.

Mr. LOPEZ: Once again - to be exact, for the third time since 1978 - my organization, the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional, has authorized me to address this body. Once again we come before it to denounce the repression which the United States Government has unleashed against the Puerto Rican revolutionary independence movement, particularly against the captured combatants who now number 15, and against the political prisoners, who now number six and whose ranks will swell within the next few months to 15 after the conviction of nine grand jury resisters. This continual persecution grows despite the admonishments by this body to the effect that the United States must cease and desist its repressive measures against our movement.

This repression cannot be isolated from the global perspective of United States foreign policy, particularly its policy towards Latin America. Reagan's Latin American policy cannot be analyzed, however, in the same manner that we usually analyze the foreign policy of this or that Republican or Democratic president. The present policy corresponds to some drastic changes in United States foreign policy as a result of its current economic crisis, a crisis from which it has not recovered, and from which it will not be able to recover except through the adoption of a war economy geared towards a third world war.

This crisis originated in 1967 when the closest allies of the United States - Germany, Japan, Great Britain, Italy and Canada - began to violate the Bretton Woods agreement of 1944, which guaranteed that the dollar would be the medium of exchange in the international monetary system. As a result of those allies' economies and their violations of that agreement, the dollar has been plunged into a precarious situation, endangering the North American economy itself, despite the ephemeral and false recovery announced by the Reagan Administration.

Two tendencies regarding how to deal with the problem have emerged within this country's ruling circles. The first, the so-called trilateralist tendency, advocated by the financial interests, particularly those of the Rockefellers, finds its expression among the liberal sectors, Republicans as well as Democrats.

The second, a nationalist tendency advocated by the so-called capitalist cowboys, is best expressed by the conservative elements, principally among Reagan's Republican cronies. Both tendencies agree that the best strategy to follow in terms of achieving economic improvement is a war strategy geared towards a third world war; however, they disagree about which tactics to utilize. The trilateralists still

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believe in the idea of negotiations being the best way to resolve immediate conflicts such as dialogue with the Democratic Revolutionary Front in El Salvador -- while the nationalists, whose plans are outlined in a secret document entitled the Santa Fe Committee Report, propose the need to heighten the contradictions between the Soviet Union and the United States, as is exemplified by their support of counter-revolutionaries in Nicaragua and of direct intervention in El Salvador. In that way they hope to end the "communist threat" in third-world countries, particularly in Latin America, which the authors of the report call the sword and shield of United States foreign policy.

It is against this introductory backdrop that one has to understand the present wave of repression against the Puerto Rican independence movement, for if the Santa Fe Committee Report considers Latin America to be the shield and sword of the United States, then, using mediaeval metaphors, Puerto Rico must clearly become the watchtower of Latin America. Thus, in the last few months we have seen the super-militarization of Puerto Rico. This super-militarization is centred on the well-recognized notion that Puerto Rico is very important because of the following facts: Puerto Rico is vital to the defence of the Panama Canal and its commercial routes; it serves as a base of operations for military intervention in the Caribbean and Central America; it serves as a control centre for naval activities and, in particular, for the protection of the South Atlantic navigational route; it serves as a training and experimentation centre and was utilized as such during the Viet Nam war; and it serves as a source of recruitment for the North American armed forces.

Now let us look more closely at the steps being taken to achieve the super-militarization of Puerto Rico. First, there is the reopening of Ramey Air Force Base, in three stages: the supply stage, the training stage and the reopening of the base itself.

Second, there is the transfer to Puerto Rico from Panama of the most powerful communications tower that the United States has in the Caribbean. This tower, which was installed in Salinas, Puerto Rico, permits communication with submarines.

Third, there is the enlargement of the Roosevelt Roads base, which already constitutes one seventh of Puerto Rico's total national territory.

Fourth, there are the First Naval Reserve Center and five Naval Reserve Divisions for ships in the Caribbean.

Fifth, there is the transfer to Puerto Rico of the School of the Americas, a training centre for the Latin American military and for counter-insurgents.

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Sixth, there is the greater role assigned to the Puerto Rican National Guard, which in the last few years has doubled its forces and has been given the task of training troops from other countries in that region. The military forces of the Dominican Republic, Barbados, Panama and Jamaica have already travelled to Puerto Rico, or will do so, to receive training and participate in joint military operations with the National Guard. In 1981, and again as recently as a few months ago, military troops from Barbados and Uruguay were trained by the Puerto Rican National Guard.

Seventh, there is the participation of the Puerto Rican Police Department in INTERPOL and the naming of Puerto Rican Police Superintendent, Desiderio Cartagena, as its head in the Caribbean.

Eighth, there is the utilization of Vieques for the Ocean Venture practices in 1981 and 1982, in which a simulated invasion of Cuba and Grenada took place.

And finally, ninth, there is the utilization of Puerto Rico as an experimental station and the continual use of Puerto Rican territory for substances and arms to be utilized against other countries in Latin America.

However, super-militarization is only one manifestation of the broader plans which United States colonialism has for our beloved nation, Puerto Rico. Last year before this very body representatives both of our fraternal organization, the Liga Socialista Puertorriqueña, and of the Taller de Arte y Cultura of Adjuntas graphically and in detail described this hideous and nightmarish colonial plan, the so-called Plan 2020. Therefore I shall limit myself to pointing out its most salient genocidal aspects.

While devastating Puerto Rico's environment, this plan will require massive depopulation. We already know the horrors of sterilization and of forced migration. The United States intends to intensify these to the point where by the year 2020 the island's population will be reduced to 1.5 million from nearly 4 million today. Within the next five years, 146,000 Puerto Ricans will be forced to leave their homeland, and once again we see the unholy alliance of the Puerto Rican colonial administration and the United States to encourage our people to leave its native hearth in hordes. We already know that part of the repression by the United States Government in the period 1940-1950 was the campaign to relieve social pressures which threatened to transform an army of unemployed Puerto Ricans into independence militants. This mass of unemployable workers was bombarded with a propaganda campaign promoting the United States as a haven for work and good living - "the streets are

... .. and the Puerto Rican

(Mr. Lopez)

At the same time, the Puerto Rican independence movement came under a strong campaign of repression and intimidation. In the 1950 Nationalist rebellion against this repression 200 were killed and 5,000 imprisoned.

In New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and other cities where Puerto Ricans were encouraged to go, they found an exploitative factory system that most often paid below minimum wages and far below what non-Puerto Ricans were paid.

