

# STATEMENTS FROM

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, 1983

IN SOLIDARITY WITH ALL FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR



SAN ANTONIO DEMOCRAT



CAROL VALLEY / THE OREGONIAN



PALESTINIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - S.F. 1983



## INTRODUCTION

On March 12, 1983 as part of International Women's Day celebrations around the world, demonstrators marched through the rain to the gates of Port Chicago Naval Weapons Stations in California. The demonstration, sponsored by the New Movement in Solidarity with the Puerto Rican and Mexican Revolutions, Women Against Imperialism and Prairie Fire Organizing Committee was in solidarity with freedom fighters and prisoners of war. Following are statements by Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and their supporters in England, West Germany and the United States.



International Women's Day Demonstration 1983

## A CALL TO PARTICIPATE ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, 1983

This March, we will be celebrating International Women's Day in the best way possible--by participating in nationwide demonstrations in solidarity with all Freedom Fighters and Prisoners of War. In the Midwest, people are mobilizing to the gates of Dwight Women's Prison, where four of the Eleven Puerto Rican Prisoners of War are being held. Here on the West Coast, we are targeting the Port Chicago Concord Naval Weapons Station. From this major weapons depot, the Navy shipped 96% of the napalm and B-52 bombs that devastated Vietnam. The phosphorus bombs that today are quietly loaded in Port Chicago, 30 minutes from Berkeley, tomorrow will explode in Puerto Rico during U.S. Navy target practice of Vieques. The missiles will be aimed at the people of El Salvador, the Congo, Palestine: everywhere oppressed people are defying U.S. imperialist rule.

Just down the highway from Port Chicago, Puerto Rican Prisoner of War Haydee Torres is imprisoned at Pleasanton Federal Prison. While the Navy "lawfully" ships out its napalm and bombs, the U.S. government calls Haydee a dangerous "terrorist." She is being kept behind bars for life without



the possibility of parole. Her crime? Fighting with her companeras and companeros--Carmen Valentin, Alicia Rodriguez, Lucy Rodriguez, Dylcia Pagan, Oscar Lopez-Rivera, Carlos Torres, Elizam Escobar, Ricardo Jimenez, Luis Rosa and Adolfo Matos--for independence and socialism for Puerto Rico, which was invaded and colonized by the U.S. in 1898. The Eleven Puerto Rican Prisoners of War have refused to recognize the legitimacy of the U.S. colonial courts to try them, and claim Prisoner of War status as freedom fighters in a war for national liberation. When Haydee was taken to court, she turned her back on the federal judge and took political control of the courtroom. Surrounded by burly guards and dozens of FBI agents, this Puerto Rican woman, only five feet tall, delivered a political speech to the hundreds of supporters who jammed the courtroom:

"I, Haydee Torres, am a Puerto Rican Prisoner of War. I am the product of this continuous struggle waged by my people. I am the conscience of my people in arms. And like a captured prisoner of war, neither this court, nor this country has any right to treat me like a criminal... I am free, and neither these bars nor this miserable and shameful country can keep me imprisoned."



credit: Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Chicago

This painting of Haydee Torres by a Puerto Rican high school student shows how the POW's defiance of the colonial court's jurisdiction put the imperialist state on trial.

It is this refusal to compromise, this courage, that is the personification of the Puerto Rican people's struggle. It is this strategy embodied by the Eleven--the strategy of protracted people's war--that is the only strategy which can free Puerto Rico and all other colonized nations.

As we march, we will also honor Black freedom fighters. We celebrate the continued freedom of New Afrikan Freedom Fighter Assata Shakur, who was liberated from prison in 1979 by the Black Liberation Army (BLA). We demand the release of Sekou Odinga, Kuwesi Balagoon and all New Afrikan Prisoners of War. We reaffirm our support for white anti-imperialists who are fighting for New Afrikan liberation, people like Judy Clark and David Gilbert.

We are going to Port Chicago to name our enemy for what it is--U.S. Imperialism, the system that colonizes millions of people around the world.

It is the U.S. state that is the real terrorist! On International Women's Day, we affirm that we as women take our stand on the side of all Freedom Fighters and Prisoners of War, those who make war on the warmakers!

The lives of colonized Third World women are completely shaped by the fact that they are members of nations whose land, labor and resources are controlled by foreign exploiters. The very survival of whole nations is threatened, and genocide is a reality. 40% of all Puerto Rican women of child-bearing age have been sterilized, 25% of Puerto Rican men, 24% of Black women and 42% of Native American women. Cutbacks in welfare and health care mean that infant mortality is rising. Children are contracting what used to be rare diseases, they are suffering of malnutrition, and drug abuse is rampant.

Under the slogan "Flag and Family," America's rulers are reinforcing oppressive roles for white working class women as part of an effort to "make America No. 1 again." In the words of Paul Laxalt, Reagan's closest Congressional ally and the author of the reactionary Family "Protection" Act, "The family is the lifeline of America's continued existence and the cornerstone of America's growth and future development." (Laxalt is not talking about Third World families that this government is systematically attacking). All this reminds us distinctly of the Kinde-Kuche-Kirche (Children-Home-Church) of Nazi Germany. This reactionary campaign takes place at a time when the white working class is under greater economic attack and pressure than any time since the 1930's. For white working class women these attacks take the form of rising unemployment, cutbacks in welfare and health services, and a shocking rise in violence, rape, and pornography. Anti-lesbian and anti-gay legislation and the sandbagging of even that paper statement of equality, the ERA: all this makes clear that rising male supremacy is an integral part of America's move to the right.

While the Republicans are calling for "Moral Rearmament," the Democratic Party offers us a role that is equally imperialist in its content. "Women's liberation" Ms. Magazine-style is defined as equal participation in all the "rights and responsibilities" of this oppressive system. We can become killer cops and join in the police murder of 400 Third World



International Women's Day Demonstration 1982



Women's March Against Imperialism, 1981

people every year; we can join the Army and become part of the U.S. military machine. The "Justice" Department invites us to use our organizing skills to form Neighborhood Watch committees so we can report "suspicious" --(Black and Brown)--people to the police.

