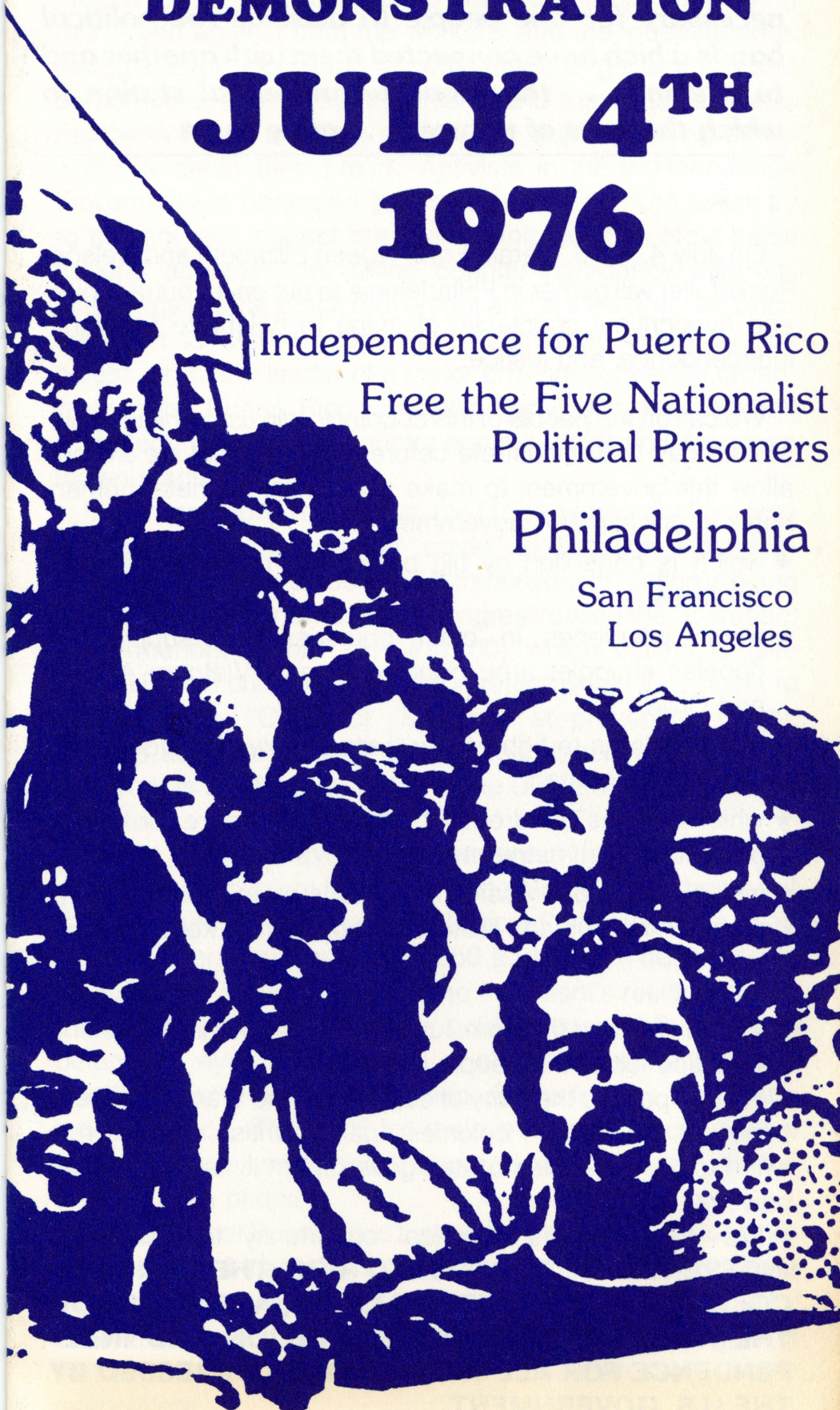


# **NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> 1976**

Independence for Puerto Rico  
Free the Five Nationalist  
Political Prisoners

Philadelphia

San Francisco  
Los Angeles



For a Bicentennial Without Colonies



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*When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume . . . the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature . . . entitle them . . .*

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On July 4, 1976, Gerald Ford, Queen Elizabeth and Nelson Rockefeller will gather in Philadelphia to put on an outrageous and hypocritical spectacle, claiming to celebrate freedom, independence, and justice.