They were forced by racism and discrimination into ghettos that not even the poorest North Americans wanted. Often, more than 10 persons had to live in one, two or three small rooms, without hot water or heating in winter and with filthy, broken toilets in the public hallway. Many still live under such conditions more than 30 years later. In all, more than 500,000 Puerto Ricans have left their country. Today nearly 4 million live in the United States.

The transformation of the United States system of production from mechanical to technological and automatic spells a sad future for Puerto Ricans, as well as all oppressed people. Because of their poor education, lack of technical skills and denial of access to science, the greater part of the population is condemned to permanent unemployment.

In this period of economic crisis we recall what history has taught us: that whenever an advanced capitalist State enters a profound economic crisis from which it cannot recover, the only option for its continued survival is war and fascism. It is obvious that the United States is preparing for such a crisis situation. Its war economy points to its future course.

If the United States learned anything from the Viet Nam war it was that it could not carry on a successful, belligerent policy abroad with open dissension at home; more so when the opposition comes from sectors of the society that have been objectified - for example blacks, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and native Americans - since they share a tremendous commonalty with the enemy of the United States, in this case Viet Nam. Everything must be done, then, at this juncture to contain people of colour and their

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leadership to ensure smooth sailing for the war plans. The United States cannot tolerate that its Detroit, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York go up in flame while waging a war abroad. The bloody urban riots of the late 1960s and early 1970s were too much for the ruling circles of the United States to take. A Commission, the Kerner Commission, was convoked. It soon diagnosed the problem and provided the medication - too many people of colour in the inner cities; you must deconcentrate them. Thus, the Commission came up with the concept of spatial deconcentration. This was in actuality a master plan to gentrify America's cities, whiten its inner cities, and deal with America's unique urban problem of having its inner cities inhabited by poor people - but, worse than that, by people of colour - able to build ghettos where they stay alive and perpetuate their national consciousness. This is the only thing that provides them with a linkage to their humanity of which they have been stripped.

Out of America's ghettos, the geo-political formation that best exemplifies the Manichean world of the native and the settler, so ably and powerfully described by the great theoretician Franz Fanon, a new and higher form of political organization emerged. A worse threat than the spontaneous riots of the 1960s was the emergence of clandestine formations such as the Black Liberation Army (BLA) and the Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN). Those national liberation armies in formation are the oppressed peoples' answer to the COINTELPRO programmes of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the other repressive measures which set back the public liberation movements of third-world people in the United States during the 1970s. So it is clear that when the FALN attacks Wall Street, it is time to get the Puerto Ricans out of town. Spatial deconcentration, a process whereby America's cities will be whitened and people of colour assigned a space somewhere in a peripheral area similar to South Africa's bantustans, will speed ahead to avoid the recruitment and growth of this army. And, if one is sceptical about this, a look at the 1980 United States census figures for cities will suffice to show this trend. Black people and third-world people in terms of numbers are decreasing in the inner cities. Where are these people going?

(Mr. Lopez)

They are being moved away from the centres of commerce and industry, from the banks. And there perhaps will be established Sowetos and Johannesburgs. Concurrently, plans are under way to establish a national identification system which will presently be aimed at the undocumented Mexican people, but will eventually identify all third-world people inside the United States and serve the same purposes as the passbooks of South Africa. So the only way that America can carry forth a militant aggressive foreign policy is to contain 40 million black people, contain 35 million Mexican people and contain 4 million Puerto Rican people within its borders. But in a demonstration of protest many of our youngsters are unwilling to register for the draft. In Puerto Rico nearly 25 per cent of the Puerto Rican youth have not registered for the Army. A tremendous victory - because it means that people, especially young people, are no longer afraid of gaol, of the consequences of harassment and imprisonment. In many ways what the youth of our communities are saying is that they are not afraid of the threat of going to gaol, because they are not going to fight the imperialist wars. And, if they do not fight the imperialist wars, who will fight them? The fact is that what may eventually happen inside America is that young blacks, young Puerto Ricans or young Mexicans will not be available for the United States Army, but through their increasing awareness will seek to join their own armies of liberation.

As the resistance grows, so does the repression. Thus, today we can clearly see a two-pronged strategy of political repression being executed against the Puerto Rican nation: one aimed at the Puerto Rican masses themselves - Plan 2020 for the Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico - and spatial deconcentration for the Puerto Ricans in the United States; and the other aimed at the most advanced political leadership of the Puerto Rican masses.

It should be clear that as the United States seeks to carry out its belligerent policies leading to a third world war it must silence opposition at home; it must mollify a sector of its populace, principally its white working class, while repressing and super-exploiting its coloured population, including the Puerto Ricans; it must transform Latin America into its sword and shield and Puerto Rico into its watchtower.

(Mr. Lopez)

Both at home and abroad it is clear that Puerto Ricans pose a direct threat to the United States imperialist objectives of war abroad and fascism at home. Thus, it is not difficult to understand the wholesale repressive attacks that the United States Government is waging against the Puerto Rican revolutionary movement, going as far as stretching to the limits its own liberal constitutional guarantees. In the last few years the United States has circumvented and violated almost every right which individuals are blessed with under its Bill of Rights. A list of these will, we are sure, suffice to help one understand the breadth, width and depth of these repressive developments.

(Mr. Lopez)

Such a list includes the use of grand juries and the charge of criminal contempt; the use of anonymous juries and witnesses; the use of political conspiracy statutes, principally that of seditious conspiracy; the use of the new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) guidelines which provide that mere advocacy constitutes grounds for possible indictment; the use of secret affidavits available only to judges in chamber and not to the defence; the use of special sentencing hearings with the aim of using circumstantial evidence; the subhuman pre-trial conditions for political prisoners and prisoners of war; the use of the media by the Government; the use of informants, infiltrators and traitors; the use of highly sophisticated new surveillance technology; collusion between prosecutors and judges; direct political attack on lawyers and, lastly, the use of unprecedented security in the courtroom. These measures, which are supposedly limited to societies that are either under martial law or that have a fascist system, are presently being carried out against the Puerto Rican independence movement and its supporters. We know that in 1978 the United States Government convoked a conference in Puerto Rico of the most authoritative intelligence leadership, including General Querrolc of the Uruguayan Army, who helped in the campaign against the Tupamaros; Reinhard Rupprecht, who helped in the West German campaign against the Red Army Faction; and Robin Bourne, Canadian Deputy Solicitor-General for Police and Security, current co-ordinator of repression against the Quebec Liberation Front. It also included experts on terrorism and subversion, FBI agents and representatives of such think-tanks as the Rand Corporation.