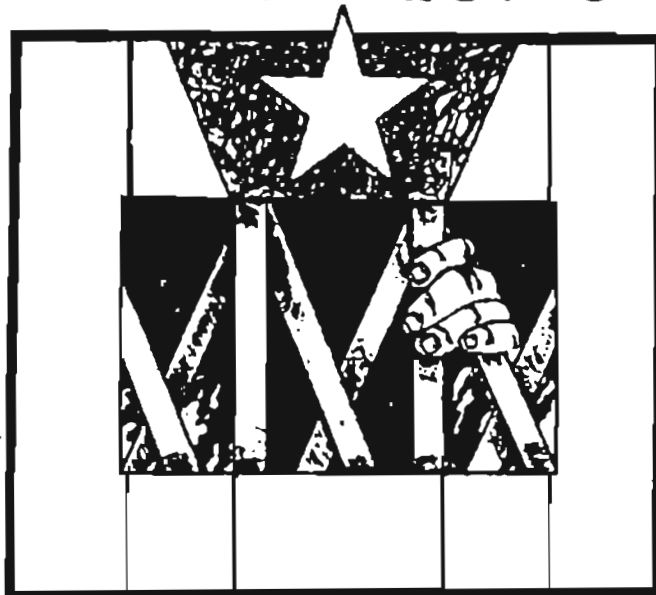
In the late 1960's, significant sectors of the women's liberation movement were inspired and led by the Vietnamese people and the Black Liberation struggle. Tens of thousands of us acted on the knowledge that there was something fundamentally wrong with this system, and that our own liberation was completely tied to the liberation of people all around the world. Now it is 1983, more than a decade later. Most Women's Day celebrations will be addressed by politicians like Mayor Diane Feinstein or Jane Byrne. Some will listen and agree, many of us will be disgusted and say, "I don't want to attend any more of these picnics." We should be disgusted! While the mayors are urging us to hide our heads behind the curtain of a voting booth, the forces of fascism are gathering across the U.S. The prison population has doubled in only a decade, and the death penalty has been reinstituted as a means of legal lynching. The Klan is becoming more aggressively terrorist and boasts a membership that is 40% women. We watch in horror as Ronald Reagan embraces the bloodiest dictators on the face of the earth; as billions are poured into the maw of the largest military machine in world history. Unemployment, recession, and cutbacks are indicative of a continuing worldwide economic crisis that the imperialists can only solve by going to war.

Too many women in the predominantly-white women's movement think that we can win our liberation separate from the struggles of colonized peoples inside and outside the U.S. These politics have almost destroyed our movement. Many women who used to be political have become cynical and inactive. Others devote themselves to the cultural alternative, building a safe island for a few women. Many think that white feminists are the inventors and judges of women's liberation, not seeing that it is within the national liberation movements and socialist societies that women are most dramatically changing their lives. This amounts to a racist politics that cuts women off from the revolutionary national liberation forces inside and outside the U.S. that are leading the worldwide fight to defeat this empire. Cynicism and passivity mean that we become "good Germans," silent in the face of colonized peoples' struggles against killer cops, the KKK, Grand Juries: genocide.

It is against this background that on IWD 1983 we feel the urgency of building a fighting anti-imperialist women's movement, committed to ending colonialism, white supremacy, and the oppression of women. We want to be part of building a revolutionary movement of white working class people which will fight alongside the national liberation movements to overturn this oppressive system.

The stand taken by POWs exposes the reality of colonialism within U.S. borders. The U.S. empire built its home base by colonizing New Afrikan (Black), Mexican and Native American peoples and lands. Today, the revolutionary leadership of domestically colonized people are developing a strategy to dismember this internal empire and regain control of their land, resources and destiny. The heart and core of revolution in North America is the struggle for an independent and socialist Puerto Rico; an independent and socialist New Afrika; the reunification of the occupied north of Mexico (the so-called "southwest") with socialist Mexico, and sovereignty for Native nations.

# SON PATRIOTAS



# NO TERRORISTAS

*"They are Freedom Fighters, Not Terrorists".*

Everywhere in the world, victory has only come about through armed struggle. This is why the imperialists always try to isolate POWs and freedom fighters as "terrorists." Why do we think the struggle will be different here? We can no longer accept a situation where people cheer those freedom fighters who are located halfway around the world, but ignore or condemn forces like the FALN and the BLA who are breaking America's predatory "peace" by bringing the fight into the heart of the empire.

Around the world, revolutionary women are destroying the bourgeois myth that women are weak and passive. These women are participating in the exercise of power, taking their destinies into their own hands as they help rebuild their nations. In Nicaragua, the new revolutionary government has prohibited the exploitation of women's bodies to sell products; in Vietnam, prostitution has been wiped out and a half a million women retrained so that they can lead useful and productive lives. The struggle for the liberation of women in these revolutionary societies is a fundamental part of the process of building socialism.

For us, women's liberation means turning around the experience we have had--defined by weakness, alienated from ourselves, separated from the oppressed peoples of the earth. It means building a movement which is accountable to the forces of national liberation. It means participating in the destruction of imperialism and the building of socialist societies free of all forms of oppression.

As we demonstrate, we know that the defining contradiction in the world today is between imperialism and white supremacy on the one hand, and the forces of national liberation and socialism on the other. This is the ground on which we carry out our fight for women's liberation and the freedom of all people. This struggle is sharpening and there is no sitting it out.



# Statements from Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

## Alicia Rodriguez

Greetings and warm and revolutionary embrace to everyone here, especially the women who are celebrating this month their contribution to the struggle.

In the field of revolution and socialism we must emphasize the emancipation of women, in the struggle, at work and in the home. This issue must be a fundamental point in our struggle for total liberation.

In the capitalist/imperialist system, women, as well as men, are oppressed and exploited. However, women suffer doubly--because they are also oppressed and exploited by men. Our struggle for Independence and Socialism places before us a tremendous task and challenge. But we can't ignore or avoid our responsibility to take up the question of women's liberation.

We must take up this issue because it impacts on all human relations. For example, we can't deny that the revolutionary couple forms a cell in the body of the movement and that the revolutionary struggle can't be carried out correctly without the equal participation of women. We see that in nature men and women are evolutionary counterparts, and that physical differences exist between them. These differences determine that women play a very important role in the production of the family. We see that biologically it is women who give birth to life. In our wombs human life is fertilized and developed--we nourish the development of a life.

We can carry the importance of these physical differences to the social world and to our struggle. Thus, recognizing the great potential we women have to internalize the essence of the struggle, to nourish it and, in reality, to give birth to a new life.