We call on the people of this country to join us in Philadelphia on that day to demonstrate before the world that we will not allow this government to make a mockery of these human rights in our name! A government—

- ★ which is controlled by big banks and transnational corporations,
- ★ which intervenes in other countries and suppresses peoples' struggles around the world, as in Vietnam, Angola and Chile,
- ★ which tells us to tighten our belts to solve the economic crisis they created,
- ★ which spends hundreds of billions to prepare for war to protect their investments, and
- ★ which, in this depression, heightens even more the divisions among us and fosters competition to keep us from uniting.

We will demand freedom, full equality, economic well-being and justice for all the people in this land.

We will point to the irony of celebrating the War of Independence of the thirteen colonies against British colonial rule when today the United States government is itself a colonial power.

We will take this historical opportunity to **DEMAND INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO, THE PRINCIPAL COLONY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND CALL FOR THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE FOR ALL THE NATIONS OPPRESSED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.**



Senator Henry Jackson has put it bluntly: "Puerto Rico is ours as booty of war." Any authority the U.S. has comes solely from the invasion and occupation of the island by U.S. troops in 1898.

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***Let facts be submitted to a candid world . . .***

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**POLITICAL DOMINATION OF PUERTO RICO**

- ★ occupied by the U.S. military, who control 10% of its best land
- ★ U.S. citizenship imposed on its people in 1917, in time for them to serve in World War I
- ★ its men drafted into four wars, to fight and die for a government they do not elect
- ★ laws passed by its legislature can be amended, suspended or revoked by U.S. Congress
- ★ subject to final jurisdiction of the U.S. Supreme Court, even in matters relating to its own constitution
- ★ U.S. regulates immigration, trade relations, labor relations, postal service and 76 other vital areas.

**ECONOMIC DOMINATION OF PUERTO RICO**

The key to U.S. colonial domination of Puerto Rico is economic control. Puerto Rico:

- ★ must use the U.S. dollar for its currency
- ★ 85% of its industry controlled by U.S. corporations
- ★ its agriculture almost completely destroyed
- ★ industry not for its own people's needs
- ★ forced to import food and necessities from the U.S. at higher prices
- ★ captive market for U.S. goods—the fifth largest market for U.S. goods in the world
- ★ yields one-tenth of all U.S. profits from investments abroad

U.S. controlled industry has not brought a better life for the Puerto Rican people.

- ★ Puerto Rican workers earn 45% less than U.S. workers on the same job
- ★ government officials admit that the real unemployment rate is 45%
- ★ 65% of Puerto Rican families depend on food stamps to survive
- ★ 52% of Puerto Rican families earn less than \$3000 a year



## CULTURAL DOMINATION AND SURVIVAL OF A NATION

For over 75 years, the U.S. government has tried to destroy the culture and national identity of the Puerto Rican people. Forced migration—the result of the distortion of the Puerto Rican economy and the destruction of its agricultural base—has driven millions from the island. Today over 40% of the Puerto Rican people live in the U.S., where they face great poverty and discrimination.

This exodus has been accompanied by a campaign of forced sterilization, similar to the one being promoted actively today in this country by the government among Black, Puerto Rican, Mexican, American Indian and other poor women.

Over 35% of Puerto Rican women of child-bearing age have been sterilized. This is the highest rate in the world. These sterilizations are given free in special clinics funded by the U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare. Women are advised that they can help reduce the unemployment on the island by not having children.

Until 1948, Spanish was not permitted in the classrooms of Puerto Rican schools, and it was illegal to display the Puerto Rican flag until 1952. Puerto Rican history was U.S. history, and George Washington became the founding father of Puerto Rico.

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***When a long train of abuses and usurpations . . . evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government.***

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The Puerto Rican people have always fought foreign domination. Today, the growing independence movement is only the tip of the iceberg of the deeply-felt sentiments of the Puerto Rican people for the preservation and affirmation of their national identity. The economic crisis that shakes this country is far worse on the island. Today the question for the Puerto Rican people is not "Can Puerto Rico survive without the U.S.?" but "Can Puerto Rico survive *with* the U.S.?"

The combative trade union movement understands that the workers' problems cannot be solved until Puerto Rico is free of U.S. colonialism. The massive incorporation of workers into the independence movement has spurred it to higher levels of organization and militancy, while it extends to other sectors of society—students, professionals and clergy.