The major theme these counterinsurgency experts considered was how to apply to Puerto Rico the counterinsurgency methods tested and found useful in other countries. Their recommendations for dealing with Puerto Rican revolutionaries included everything from over-stretching the legal system to include most of the points I mentioned earlier - systematic detentions, arrests and imprisonments, sometimes without trial - to keeping pretrial political prisoners in solitary confinement in order to create - I quote the report -

(Mr. Lopez)

"the psychic consequences of such isolation. ... Prisoners have lost their minds; their nerves have been shattered forever; they have been driven to suicide".

Their recommendations include also the political internment of activists and even selective assassination.

Now let us look at how, in the past two years, some of these recommendations have been applied specifically to Puerto Rican activists. Five independentistas have been assassinated and over 100 members and sympathizers of the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional (MLN) have been detained, arrested or imprisoned. These include four of our most prominent national leaders, Julio Rosado, Ricardo Romero, Maria Cueto and Steven Guerra, and three sympathizers - Shelly Miller, a leading member of our North American solidarity organization, the New Movement in Solidarity with the Puerto Rican and Mexican Revolution; Silvia Baroldini, a member of the May 19 Communist Organization, and Puerto Rican community worker Andres Rosado. Those seven people have been charged with criminal Grand Jury contempt, a charge that carries with it a maximum sentence of a person's natural life. Similarly charged are two citizens and residents of Puerto Rico, Federico Cintron Fiallo and Carlos Noya. The only crime these nine people have committed is to exercise their human rights to silence and non-collaboration with a repressive agency seeking the destruction of the Puerto Rican independence movement. In their arrests and trials almost every conceivable violation of the United States Constitution has been noted - everything from the use of an anonymous jury to the use of traitors, special sentencing hearings and secret affidavits. Those nine will soon join the ranks of seven other political prisoners - Nydia Cuevas, Pablo Marcano, Julio Antonio Veras-Delgadillo, Ricarte Montes, Raymond Soto, Alberto de Jesus and Felix Rosas, who are currently being held in United States gaols, and Jose Luis Rodriguez, a 22-year-old Puerto Rican charged with seditious conspiracy and at present free on \$25,000 bond.

(Mr. Lopez)

Among the 21 Puerto Ricans currently in prison for their pro-independence activities there are 15 prisoners of war, 12 of whom have admitted membership in the clandestine Puerto Rican guerrilla organization Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion Nacional (FALN) and 3 of whom are accused of being members. These last three include Edwin Cortes, a young Puerto Rican who was born and raised in Chicago and experienced at first hand the hardships of the forced migration described earlier and who has dedicated his life to building a better future for his two children; Alberto Rodriguez, another young Puerto Rican who was also born and raised in the Puerto Rican community of Chicago and who, for many years of his young life, has fought to improve the lot of the Puerto Rican diaspora in that city by struggling for such basic human rights as decent education, health care and wages and against abuse and repression by the State; and Alejandrina Torres, a member of one of the most respected families in the Puerto Rican community of Chicago, a dedicated activist profoundly committed to advancing the struggle for social justice and the national liberation of the Puerto Rican people.

On 29 June 1983 those three Puerto Rican freedom fighters, along with political prisoner Jose Luis Rodriguez, were arrested by the FBI during simultaneous raids throughout the city of Chicago. The next day, at 5.30 a.m., in a gestapo-type operation the FBI's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team, along with the Chicago police, the Secret Service and the Illinois Department of Law Enforcement, raided one of the most respected institutions in the Puerto Rican community of Chicago, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, which, since its inception 10 years ago, has been associated with the Puerto Rican revolutionary independence movement. Eight and a half hours later, the FBI agents left the Center a complete shambles, taking with them more than \$25,000 in office equipment and materials.

The four patriots were charged with seditious conspiracy, a catch-all charge that entails an attempt to overthrow the authority of the United States Government by force to obtain the independence of Puerto Rico, regardless of

(Mr. Lopez)

whether the attempt actually takes place or is merely planned. The four were subsequently imprisoned in the Metropolitan Correctional Center in lieu of an exorbitant and unprecedented bond of \$10 million for each of the men and \$5 million for Alejandrina Torres. Since that time the four have been incarcerated under the most horrendous conditions. They are held in total isolation, spending 23 and a half hours a day locked in a tiny cell and bereft of almost all human contact. In addition they have been denied regular visiting privileges; they are allowed a one-hour visit per week with members of their immediate families. These visits take place in the presence of two heavily armed guards, one of whom must be Spanish-speaking. This punitive incarceration poses a particularly life-threatening situation for Alejandrina Torres. Last week she suffered heart palpitations; yet, due to her isolated imprisonment, she was unable to receive immediate medical treatment. She is also being held in an all-male detention area and must submit to being patted down by male guards or forfeit a visit. This is clearly in violation of the most basic right to minimal privacy. Until recently the four were also denied the right to meet collectively with their attorneys.

It should be noted that on Saturday, 20 August 1983, Edwin Cortes, Alberto Rodriguez and Alejandrina Torres assumed the status of prisoners of war. They ended their collective statement by saying:

"We claim our right to be judged by an international body. The United States has no right to judge us. It does not have the moral integrity to judge a people that risks and combats terrorism."

The conditions of the 11 other prisoners of war currently being held in United States prisons are also quite alarming. In some cases their very lives are in jeopardy. Despite the many abuses, the threats on their lives and the daily harassment, the 11 maintain their courageous spirits high and have not let down their guard.

At this very moment another Puerto Rican prisoner of war, the heroic William Guillermo Morales, finds himself in our sister nation, Mexico, also in gaol. In May of this year William was captured in Mexico after having entered that country and resided there for a number of years. William, who escaped from a United States gaol, apparently had no alternative other than to enter Mexican national territory without documents, knowing full well that his life was in jeopardy if he were found on American soil. The United States Government is now engaged in litigation to

(Mr. Lopez)

I beg forgiveness for having taken so much of representatives' time, but we felt it necessary to give this broader perspective of the relationship between the United States belligerent policies abroad and the growing fascist repression against the Puerto Rican nation and its revolutionary leadership. The United States hopes through this repression to give Puerto Ricans a lesson, for the United States realizes that, as the three new prisoners-of-war stated,

"every Puerto Rican is a potential threat, a potential conspirator against Yankee imperialism, regardless of where he finds himself.

Against this, it /the United States/ is powerless".