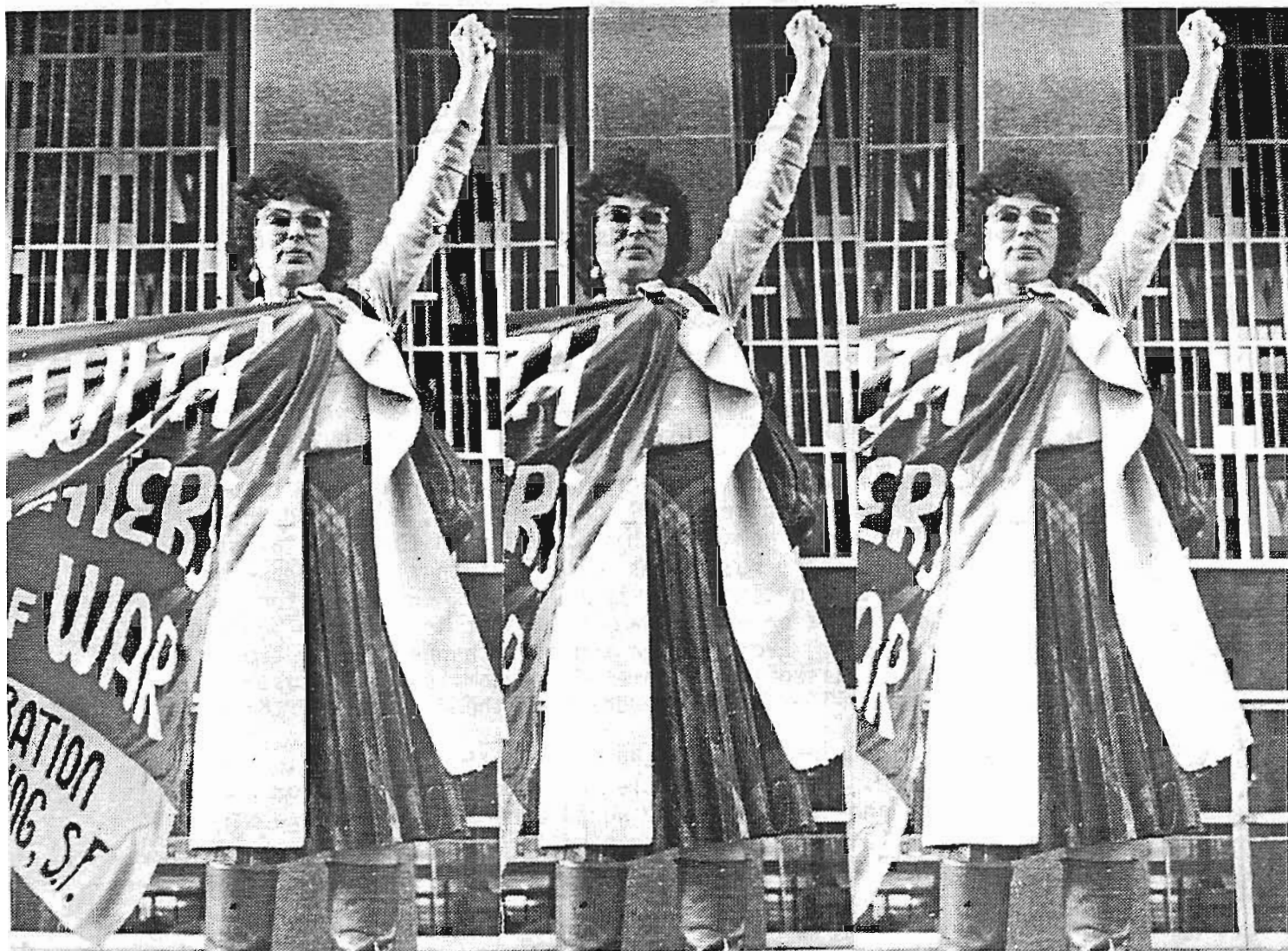
The potential and need for our contribution to the revolutionary process exists--open to everyone's examination, in the revolutionary and victorious examples of the women of Vietnam, Cuba, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Palestine, Nicaragua, China, Africa, etc. These courageous women are examples of patriotic love, of love for human life and the human capacity to carry out profound changes.

Women will continue being victims of inequality and oppression until we struggle to root out the bourgeois/colonial mentality which invades all the oppressed and exploited. She will enter our struggle as an active participant when she breaks the chains imposed by alienation.