The U.S. government, with the cooperation of its "Thieu regime" on the island, replies to this challenge by intensifying repression against both the workers' and the independence struggle. Even more than at home, the U.S. government and corporations use company unions and the National Labor Relations Board to break strikes and stop organizing drives which threaten their profits. Activists in the independence movement are harassed by the same FBI and CIA which try to monitor and control our lives in this country. Now these Federal agencies are using counter-insurgency methods tested against the Black movement and in Vietnam—violence designed to cower people into submission. Recently, the eldest son of the leader of a major pro-independence organization, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, was assassinated, a strategy used in this country against Black and American Indian leaders.

In a more subtle repression, the U.S. government tries time and again to devise a legal "cover" to disguise its domination of Puerto Rico. Since the "Commonwealth" fiction is being exposed, there is now a bill in Congress called the "Compact of Permanent Union" (HR #11200) which claims to give Puerto Rico more autonomy, but in reality would tie it closer to the U.S. The "Compact" is aimed at preventing United Nations' action for Puerto Rican independence by defining the question as an "internal affair" of the U.S. It can and must be defeated.

These moves have only deepened the Puerto Rican people's commitment to resist U.S. domination. Five heroes of this resistance, the Nationalist Political Prisoners, have been in U.S. Federal prisons since 1950 and 1954. These patriots launched an armed attack on the President's residence and the U.S. Congress to bring the colonial case of Puerto Rico before the eyes of the world, at a time when hundreds of Puerto Ricans were being killed and jailed for supporting independence. The fight for their immediate unconditional release is a rallying point of international solidarity with the Puerto Rican people.

It is clear that Puerto Rico's struggle for independence is an integral part of that powerful historical force which is a prime characteristic of our epoch — the anti-imperialist struggle for national liberation. Puerto Rico's struggle is the struggle of Vietnam, Angola, Southern Africa and oppressed people everywhere.

(Continued)



Today, there is a wave of support for the Puerto Rican struggle throughout the world. Over 100 countries affirmed the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination and independence in the United Nations General Assembly. Additional support has come from the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations and from the International Conference of representatives from more than 79 countries held last September in Havana.

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***. . . Declare that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states.***

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On July 4th, 1976, we will expose before the whole world the hypocrisy of the official "bicentennial celebration of independence." We will not let the U.S. government suppress the Puerto Rican people's fight for freedom in our name. The Puerto Rican independence movement cannot be stopped. This was proved in the American Revolution when the British Empire was defeated. And it is shown in our own time, when the small country of Vietnam drove the U.S. from its land.

There is no question that colonialism does not benefit the Puerto Rican people. We, the people of this country, also have nothing to gain from colonialism in Puerto Rico.

The independence of this country rested on the slavery of Black people, the theft of the American Indian peoples' land, and the denial of equal rights to these oppressed peoples, as well as to women and propertyless workers. Oppression and exploitation continue today. The movement for freedom in this country will not be stopped either.

We don't want our tax money used to protect the huge profits of the few, bringing starvation wages to our Puerto Rican brothers and sisters.

We want the resources of this country used to meet all peoples' needs — more and better schools, hospitals, day-care centers, jobs for the unemployed.

The same corporations and government that exploit Puerto Rico deny us our needs. We join with the Puerto Rican people in their just struggle for independence. Their freedom will bring us closer to our own.

**INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO!**

**FREE THE FIVE NATIONALIST POLITICAL PRISONERS!**



The PUERTO RICAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE is a national anti-imperialist organization, founded to build a solidarity movement in support of the full independence of Puerto Rico and the struggle for self-determination of the Puerto Rican people, which has 20 chapters across the country.

For information and bus tickets for the July 4th mobilization, and for more information about the PRSC, contact your nearest PRSC:



The PRSC is a member of the NATIONAL JULY 4th COALITION, a broad formation made up of people from over 100 organizations and groups — trade unions, churches, women's unions, Black, Latin and Asian groups, schools, professional groups and political organizations. The July 4th Coalition is the sponsor of the national mobilization on July 4th.

The Coalition's main demands are:

- ★ For a Bicentennial Without Colonies — Freedom for all Oppressed Nations.
- ★ For Full Democracy and Equality
- ★ For Jobs & a Decent Standard of Living.

July 4th Coalition  
National Office  
P.O. Box 998  
Peter Stuyvesant Station  
New York, New York 10009

**JOIN US ON JULY 4th!**