We call upon this body to consider the following recommendations in the light of our presentation. The first is that the Committee be more specific and aggressive in its forthcoming resolution on Puerto Rico, particularly on the question of repression. It should be noted that we affirm what the legendary Salvador Carpio of El Salvador once said:

"Then between the external and internal /struggle/ a correlation is established, but that correlation dialectically speaking is the following: in the relation between the external and internal, the internal struggle of our people is fundamental. In other words, it is the people's own efforts for their liberation which is the determinant in that relation."

Conscious of the great moral and political weight that this body carries, we also ask specifically that the Committee name a commission to visit Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rican communities in the United States to report on the violation of human rights, specifically the judiciary process against Puerto Rican independistas, and the subhuman conditions of the Puerto Rican political prisoners and prisoners-of-war.

Our second recommendation is that all Puerto Rican freedom combatants captured by the United States be given prisoner-of-war status, including the right to be held together in a holding area while waiting to be tried under international law in a neutral country.

Thirdly, we recommend that this Committee should recognize William Guillermo Morales as a political refugee and demand that the United States desist from its plans to extradite him from Mexico.

(Mr. Lopez)

I should like to leave the Committee with a thought, that despite all the atrocities and threats against our movement,

"We",

in the words of the Rodriguez sisters, Lucy and Alicia, two of the 11 Puerto Rican prisoners-of-war,

"will challenge and resist them, because we well know that the enemy and its cohorts lose their power over us, over the entire movement, when we lose our fear. As our hero and teacher, Don Pedro Albizu Campos, once said, courage is something we must constantly cultivate or we lose it. We continue in the struggle with our heads held high and ready to defend the life of our homeland until the final consequences."

Victory will be ours, if we work on it!

Mr. Lopez withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mrs. Faustina Deya Diaz (Taller de Arte y Cultura) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mrs. Deya Diaz.

Mrs. DEYA DIAZ (interpretation from Spanish): I am a teacher in the central zone of Puerto Rico, precisely where the new model for economic development of Puerto Rico is planned, based on mining.

The Taller de Arte y Cultura is an organization which struggles for the defence of our cultural and national values. The organization, which I represent this afternoon, is appearing before the Committee for the second successive time. I am also speaking particularly on behalf of a large number of residents of the central zone of Puerto Rico.

The greatest emphasis in my statement will be given to the imposition of a new economic model for Puerto Rico, which is being carried out in our island at this very moment in an underhand, covert manner. This project is designed essentially to secure the exploitation of our non-renewable natural resources - minerals, strategic minerals and hydrocarbons - and the agricultural exploitation of the fertile coastal plains by foreign corporations.

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

At the end of the 1950s there began in Puerto Rico intensive exploration in a sophisticated, scientific manner. Virtually the whole island was explored. As a result, the North American corporations Amax and Kennecott found 17 deposits containing gold, silver, copper, molybdenum and zinc in economically exploitable quantities, mainly in the central zone. The United States Department of Mines explored the western region of the island, finding seven potential deposits of nickel, chrome and cobalt. Nickel, chrome and cobalt are strategic minerals necessary for the armaments industry. Forty per cent of the nickel reserves in territory controlled by the United States is situated in Puerto Rico.

Moreover, Western Geophysical found three potential oil deposits in northern Puerto Rico, and recently Basic Minerals, a North American corporation with headquarters in Florida, applied for a permit to exploit strategic minerals which it discovered in eastern Puerto Rico, specifically in the town of Maunabo. In this connection, I have submitted to the Committee a document which is an application to the Government of Puerto Rico for permission to exploit these strategic minerals.

We Puerto Ricans have constantly been told by the colonizers that Puerto Rico is a poor country, without natural resources, even though its natural wealth has been known since the 1940s. But now they can no longer hide how rich Puerto Rico is.

As is well known, Puerto Rico is experiencing a profound economic, political and social crisis. Economic instability, with high public and private indebtedness, agriculture in ruins, and considerable social deterioration, with a very high unemployment rate, have posed and continue to pose a threat to Puerto Rico's political stability. Moreover, the crisis of capitalism in the United States requires an economy in Puerto Rico which will make quite sure that the island continues to be profitable for foreign interests, as it has been ever since 1898. Given these facts, the rich mineral and hydrocarbon deposits which are local raw materials were considered for exploitation as a means of relieving that crisis.

The design and planning of a new economic model began in the 1970s and covered the whole island in an integrated manner, with particular emphasis on the use of land in coastal areas, water and mineral resources, with a view to the joint future exploitation of those resources.

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

All Departments of the United States Government co-ordinated their responsibilities and took an active part in the planning of Puerto Rico for the years 1985 to 2020. Those responsibilities entailed mainly technical research for the development of natural resources and financial assistance through loans and assistance programmes to implement the project. Some of the Departments that participated were: the Department of the Interior, the Department of Housing and Development, the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Transportation. The result of all this is a new economic model for the island to ensure that by the year 2020 the plan we know as the 2020 Plan will be fully implemented.

This 2020 Plan is illustrated on an official map showing objectives and public policies, published in both unabridged and abridged editions. We have a copy of this Plan, and we have brought it here as evidence. It shows economic planning for the island for the years between 1985 and 2020 and governs land use throughout the period. It was financed by the Housing and Urban Development Department of the United States. Furthermore, it sets aside areas for urban growth, industrial and agricultural development, infrastructure and natural resources.

For example, for industrial development, it proposes the construction of 11 industrial parks - these are the circles to be seen on the map - in strategic areas to establish major industries for metals, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and electronics.

For agricultural development, it separates the areas with agricultural potential that will not clash with the exploitation of natural resources. They are located mainly on the fertile coastal plains. The central zone, which is rich in minerals - from Jayuya to Maricao - is not reserved as an agricultural area, nor is there any agricultural project intended for it.

The 2020 Plan also requires a supporting logistics infrastructure. For this purpose the plan shows the construction of roads, electric power stations, industrial ports, regional water-treatment plants and so on.

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

With regard to natural resources - the area of the map in black - the Government used the results of scientific research and froze 37,000 cuerdas of land for the exploitation of copper, gold, silver, nickel, chrome and cobalt in the central and western areas of Puerto Rico.

Moreover, it sets aside and protects more than 26 per cent of fertile lands for military or other uses of United States Agencies. These areas are shaded in green on the map.