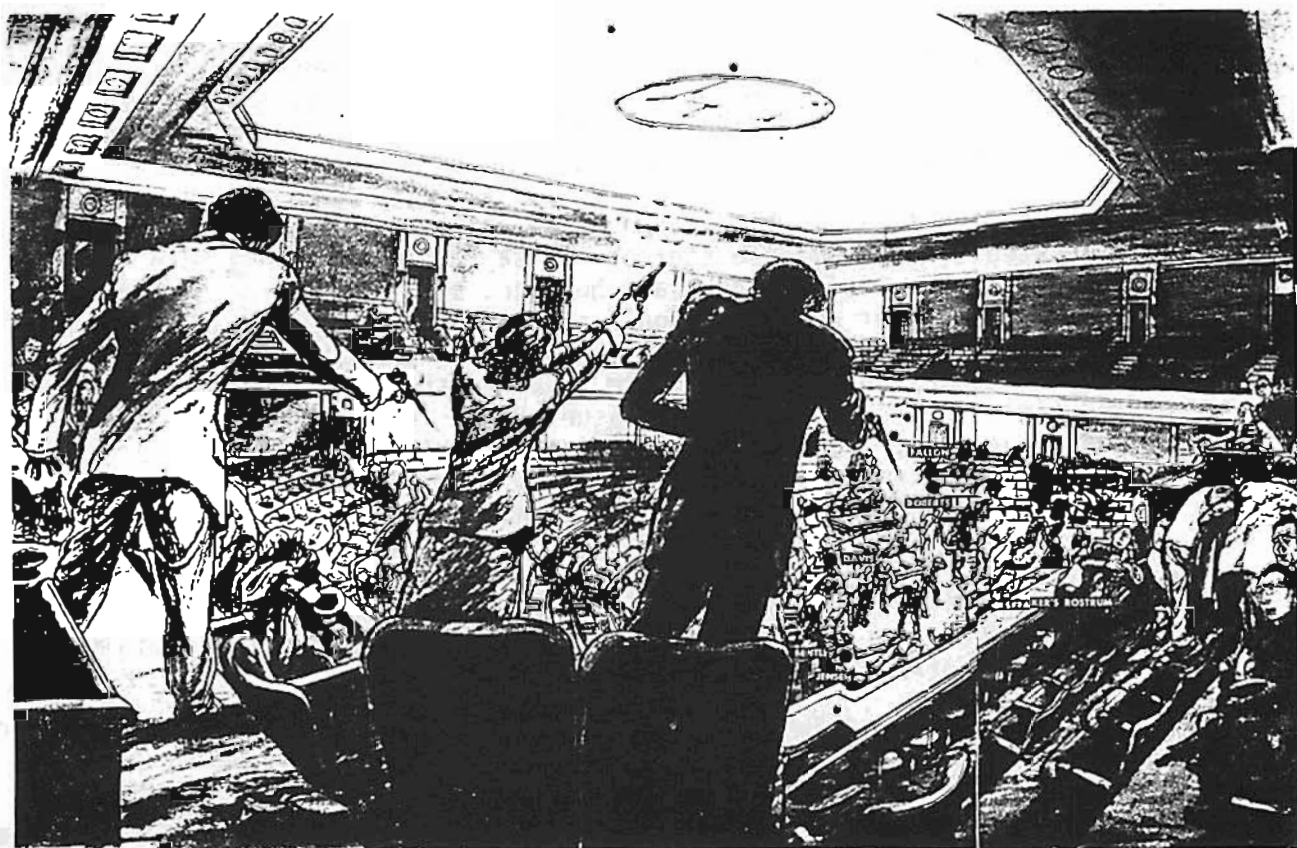
Stereotypes exist which cause us to act and think in a fragmented and alienated fashion. These stereotypes say that women were born to be housewives, take care of children and husband, and to work in the kitchen. In other words, that politics should not concern women. The truth is that these stereotypes play a role in maintaining the current structure and women's isolation. After a while this isolation makes women feel useless, and timid in the face of vital issues which endanger her, her family, her people and other peoples in the international community. In our struggle, we're not forcing men to exchange roles with women. We are only demanding the union and equal sharing of tasks and responsibilities between men and women.

The commitment to struggle which takes place on all levels gives us the opportunity to prepare ourselves and develop our skills and mature our human potential.

If this is reality, which we think it is, then we accept the energetic invitation offered to us to enter our struggle and continue it until the final victory.







Lolita Lebron leading an attack on the U.S. Congress in 1954 with Andres Figueroa Cordero, Irving Flores, and Rafael Cancel Miranda, to bring the case of Puerto Rico's colonization to world attention.

## Carmen Valentín

A Revolutionary Salute Comrades, Friends of the Puerto Rican Revolution!

I embrace every woman here present with the hope that she will accept my invitation to make a leap onto the stage of history by picking up arms to defend humanity.

It is very gratifying to know that you are here today demanding that we be treated well and with respect. This is a clear message, yet there is a broader meaning to your presence here today. You are saying: "We are here to demand respect for the Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, but above all we demand the respect of all Puerto Ricans, of all oppressed People." This is no small demand. This is a demand for a Socialist Revolution. Your presence here reinforces our belief that there are People in this powerful empire concerned for human rights, concerned for justice, concerned for the liberation of all mankind. That is why your presence is of paramount importance. Every time a socialist banner, every time a Puerto Rican flag is raised in the name of freedom, you get closer to our goal, which in turn will grant us freedom from the dungeons of the enemy.

Today, we are also here to honor the contribution of women in struggle throughout the times. It is impossible to list the thousands of women throughout history and throughout the world who have died in the struggle attempting to make their country independent and socialist. We Salute all Women of Struggle, Past and Present!

In our history we have an endless list of Puerto Rican revolutionary women: Mariana Bracetti, Lola Rodriguez de Tia, Blanca Canales, Isabel Rosado, Consuelo Lee Corretjer--to name a few.

We have presently: Dylcia, Haydee, Ida, Alicia, Nydia, who are living examples of women who have decided to make a leap onto the stage of history and who with their actions have reaffirmed the fact that many a time there are a few men and women who at a given moment in history seem to contain within themselves the dignity of all people. It has been said that through the struggle of the few, the people as a whole reclaim strength and dignity shown by a few.

A woman's conscious decision to join in organized struggle implies a transition of great importance to a nation. These comrades internalized and put to practice the great words of Lenin: "The success of a revolution depends on the extent to which women take part in it." Rest assured that if this is a true indication the Puerto Rican Revolution will be successful!

One may wonder what it is that makes a woman believe in her potential as a woman: What makes a woman believe that she is as capable to wage armed struggle as man? Our actions would seem irrational, unusual, exceptional, if isolated from the historical facts that clearly show the colonial status and destruction of our country and of the world as a whole. We have to give explanations of our actions continuously because much of what has been taught to us has reflected an outlook, because we perceive things, humans, as unrelated images of the romantic and having no real relationship to the external world. However, when our actions are analyzed, scrutinized correctly and with great knowledge of history, they are no more than ordinary. We merely did what was expected of us as humans, no more, no less. At the threat of extinction as a nation, as a people, what other alternatives do Puerto Rican men and women have?

Had there been another alternative that had a paved road to victory, rest assured that we would have followed it. The explanation is simple. There are many intrinsic rewards in struggle for the people, yet we can attest to the fact that struggling is not glamorous. How can carrying out very difficult and dangerous revolutionary tasks be glamorous? How can the thought of spending the rest of your life in prison be humanly gratifying? If I told you that I enjoy prison life because I am a strong revolutionary, if I told you that I enjoy being separated from my loved ones, if I told you that because I am a revolutionary I can easily eat spoiled food, that I can block volcanic noise, and accept with great ease all the humanity that one encounters in prison--then know that I would be lying to you. I can say that we are doing these things with dignity. They can be done! Our example serves as proof. I can also honestly say that if one truly understands that there is no alternative for the oppressed but to struggle, then one develops a strong commitment and a strong understanding of the fact that struggle means sacrifice and as a result one learns to deal with all of this and one receives strength from the ongoing revolutionary work and actions of the Free Masses.