This 2020 Plan and mineral exploitation is a threat to the future of Puerto Rico, if not ongoing aggression. There has been a surreptitious, covert move towards investing billions of dollars in the supporting infrastructure. The following series of facts demonstrates that this is the case:

First, in June 1983 the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States approved a \$125-million loan for the building of five regional water-treatment plants - in Aguadilla, Arecibo, Mayagüez, Carolina, Camuy and Hatillo. This infrastructure is shown in the Land Use Master Plan, to which I have already drawn attention.

Second, the eviction of 250 families from the community of Villa Sin Miedo was designed, inter alia, to show that the Land Use Master Plan designated that area for future development of a regional industrial park.

Third, the joint resolution of Congress No. 1288 and the joint resolution of the Senate of Puerto Rico in 1983 appropriated \$15 million for the building of industrial premises and the acquisition of land for the creation of regional industrial parks.

Fourth, the Government of Puerto Rico has been holding talks with the United States Defense Department with a view to establishing on the island industries supplying products needed for military defence. Negotiations are being conducted with 100 high-technology industries.

Fifth, based on the planning of the industrial development area, more pharmaceutical companies are being set up in Puerto Rico. In May 1983 a contract was signed for the establishment in Guayama of American Home Products, one of the biggest pharmaceutical corporations of the United States. At the present time more than 100 pharmaceutical and electronics corporations established in the country have contracts with the United States Defense Department.

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

Sixth, in April 1983 the Government of Puerto Rico approved the document setting public policy for the location of dumps for toxic and dangerous waste. It is currently intended to locate one in the municipality of Ponce, although it has been rejected by the local inhabitants.

Seventh, corn farming in the coastal plains of the country and the agricultural planning of the island has been entrusted to foreign Israeli corporations - which is in keeping with the 2020 Plan for land use.

Eighth, according to the public policy for land use of flooded areas, it is intended to relocate 1,400 families from the following communities: Vistas de Río Grande, Villa Caridad, Vistas del Río, Villa Justicia and Villa Esperanza I and II of the municipality of Carolina. The United States Army Corps of Engineers carried out this study.

Ninth, on 31 March 1983 the Planning Board approved the zoning regulations for the coastal area. This establishes mining districts on the coasts in order to facilitate the exploitation of mineral and petroleum deposits. These regulations depart from the Management Programme for the coastal areas, started in the 1970s, and freeze lands in the mining districts.

Tenth, the Planning Board has denied permits for owners to set aside and build on the 37,000 cuerdas of land frozen for mining exploitation. It invokes Public Policy No. 17.04 of the Land Use Plan, which indicates the incompatibility of such activities in areas planned for mining.

Eleventh, the final report of the United States Bureau of Mines (1982) contains recommendations and conclusions on initiating the working of copper deposits. It recommends a smelting and refining complex of higher capacity for large-scale mining in Puerto Rico and, furthermore, for the processing of minerals from other countries. Arrangements are now being made with Chile for this purpose.

Twelfth, the accelerated construction of a super-highway from Arecibo to the mining zone is in keeping with the infrastructure planned from 1974 onwards in the Land Use Master Plan for the years 1985-2020.

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

Thirteenth, the Comprehensive Study of the Water Supply for Puerto Rico in 1980 plans for the exploitation of copper, nickel, oil and of farming in the coastal areas of the country that may take place. Its proposals coincide with the master plan for land use for 1985 to 2020. In order to confront this economic model and the definitive destruction of bodies of water, the study recommends an investment of billions of dollars in infrastructure for dams, tunnels and pipelines to meet the island's water requirements, particularly in the 11 major industrial parks. The plan is being implemented by the United States Army Corps of Engineers with the construction of two dams in Maraguez and Tibes de Ponce. More than 400 families are being evicted.

Fourteenth, a reforestation programme initially of 100,000 cuerdas in the area of Jayuya, Adjuntas, Utuado, Lares, San Sebastian and Maricao is being submitted by the United States Army Corps of Engineers. It is located in the area where the copper deposits are situated and will eliminate traditional agriculture in that area.

Fifteenth, the 1983-84 budget for the Corporation for Mining Resources Development (CODREMI), calls for an increase of 283 per cent above the previous figures in order to carry out the following:

- (a) Preparation of an environmental impact statement for the mining of copper deposits: \$100,000;
- (b) A contract with Manuel Dubon to negotiate with Amax and Kennecott on the mining of the copper - \$110,000;
- (c) Contracts with the United States Geological Survey to investigate water resources in the area of the copper deposits - \$30,000; and the investigation of possible mineral resources in the sea-bed around the island and its jurisdiction - \$40,000;
- (d) A continued contract with the United States Bureau of Mines for the assessment of copper and nickel deposits - \$40,000;
- (e) A contract to investigate areas that are possibly mineral-rich - \$65,000;
- (f) The conclusion of the final document of regulations for the working, leasing and production of oil and gas;

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

(g) the carrying out of eight to 10 final oil-drilling operations on land at a cost of \$8 million to \$10 million; and

(h) the determination of the viability of exploiting existing gold deposits on the island.

Sixteenth, also as part of that infrastructure, the United States Government, through its Department of Commerce, is implementing in Puerto Rico a programme of coastal zone management. This determines all uses of the coastal waters, submerged lands, the terrestrial maritime zone and areas of natural reserves. The United States Geological Survey and the Bureau of Land Management took part extensively in the preparation of the coastal zone management programme. The Bureau of Land Management is the federal agency responsible for the management of the mineral resources in the sea-bed of the continental shelf.

In conclusion, since 1898 the economic models practised in Puerto Rico have been in accordance with the needs and decisions of the United States Government and its dominant class and had nothing to do with the needs and interests of us, the Puerto Ricans. But this time this new model has gone too far. With the Coastal Zone Management Programme of Puerto Rico being implemented by the United States, the right of Puerto Ricans with regard to the exploration and exploitation of mineral and oil resources will be limited, as will their right in respect of other living and non-living resources in the soil and marine sub-soil.

They also intend to initiate large-scale exploitation of minerals, strategic minerals and hydrocarbons.

The 2020 Plan would transform Puerto Rico into a military-industrial complex. It would result in total social upheaval. Populations would be situated around the 11 planned industrial parks and we Puerto Ricans would be mere accessories to an economy being practised by the United States in the Caribbean and in Central and South America. In the hinterland of the island there would be a small number of workers involved in large-scale mining operations. The remaining population not needed for this economic activity would be moved outside Puerto Rico because, as a result of the ecological destruction, large areas would be rendered uninhabitable.

(Mrs. Deya Diaz)

This 2020 Plan is not at all a future threat; it is an act of aggression now in progress. In a covert and insidious way, billions of dollars have already been invested in a logistic infrastructure consisting of highways, dams, ports and so forth to provide support for the project.

In Puerto Rico one lives in a state of war. There is, on the one hand, daily aggression embracing all aspects of the life of a people which is now threatened with its own destruction and, on the other hand, a patriotic resistance in all areas for our own protection.

If the 2020 Plan is allowed to go ahead together with the large scale exploitation of minerals, the island will be turned into a military-industrial wasteland not fit at all for collective living. With the destruction of our national territory and the social disintegration of Puerto Ricans, an attempt is being made to resolve the problem of the status of Puerto Rico. By then the work of this Committee will prove to have no effect. We therefore urge all members of the Committee to work hard now to resolve the destiny of our country. History and humanity will be on their side.

Mrs. Deya Diaz withdrew.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Fernando Martin (Puerto Rican Independence Party) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. Martin.

Mr. MARTIN (Puerto Rican Independence Party) (interpretation from Spanish): My name is Fernando Martin. I am appearing here today on behalf of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, the main and largest organization fighting for the independence of Puerto Rico. I am a member of its Political Committee and act as the Secretary for International Relations. I was entrusted with speaking here by the President of our Party, Ruben Berrios Martinez.

Once again the Committee has before it the colonial case of Puerto Rico. The struggle for the independence of my country and the struggle against the vestiges of colonialism around the world require the Committee, today more than ever, to reiterate to mankind the fundamental principles which have been stressed in the Committee in the past in connection with colonialism in Puerto Rico. I am referring basically to recognition of the applicability of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) to the colonial case of Puerto Rico and thus to the jurisdiction of the Committee over this matter and to the need for the Committee to call on the United States to transfer to Puerto Rico all powers so that my country, in full enjoyment of its sovereignty and independence, can exercise its inalienable right to self-determination.

A new resolution by this Committee, reiterating these fundamental principles, will, inter alia, serve the important role of convincing the colonial Power in Puerto Rico, the United States, that no amount of pressure or attempted political blackmail can stop this Committee and its member countries from faithfully discharging their responsibility to promote the attainment of independence for those peoples such as that of Puerto Rico which are still subject to a colonial system.

However, it is essential for this international effort of support for the just cause of the independence of Puerto Rico to be expanded to include all the political forces that are committed to the elimination of colonialism around the world. Although the United Nations is a forum of enormous importance, it is not the only one which the Independence Party has approached with a view to helping it attain our independence. The Independence Party joined the Socialist Internationale, for example, in April this year, but that international organization did not merely accept the membership of the Puerto Rican Independence Party but, in the resolution on Latin America adopted at its Congress last April, decisively emphasized its support for the independence of Puerto Rico. In so

(Mr. Martin)

far as the Socialist Internationale can increase its support as part of the foreign policy of the member Governments of that organization, there will be a corresponding increase in support for Puerto Rican independence here in the United Nations. The same applies to the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America, COPAL, of which my Party is also a member. This development will not take place overnight here in the United Nations. It did not do so with regard to our joining the Socialist Internationale and COPAL either. What is clear, however, is that the international trend against United States colonialism in Puerto Rico is inexorable. As the independence of Puerto Rico receives increasing support from Governments and political forces which enjoy cordial relationships with the United States, such as Venezuela, in the same way the isolation of the United States because of its policy towards Puerto Rico will become intolerable. The United States cannot continue to use the sad excuse that Puerto Rico is merely a further incident in the proverbial confrontation between East and West.

In July this year, during the commemoration of the bicentenary of the birth of Simon Bolivar, the Liberator, the Presidents of Latin American nations freed by Bolivar, meeting in Caracas, issued a joint statement, the Caracas Declaration, which called for the liquidation of the last vestiges of colonialism in Latin America. This Bolivarian attitude, which goes beyond narrow ideological barriers, is a portent of what will happen in the case of Puerto Rico here in the United Nations. Our struggle in the United Nations, in other regional and international forums and in the territory of Puerto Rico itself will not halt until our country's independence is attained.

The Committee on Decolonization, which has played such a vital role in developing and strengthening this growing mass movement around the world whose membership is daily more varied, must continue to be a source of legitimacy and support for this process. It must be an example of the capacity to resist the range of pressure and threats which have become so frequent in United States Government policy in connection with Puerto Rico in the recent past. The current crisis affecting Central America and the Caribbean represents a further context for considering the case of Puerto Rico and United States conduct in connection with the island. While the United States thunders against alleged foreign intervention in El Salvador and Nicaragua and advocates the need for multilateral rapprochement to deal with this and other regional matters, this attitude is hypocritically absent in the case of Puerto Rico. In our case,

(Mr. Martin)

where military invasion by the United States is the longest-standing and most decisive in the region, the United States insists that the matter of Puerto Rico is a domestic, United States issue and should be dealt with in a bilateral fashion between what is really the colonial Power and the subject people. It rejects intervention by the United Nations, which is, after all, the multilateral forum par excellence. This great hypocrisy must be unmasked and this Committee, in reiterating the fundamental principles which I previously mentioned, would thereby contribute to that unmasking.

At this time, when the United States is beginning to reactivate Puerto Rican troops to take part in war plans in Central America and is attempting to increase its military presence in Puerto Rico as a military base in the heart of the Caribbean, the United Nations must act decisively in the colonial case of Puerto Rico.

I should like to draw the Committee's attention to the intensification of repressive campaigns by the United States Government against Puerto Rican independence fighters, the most recent example of which is the abuse of the legal device of the so-called Federal Grand Jury by United States Government prosecutors in order to arraign independence fighters who have been charged with no crime and to imprison them if they refuse to answer questions put to them by Federal Government representatives. This jailing of those who have been charged with no offence is the most recent and most striking manifestation of the historic persecution which the Puerto Rican independence fighters have suffered at the hands of the United States colonial authorities. The United States authorities continue totally to ignore resolutions of this Committee in open and flagrant violation of the significance of this body. To these calls for justice the United States responds with the arrogant tones of someone who believes himself to be above the international legal order.

It remains for me merely to ask this Committee once again fully and faithfully to discharge its historic responsibility.

Mr. Martin withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Diego Roman Ramirez (Gran Oriente Interamericano de Puerto Rico) took a place at the Committee table.

Mr. ROMAN RAMIREZ: My name is Diego Roman Ramirez, Grand Secretary for External Relations of the Gran Oriente Interamericano de Puerto Rico, a masonic lodge with its headquarters in the valleys of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Accompanying me are Brother Alberto Rivera, Grand Master, Brother Homero Rosado, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Universal Council, and Brother Humberto Duran, Grand Treasurer, as well as the Grand Secretary.