Many elaborate, mythical explanations have been given as to the reason why we followed a revolutionary path. The only simple explanation I have for becoming a revolutionary woman stems from the historical law that people have made revolutions since the beginning of time and are presently making revolutions. I have a great belief in humanity, this has automatically given me confidence in myself. I personally saw my liberation as a woman closer at hand every time I acted in the name of my country's li-



beration. I began to gain strength as a person and to feel stature as a human being as I carried out revolutionary actions. Revolutionary practice reaffirms our potential as humans, and then as women. It is these actions that return to us the high level of humanity engrained in us and consistently drained out of us by this capitalist system. It is so very difficult to overcome the strong capitalist belief that human dignity is despicable. It is at the same time easy to see that nobody can be free in a system that destroys everything human.

Since we see that the capitalists do not distinguish between the sexes with their inhumanity and repressive measures then we must see no reason for difference between the role of men and women within the revolution. We are seeing in Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua that as the foundation of a new society is built, the elimination of all forms of oppression begins. This is a long evolutionary process that goes on forever in a liberated country. When a socialist revolution takes power there will be an equalizing process that will place the members of that society in the proper place. From that moment on women collectively and not as an isolated group will start the long march towards their total liberation.

Presently we must forge struggle together with only one legitimate concern--national liberation. We have to unite all our forces because we are seeing that presently, as the capitalists become more threatened by the revolutionary forces, they have increased their pressure against the oppressed, the prisons have become full of activists, who are being tortured in scientific ways, these have been sentenced to death, or long prison terms in Kangaroo Courts.



As these things persist we have the guarantee that both men and women will respond with revolutionary violence, as we so exuberantly saw the FALN's response, December 31, 1982.

Let's not deviate from our socialist goals and let's embrace together men and women with the hope of forming a chain of strength that will destroy the Capitalist System of Oppression. Struggle Together! Let's listen to the invitation, the Poem of our great Palestinian Revolutionary, Leila Khaled.

We wanted to tell you  
our brothers  
that we did not cheat you,  
but the society has cheated us.  
The oppressors have sown  
seeds of oppression within us,  
so that you oppress us  
and we oppress you.

We wanted to show you  
our brothers  
when we took the child  
on one shoulder,  
the gun on the other,  
that we have broken with them  
and that you must do the same.

We wanted to cry to you  
our brothers  
that you must lift us  
up on our feet  
as we lifted you  
and taught you how to walk.

We wanted to ask you  
our brothers  
to take your part  
of our burden  
as we have taken our part  
of yours.

But now we demand of you  
our comrades  
not to take part any more  
in the game of the oppressors,  
not to allow yourselves to  
strike us  
when they strike you.

We demand of you  
that we go together  
on the same road  
and in the same step.

LONG LIVE THE UNITY OF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN IN STRUGGLE!  
LONG LIVE THE FALN!  
LONG LIVE A FREE AND SOCIALIST PUERTO RICO!



"On November 4, 1968 the girls of Bekaa' camp made a demonstration, demanding that the government give them arms and protect the commando movement"  
By Yakoub Muhammad, 13 years old.

"مظاهرة البنات في مخيم البقعة يوم ١١/٤/١٩٦٨  
بطالين الحكومة بالسلاح وحماية العمل الفدائي"  
رسم يعقوب محمد ١٣ سنة.



# Lucy Rodriguez

Sincere and deep greetings to all our comrades gathered here together.  
Special greetings to the women comrades.

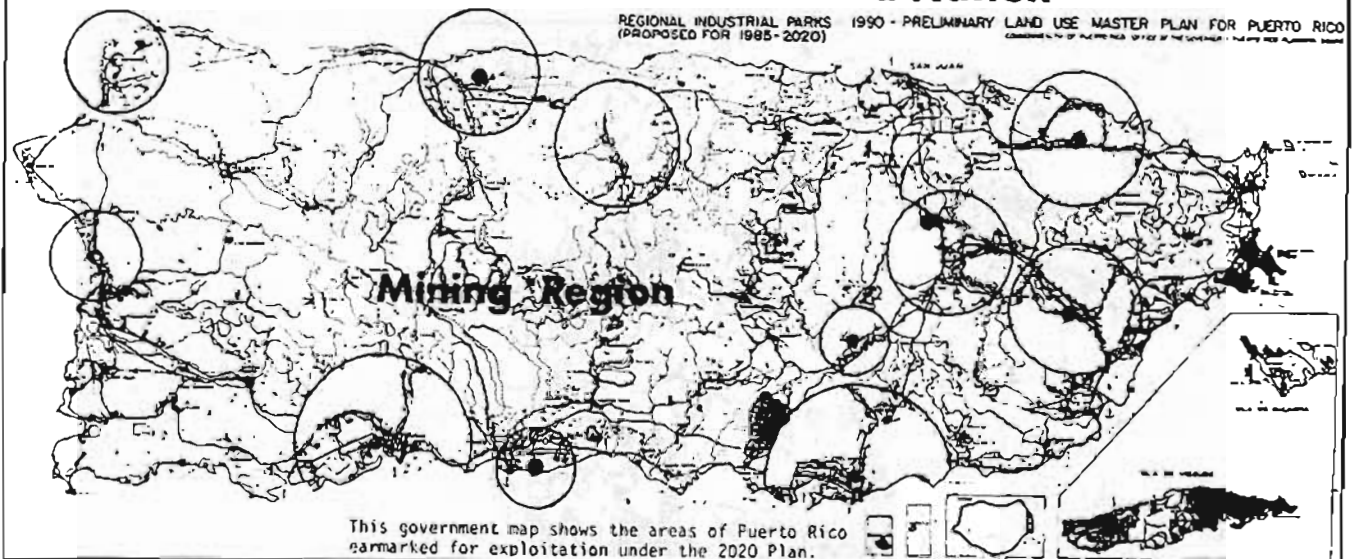
Comrades, the experience in the development of revolutionary struggles throughout the world can leave no doubt of the essential role played by women in the struggles for liberation. They can leave no doubt that without our conscious and concrete participation, there can be no revolution. This reality can not be hidden even from those who oppress and exploit us. This is why they have a whole arsenal of weapons: sexism, alienation, sterilization, self-centeredness, racism and the supposed passivity and inferiority of women. Weapons which since our birth have been used to divide us, control us and keep us alienated from our reality. In essence they serve to condition us and shape us to the mold of the capitalist/imperialist structure. Thus, those of us who struggle to be revolutionary must understand and know how to fight the objectives of our enemy. We must know that only through revolutionary struggle can we begin to heal the psychological wounds inflicted during our formation as human beings, especially as women.