We have come here once again for the dual purpose of setting forth the colonial situation of our nation and of appealing to all the other nations of the world for support for our freedom struggle.

This is a year of special significance for the freedom of the peoples of Latin America and of the world. We are commemorating the bicentenary of the birth of el Libertador, the illustrious and mighty Brother Simon Bolivar, who continues to inspire us in our efforts to gain international support for our cause. It is also 251 years since the birth of the patriot and Master Mason, George Washington, the liberator of the nation which still oppresses us.

Unlike Venezuela or the United States, our movement for liberation from the latter nation goes back 85 years. But like those two outstanding patriots and masons Bolivar and Washington we remain faithful to the responsibility placed upon our shoulders by history. And we are and shall continue to be ready and willing as masons - who are free, civilized men - to condemn, whenever and wherever necessary, the régime of intervention and oppression against our nation.

What has been the result of these 85 years of colonial domination?

One result has been crime. Crime is nearly out of hand. Even within the very ranks of the colonial police there are those who violate the laws they are supposed to defend. This goes as far as the entrapment and murder of individuals who are struggling for our freedom. Similarly, corruption in all spheres of colonial government -- once an "example of administrative purity" -- threatens to destroy our society once again.

Another result concerns Federal funds. Federal "assistance" or "transfers" have led, as a result of the increasing or constant state of dependency, to mental control of our citizens, causing them, through a subtle psychological mechanism, to think of the United States Government as their benefactor. This in turn brings about a feeling of powerlessness and despair by implanting the notion of the total helplessness which would allegedly exist if that assistance were to be withdrawn upon independence.

(Mr. Roman Ramirez)

A complement to this mental control is the fact that 60 per cent of the population receives Food Stamps, cloaked of late with cash payments under the Nutritional Assistance Program. Such assistance, wrongly utilized, has not prevented 24 per cent unemployment in the colony's economy.

A further result concerns alcoholism. The vagueness of our political status - a vagueness which is planned and continued skilfully and with sinister intent by the aggressor nation - has brought about, as an escape mechanism, a high - an excessive - level of alcohol consumption. Indeed, Puerto Rico has the dubious honour of being the second-ranking country in the world in this respect.

The evidence for an intention to continue colonial rule is clear and obvious. The United States has never tried to achieve the economic development of Puerto Rico. It wants our nation - small in size, but great in its opposition to the tyrannical oppressor - to remain forever under-developed.

Is additional proof needed?

For one thing, there is the Federal grand jury system. This allegedly legal mechanism is like an anti-democratic, anachronistic mediaeval court which has been used by the imperialists throughout the 85 years of colonial domination to repress, punish and unjustly imprison advocates of Puerto Rican independence, without granting the opportunities for legal protection which the United States Constitution supposedly guarantees.

The war-mongering régime which dominates us, represented by the whole political, military and multinational scaffolding of the United States, is trying to convert Puerto Rico into a nuclear stockpile and an enormous base for aggression against our brother peoples of Central America. One of the plans of the United States Government is to reactivate the Ramey Air Force Base in the town of Aguadilla. Given the current Administration's aggressive policies towards Latin America, we should not be surprised that this year the base is once again functioning at full capacity. In addition, it is rumoured that the Military School of the Americas, now in Panama, is to be transferred to Puerto Rico. The Gran Oriente Interamericano de Puerto Rico vigorously rejects all the hostile manoeuvres and actions of the interventionist Government against Puerto Rico, which have the criminal aim of using us for aggression against our Central American brothers.

(Mr. Roman Ramirez)

Another proof concerns Agent Orange. The United States has attempted to use the Puerto Ricans as guinea pigs. Investigations by local scientists and reporters have recently revealed that in the 1960s chemical experiments were conducted in Puerto Rico by the United States Department of Defense. The Pentagon used Puerto Rico as a "model" to imitate war conditions in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. A principal part of these experiments involved the use of the highly toxic herbicide Agent Orange. That agent contained a dangerous compound known as dioxin, exposure to which has caused more than 20,000 veterans to sue Dow Chemical because of physical injury brought about by it.

We have attempted to place these abusive acts by the United States Government before the Special Committee so that it can see the magnitude of the disrespect of that Government for the territory of Puerto Rico and for the life of the Puerto Ricans: some of these tests were carried out in inhabited areas.

Finally, we should like to denounce here the continued violation by the North American Administration of the historic Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was signed in Mexico by the former President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, on 29 May 1973. That Treaty prohibits nuclear stockpiling in Puerto Rico and other parts of the Caribbean under United States dominion. The United States flagrantly violates the Treaty by permitting the mooring of submarines with nuclear cargoes at the Roosevelt Roads base for various periods of time.

In no way can the people of the United States deny its glorious past. Master Masons like Washington and Lafayette, among others, founded that free and independent nation. As masons, we demand the exercise of the same rights and prerogatives which in the past were demanded by the liberators of the United States, and we urge all masonic lodges and all the citizens of the United States and other nations of the world to recognize our right as a nation to freedom and self-determination.

Mr. Roman Ramirez withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mrs. Ruth Vassallo (Respetable Logia Femenina "Julia de Burgos") took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mrs. Ruth Vassallo.

Mrs. VASSALLO (interpretation from Spanish): I am appearing here on behalf of the Julia de Burgos respectable Masonic Lodge of Puerto Rican Women. I am accompanied by Conchita Soltero, our venerable Lodge mistress.

The three basic principles which govern our organization are equality, fraternity and freedom. For that reason the primary responsibility of masonic women in a colony such as Puerto Rico is to fight for independence. Fulfilling this responsibility has brought us here today seeking the implementation of United Nations resolution 1514 (XV) in connection with Puerto Rico.

Since the founding of the United Nations the case of independence for Puerto Rico has been brought again and again before this Organization in pursuit of the implementation of one of the basic principles which gave birth to the United Nations - the decolonization of peoples. Our struggle has been and continues to be very difficult since we are a colony of the most powerful empire in history, the United States of America - the same United States which dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, which intervened in Viet Nam with murder, the destruction of flora and fauna and the sterilization of land for the next two or three generations, leaving its stamp of misery and hunger; the same United States which is brutally and irresponsibly attacking our Central American brothers in their just struggle for social claims that would enable men to live like men; the same United States which has called for participation by our young Puerto Rican men in its armies to serve in its interventionist interests; the same United States which has militarized Puerto Rico to such an extent that we have in our country the largest military base in the Americas; the same United States which is using the Federal Grand Jury as an element of repression against those fighting for Puerto Rican independence. The same empire which is trying to destroy our culture; which is trying to prevent the daily and constant creation which is the culture of our own land. It is attempting to impose alien patterns, ignoring the fact that a people does not allow the imposition of conduct upon it. Each people creates its own conduct and around that arises its way of seeing the world.

(Mrs. Vassallo)

This empire which commits murder, seizes the lands of others, attacks countries fighting to alleviate the plight of barefoot and starving children, suppresses and kills those fighting for the independence of Puerto Rico, tries to destroy our culture which is tantamount to destroying our very raison d'être -- this devastating empire is the one which is holding us in subjection.

Accordingly, we urge that representatives reiterate in the United Nations General Assembly the call for the Assembly to include in its agenda for its session this year the question of Puerto Rico as a separate item in order to speed up the decolonization of Puerto Rico, the fundamental requirement if the Committee is successfully to conclude its work as a decolonization organ.

In conclusion, I should like to add three lines which representatives could perhaps bear in mind in pursuance of their work. Puerto Rico as a colony is a threat to the stability of the Caribbean; Puerto Rico as a colony is a threat to the integrity of Central America; Puerto Rico as a colony is a threat to the peace of the entire world.

Mrs. Vassallo withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Rafael Soltero Peralta (Gran Logia Nacional de Puerto Rico) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Soltero Peralta to address the Committee.

Mr. SOLTERO PERALTA (interpretation from Spanish): We are appearing here as representatives of the National Grand Lodge of Puerto Rico, a Puerto Rican masonic organization which has not missed a single year of these public hearings since the 1960s when the colonial case of Puerto Rico began to be discussed here in this Committee on decolonization.

(Mr. Soltero Peralta)

Inasmuch as since 1978, five years ago, this Special Committee has been satisfied that there is adequate proof of the political, legal, economic and cultural subjugation imposed upon the people of Puerto Rico since 1898 by the metropolitan Power, the United States of America, and on the basis of that perceived colonial reality requested the Government of the United States to withdraw from our national territory the power that it had previously exercised so that our people may exercise validly and effectively its inalienable right to self-determination and independence, as well as to manage its own destiny, it is therefore no longer necessary for us to adduce large numbers of facts and additional data to demonstrate what has already been clearly proved - as can be seen from the records of this Committee, its five resolutions adopted between 1978 and 1982 on the subject, and its annual reports to the General Assembly in respect of the case of Puerto Rico.

(Mr. Soltero Peralta)

We do consider it timely and necessary, however, to bring to the Committee's attention the fact that, despite its repeatedly urging the United States to desist from exercising its imperial sway over Puerto Rico, which it does in flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, the legitimate decisions of the Committee of 24 and the rules of international public law with regard to decolonization, the Government in Washington arrogantly persists in exercising over our people powers that are identical to those it has wielded for more than eight decades - ever since 1898, when it invaded the land it continues to occupy and to treat as a part of its own territory by force of arms.

In other words, the imperial United States Government continues to ignore completely the appeals issued by this anti-colonial body with respect to Puerto Rico, in spite of the fact that five years have elapsed since the Committee began to urge our people's immediate decolonization.

Indeed, there is no sign at all that the United States Government has any intention of beginning the process of decolonization that has been urged upon it and without which neither the Puerto Rican people nor its Government can do anything to move Puerto Rico closer to decolonization, without running the risk of causing damage to the country - damage that could assume unforeseeable proportions.

We must also point out that, in addition to this failure to act, the United States Government continues with impunity to commit serious violations of the elementary rights of our people. The most recent and significant of these violations can be summed up as follows:

One, the absolute control by the metropolitan Power of international relations involving and affecting Puerto Rico, a right to which our people is entitled. The most recent example of this illegitimate control of foreign affairs was the refusal of the Executive Branch in Washington to allow Puerto Rico to participate in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in its own right, for the protection of its Hispano-American culture.

(Mr. Soltero Peralta)

Two, absolute control of the economy, finances, and banking and Washington-imposed conditions governing the use of credit, particularly with regard to foreign exchange.

Three, the absolute control of the territory of Puerto Rico and the seas surrounding it.

Four, the continuation of bombardments and military manoeuvres by the United States infantry, naval and air forces, in conjunction with allied forces, entailing serious risks for the people of Puerto Rico and irreparable ecological damage.

Five, the reimposition of compulsory military service and extending it to the young people of Puerto Rico.

Six, the decisive influence, both direct and indirect, on the educational system of Puerto Rico to the detriment of sound pedagogic policy, along with a lack of proper stimulus for detecting the scientific truth of basic knowledge, as well as the lack of proper emphasis that should be a part of any sound educational system.

Seven, the continued persecution of Puerto Ricans who have openly and bravely defended their country's independence. In this respect, the scandalous Cerro Maravilla case is particularly noteworthy. It involved young advocates of independence who were treacherously and purposely entrapped and who died, obviously at Government hands instead of being brought to trial as they should have been and as is usually the case with those purported to have violated the law.

Eight, the intervention of judges and of a Grand Jury, operating as part of the metropolitan judicial system, assuming jurisdiction over purely local matters and making judicial rulings that openly clash with the powers traditionally recognized as incumbent upon the courts of the local justice system. The most recent examples of such violations have occurred in disputes in connection with local electoral matters and with the powers of the Puerto Rican Bar Association.

(Mr. Soltero Peralta)

Nine, the threat by the United States Government to set up on Puerto Rican territory a so-called military college of the Americas aimed at training military personnel to oversee foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the peoples of Latin America.

Ten, the use of the Puerto Rican National Guard, or a part of it, in military interventions and reckless ventures in Honduras as a part of the interventionist policy of the United States throughout Central America.

Finally, in view of the violations I have just enumerated, we would request the Special Committee, now that the case of Puerto Rico has reached the extremes to which I have referred and after five years of foot-dragging since decolonization was first requested, and since the colony is the largest among the 1 per cent of mankind still awaiting political freedom - we would, I repeat, request the Committee to reissue its decision that the case of Puerto Rico should be included in the agenda of the General Assembly for 1983 in order that that body, the most representative of world public opinion, might take the appropriate decisions that would enable more than 3 million Latin Americans finally to emerge from their condition of abject servitude.

Mr. Soltero Peralta withdrew.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.