If we truly want to fully enjoy the moments we live on earth, if we want a happy life for our children, if we hope to live in harmony with the flora and fauna of nature, then our only alternative open to us is to contribute to socialist revolution. We must struggle, because oppression, destruction and exploitation are not the inevitable realities nor are they part of the destiny of life on this planet. We must struggle because our enemy is threatening such monstrosities as the 2020 Plan, the threat of nuclear war, the destruction and contamination of the environment and the oppression and exploitation of the workers and other poor people. Struggle simply because we respect life and want to preserve it.

## **The Weapon: The 2020 Plan**

### **The Target: Puerto Rico**

### **The Stakes: Survival of a Nation**



If we look again at the experiences of different revolutionary movements we can see the great capacity which women possess to fight and transform the old way of being and thinking. These same experiences teach us the collective power of women to convert ourselves into a formidable force capable of confronting and victoriously fighting, alongside of our compañeros and comrades. We don't have to look very far to the experiences of Puerto Rican history to see the illuminating experience of the Mariana Bracettis, Lolita Lebrons, Isabel Rosados, Blanca Canales and Consuelo Lee Tapias.

It is certain that no fighter can underestimate his adversaries capacity to carry out war. But facts demonstrate that our enemy is the same paper tiger Mao spoke of. This enemy can't hide its frustration and terror in the face of the truth and justice of revolutionary movement. It can't understand at all a very important law of war which dictates that repression brings forth resistance. In our case today the system of Grand Jury, prisons and harassment only serve to aid us to steel ourselves and make us better revolutionaries--with a greater capacity to fight effectively.

The case of El Salvador is another illuminating example. In this sister country we are witnessing the defeat of the technology and mercenaries of yankee imperialism. It is proved once again that the capital and Yankee might lack the power to confront the patriotism of a people guided by the love of life, and scorn for all which endangers it.

Thus, comrades, the path has been lit for us. What remains is for us to decide to fight.



Comandante Ana Maria, Second in Command of the Popular Forces of Liberation of El Salvador, murdered by CIA-backed forces in Nicaragua on April 6, 1983.

WE ARE GOING TO STRUGGLE FOR WOMENS LIBERATION!

WE WILL BE PARTICIPANTS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIALISM!

NO TO THE 2020 PLAN!

VICTORY TO THE SALVADOREAN PEOPLE!

FREEDOM FOR THE PRISONERS OF WAR AND ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!



## Alicia and Lucy Rodriguez

The reality of war cannot be removed from its proper historical perspective. A look into history will reveal that the capitalist/imperialist state was founded on force and violence. That since its origins, it has declared war against humanity and nature's fauna and flora. This is a reality which we must take into consideration in order to fully understand the revolutionary positions of countries like Puerto Rico. Nations which are literally forced to wage armed struggle in defense of the inherent right to life.



In today's world no human being should be fooled into believing that he or she is indispensable in the eyes of the enemy. If there exists any doubts, we need only take a superficial look at Plan 2020. A quick glance will show that it took an abortion of nature to conceive such a horrific scheme whose objectives include: (1) the depopulation and total destruction of the ecology of our island-nation, and (2) the use of Puerto Rico as a springboard to continue the war of destruction against sister nations and their fauna and flora. Simply stated, Plan 2020 reveals our enemy stark naked.

There are many who may argue that the threat of swift and total devastation only faces the people and ecologies of the Third World. So, why should they be concerned? But this argument is based on illusions, the multi-national corporations are also experts at creating slower and at first unnoticed catastrophies within their own borders. They produce deadly conditions wherever they operate. For graphic evidence we have the dioxin poisoning of Love Canal, Times Beach and the tens of thousands of other toxic sites throughout the territory of the U.S. We have the exam-

ples of ocean, air and land dumping of poisonous chemicals. And we have the contamination of the food chain, as well as the marketing of dangerous pesticides, herbicides and pharmaceutical drugs around the world. The multi-nationals have free reign to continue their destruction. And those in high government positions have openly admitted that they consider big business as their main constituency.

Another potent reality which proves that no form of life on earth is indispensable is the brutal theft by the multi-nationals of all the riches produced by the workers within their sphere of influence and corruption. This wealth is, in turn, used against humanity and nature's fauna and flora. To be more specific, an immense portion of the amassed capital and technological power is directed toward the unbridled development of a war machinery capable of annihilation. A machinery to defend avarice and private property and to war against the needs of society and nature.

The destruction we are writing about was created by the greed and alienation of the privileged classes and it will be ended by the collective and selfless efforts of humanity. It is without a doubt that the coming together of our hearts and minds will be powerful enough to sound the death knell of the capitalist/imperialist empire. In its place humanity will erect socialist societies.

War is being waged equally against humanity and the earth's ecology. Hence, in order to guarantee the continuation of life, a fusion must occur to guarantee the continuation of life, a fusion must occur between the socialist revolutions and the struggles in defense of nature. This fusion must enter into the revolutionary objectives of the proletariat.

Some may question the relation of the reality depicted above with the commemoration of International Women's Day. This connection should be clear. International Women's Day has its historical roots in the struggle of women proletarians. And this particular demonstration is a concrete act of solidarity with the class and anti-imperialist struggle of women who continue to light the way. On the other hand, we have tried to affirm that the pain, loss and misery embodied in the accelerating destruction of mother earth is another cornerstone of the capitalist/imperialist war being waged. That the avarice of capitalists does not distinguish between women and men, or between humanity and nature. In essence, the connecting reality is that humanity cannot exist apart from nature. We are products of nature and what affects one profoundly affects the other.

If we accept this reality, then the tasks of revolutionaries should be clear. Our historical responsibility is to dismember the capitalist/imperialist structure, and erect independent and socialist states. Our point of embarkment is the total integration in the revolutionary movement. An integration without romantic ideas of war. The revolutionary path is long and continuous because it is governed by dialectical laws. But this same road will bring us closer to realizing our essence as human beings.

Here we wish to touch upon the fact that this demonstration is taking place in front of Dwight Women's Penitentiary. In truth, this resembles a concentration camp structured to reinforce the capitalist belief that women do not play important roles in society and that we are merely good as "sexual objects". Systematic attempts are made to "keep women in their place". And any independent thought or action is attacked, as demonstrated in the revealing example of a prisoner by the name of Ann Dredge. This woman was brought to Dwight during the same period we were and from





the beginning her spirit and resistance marked her as a target of the prison administration. Consequently, for 2-½ years she has been kept on segregation status and denied commissary shopping, sunlight and fresh air and interaction with other women. They have gone to the extent of forcefully injecting her with drugs like Prolixin and shackling her to her bunk. And while outside her cell, she is never without wrists and leg irons. This treatment of Ann Dredge is at times personally supervised by Michael Lane, Director of the Illinois Prison System. Who then can deny that prisons are designed for the mental and physical destruction of human beings. That they are an integral part of the overall system.

It is behind these same walls that four Puerto Rican POWs are being held captive because we are rightfully considered dangerous to the stability of the U.S. regime. We are serious about our life or death commitment to the revolutionary struggle for independence and socialism. Let it remain clear that we do not play games. We leave that to the experts at game playing who are very well represented by the Dwight lackeys. They are the ones who make great displays out of searching our cells only to take away pencils, calendars and cinnamon as contraband. They are the ones who flex their muscles with the "FALN hourly body counts" only to fill up their special count sheets with such pertinent data as the date and time one of us was wiping a water puddle off the dayroom floor. It was their absence of creativity and intelligence which led them to base their denial of correspondence between Lucy and her companeros, Oscar Lopez Rivera on excuses, like the words of a "high official" at Leavenworth who said that no prisoner with such a name was there; imagine going to the extent of implying that we invented his existence!

This is the situation we face. And these are examples of the experiences which prove that our incarceration did not seriously limit us. On the contrary, it is our enemy and its lackeys who possess the greatest limitations. When confronted by such an enemy we have no reason to doubt that we will be victorious. Venceremos!

NO TO PLAN 2020!

INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIALISM FOR PUERTO RICO!

FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION!

VICTORY FOR EL SALVADOR AND OTHER SISTER NATIONS IN STRUGGLE!

DEFEND THE RIGHTS OF MOTHER EARTH!

FREEDOM FOR ALL POWS AND POLITICAL PRISONERS!

# Dylcia Pagán Morales

Dear Comrades,

Today as we commemorate International Women's Day I would like to reflect upon the role of Puerto Rican women in struggle. It is unfortunate that the bourgeois women's movement has confused so many women in America with the utilization of the word "liberation", but is so reformist. For the Puerto Rican and all Third World women, the only relevant movement is that of national liberation. I say this because as victims of colonialism, oppression and all of the vices of capitalism, we can only truly be liberated when capitalism is completely destroyed and we are rid of all of the vestiges of imperialism.

Some of you may feel upset by this statement, but it is the only reality for Third World women as well as all progressive women. We need to look at what capitalism has done to maintain a division between men and women in its overall scheme of oppression. For the Puerto Rican nation, both its men and women have been sterilized against their will. They have been transformed into the guinea pigs of the pharmaceutical corporations' experimentations, which results in profits at the risk of the lives of the poor. The US in its massive scheme of industrialization of Puerto Rico for the last 84 years has displaced and dehumanized the male workers by creating industries which they do not have the necessary skills for and therefore are unemployed and are forced to seek refuge in drugs, alcohol and other vices. This displacement of the family has forced the female population to work at jobs whose wages are below minimum standards in the US. For the most part, as victims of colonialization, the Puerto Rican woman has been conditioned to be a housewife--uneducated and subservient to the men. We have become victims of "machismo" created by the conditions of frustration as a direct result of the contradictions of the capitalist way of life. Both the men and the women have been victimized by this system because it is an inherent part of the "American Dream" which capitalism forces on its subjects.

With all of these odds against us, the Puerto Rican woman has a long and rich history of resistance and participation in armed insurrections. Today I salute all of my comrades and as a captured combatant I am honored to be a living example of the revolutionary Puerto Rican woman.

Many have asked how we have arisen to this level of consciousness of revolutionary fervor and courage. My response is a simple one: we are not exceptional women, nor are we super-women; we are humble women--mothers, wives, daughters--who in the process of our lives have seen the contradictions and have decided to take action. It is one thing to talk revolution, and another to practice it. Like all things in life a qualitative change can only occur when the individual sees the necessity to change and believes that change can happen and is happening every moment of the day.

My dear companeras and companeros, we need only to look at Nicaragua, at Cuba, at Zimbabwe, at Vietnam. Those triumphant revolutions came about because both men and women together in arms engaged in combat and persevered until final victory. What we must fully understand is the process these comrades have undertaken in order to reach their level of revolutionary consciousness and commitment. This is not a far-fetched goal, it is an attainable one by all of the proletarian masses. It does require

dedication and a sincere commitment to change man/woman and his/her relationship with the world around them. We must move forward in our understanding and practice of collectivity. We must believe in ourselves, in the ability to change no matter what odds are placed before us. The essence of the evolution is revolutionary morals. We need to be reborn with the correct values and desire to become exemplary examples of men and women of struggle. If in your case it is the woman of the household who is involved, then it is your responsibility to encourage your companero to become a part of the struggle. Every person has a role to play in the liberation process, no one is dispensable.



As we grow in revolutionary practice, we must never lose our own sense of humanity, but be aware that given certain conditions we must be prepared to pick up a gun if necessary. Our oppressor is a violent one and uses its violence against the masses on a continual basis. Every day we hear of the victimization of women, men and children by the police and other repressive agencies. These actions on the part of the state are a reflection of the policies of the ruling class, whose sole purpose is to maintain the oppression and keep us unaware of the strength of a nation that is prepared to raise arms against its oppressor.

The decade of the 80's will place many hardships as well as challenges before us as the USA utilizes its military strength in an attempt to dismember national liberation movements worldwide. It is no accident that so many comrades are being systematically jailed for refusing to collaborate with the grand juries. Once again the enemy wants to create an aura of fear for all those who support Puertorican liberation. Our comrades have proven them wrong by their courageous stands of non-collaboration. We will not be intimidated. We will continue to work and forge ahead until final victory.

In closing I would like to pay tribute to all of my comrades of the FALN, the BLA, African Freedom Fighters, and all those who have decided to join the ranks of clandestinity, for it is from this source that the direction of people's war emanates from. WE WILL WIN!



I send all of you my revolutionary love and respect and leave with you the following poem sent to me by my loving comrade, Judy Clark:

If then  
we are plunged  
into the fire - without choice  
but rather with necessity  
let it not be forgotten  
that we are  
fighters, also mothers and fathers  
and children of mothers and fathers  
If  
to cease war  
we must enter it ruthlessly  
let it be so

- Azanian National Liberation Front



Angolan Liberation Fighter  
Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola.

# Comité de California Contra la Represion

Compañeras y Compañeros, Comrades and Friends,

On behalf of the Comité de California Contra la Represion, I wish to thank you for allowing us to share this day with you.

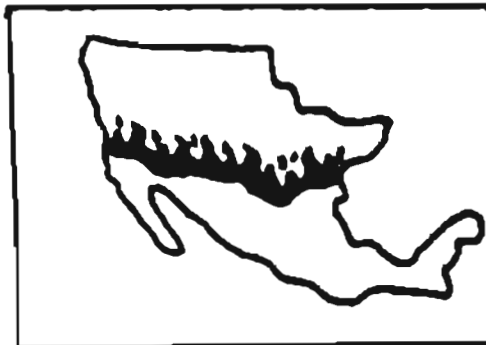
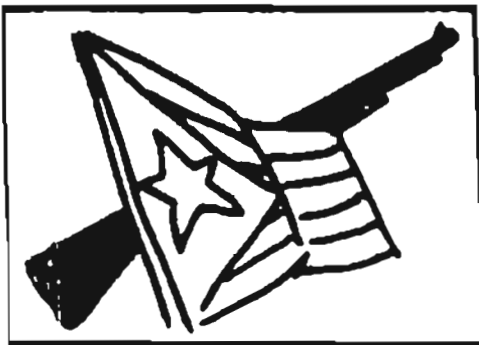
Today we come together to celebrate International Women's Day, but not in a way that buries the real meaning of the day. For we do not come together to examine and boast about what women have done nor do we wish to celebrate mere sisterhood- instead we come together to reaffirm our commitment to the life and death struggle against imperialism which is the only sure path to the liberation of women.

As Puertorriqueñas and Mexicanas, we celebrate our commonness with women all over the world. We celebrate and hold high Leila Khaled, we celebrate and hold high the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Doris Tijerino. We honor Judy Clark, Lolita Lebron, Blanca Carnales, Nydia Cuevas, Ulrich Mienhoff, Maria Torres, Assata Shakur and the millions of others whose names are lost in history. We celebrate our ties to them for they are what we are, and they are what we will be.

Today Puerto Rico is threatened by a horror known as the 2020 Plan. This plan which threatens our nation with genocide coupled with the complete destruction of our homeland is a plan which must be challenged on every level, for Puerto Rico is not only our homeland but rather it is the mother to us all. We ask you to remember this for we are not fighting to defend our mother, but our homeland- that which has given us life. That is why the struggle is a life and death struggle- that is why we see women in our struggle the likes of Carmen Valentin, Dylcia Pagan, Alicia Rodriguez and Ida Luz Rodriguez.

I say this to you so that you may consider your commitment not only to our struggle, but to yourselves. Your commitment must not be of a revolutionary Red Cross type- your sympathy or solidarity must not alone be the motivation for your politics. Rather you must understand, companeras, especially how a better future for each and everyone of you here today is tied to the complete destruction of imperialism. Do not embrace our struggles as your own and then form your politics accordingly, instead form your politics, understand the real meaning of International Women's Day- and, if that understanding leads you to then embrace our struggles, then we will embrace you as sisters, and as comrades. Thank you.

VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE Y SOCIALISTA!  
LIBERTAD PARA LOS ONCE PRISIONEROS DE GUERRA PUERTORRIQUENOS!  
QUE VIVA LA LUCHA ARMADA CLANDESTINA!



## Family Committee of Political Prisoners from the FRG

We, the relatives of the political prisoners from the RAF and the anti-imperialist movement from the FRG send our solid greetings to the participants of the "International Women's Day Demonstration in Solidarity with all Freedom Fighters and Prisoners of War."

In our struggle against the destructive conditions, the political prisoners in the FRG are subjected to, we have learnt: whether it is in El Salvador, in Lebanon, in Turkey, in the FRG or in the USA, all over the world, where people--armed or unarmed--fight against imperialism and for liberation and socialism, they are denounced as "criminals" or "terrorists" by the imperialists. By that the imperialists try to legitimate the destruction of the freedom fighters--and their methods go from destructive conditions into genocide.

When the imperialists talk about "criminals" and "terrorists", they want to prevent more people from realizing that resistance and struggle against oppression and for liberation is their concern, and necessary and possible. And the imperialists want those people, who did not yet decide to resist and struggle, to be frightened by their destruction machine.

The 11 Puerto Rican prisoners reply to the imperialist methods of criminalization and frightening with their claim for Prisoner of War status. So they show that they have fought for independence and socialism for Puerto Rico, before being imprisoned, and that they continue their struggle in prison.

We are in Solidarity with the 11 Puerto Rican P.O.W.s and the New African P.O.W.s and we support their claim for Prisoner of War status.

Your demonstration thwarts the imperialists' plans too, when you express your solidarity with the Puerto Rican and New African and other freedom fighters and P.O.W.s, and when you show your solidarity by your own struggle.

Your demonstration gives us courage and power for our struggle, because everyone who participates in the demonstration gives a signal, that the imperialists' methods of frightening do not work.

So we join your demonstration with our thoughts. In consciousness of our united struggle we assure our solidarity.





## London Armagh Co-ordinating Group

In 1979, a small group of women gathered outside Armagh Gaol to celebrate International Women's Day. The struggle of the political prisoners incarcerated for their resistance to British rule in Ireland is part of the struggle of all women for our liberation.

Eleven women demonstrators were arrested and charged and two of them served sentences rather than pay the fines. In 1980, the call went out for more women to come to Armagh to assert their right to protest. The event is now a regular one receiving greetings from every continent.

This year women from Britain and from Ireland will gather at Armagh. Meanwhile in London a rally will be followed by a conference discussing such topics as "Third World Feminism," "National Liberation Struggles" and "Whose Peace?" These events are a step forward as they have been initiated by third world and Irish women and have the support of the mainstream of the Women's Movement.

It was with great joy therefore that we heard the theme of your demonstration.

The London Women in Armagh Co-ordinating Committee sends its warmest greetings to your demonstration and to Puerto Rican and Mexican prisoners of war.

VICTORY TO ALL FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND PRISONERS OF WAR.

VICTORY TO THE IRISH NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE.

VICTORY TO THE STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.



*International Womens Day picket, Armagh 1983.*

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