



The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign

WHAT IS THE PROLIBERTAD FREEDOM CAMPAIGN?



The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign has been working for the release of the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners for over 14 years. With the release of 11 of the Political Prisoners in September 1999, we have re-dedicated our efforts to securing the

freedom of the remaining 3 political prisoners. Through educational events, lobbying and public pressure work and activities it is our goal to secure the freedom of these patriots whose only "crime" has been the love of their home land, Puerto Rico.

We support the release of All U.S. held Political Prisoners, oppose the U.S. colonial control of Puerto Rico, U.S. imperialism throughout the world, and the U.S. military presence in Vieques. Check out our website for campaign updates:

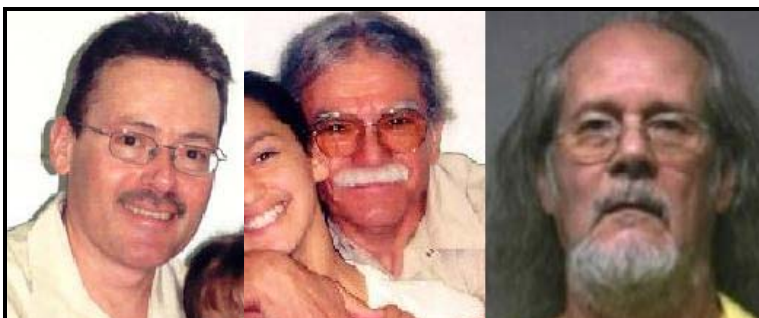


ProLibertad members at the March 31st, 2007 march for the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners in the Bronx.

<http://www.ProLibertadWeb.com>

The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign needs talented, energetic and enthusiastic people to help us free our freedom fighters! The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign meets the first Monday of every month at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies in Hunter College (East Building 14th floor on E68th St. and Lexington Ave. at 6:30pm. **If you are interested in joining ProLibertad, then contact us at the ProLibertad Hotline: 718-601-4751**

WHO ARE THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS?



The Puerto Rican Political Prisoners: Carlos Alberto Torres, Oscar Lopez Rivera, and Avelino Gonzalez Claudio

They are workers and professionals, students and teachers, community organizers, artists, mothers, and fathers of families. They are fighters of Puerto Rico's Independence and social justice. These men and women found Puerto Rico's Colonial reality intolerable and unacceptable. This situation led them to join the Puerto Rican Independence movement and to confront the United States government directly. The majority of the Political Prisoners have spent almost 25 years in federal prisons for their political activities.

During the 1970's and the beginning of the 80's, the prisoners were involved in community, union, student and political struggles in Puerto Rico and the United States.

They fought for the people's right to high quality, free education. They worked to create community institutions such as alternative education programs, child-care centers, health centers, housing cooperatives, recreational facilities and political organizations. They participated actively in churches, student groups, unions, professional associations, committees against repression, campaigns against youth violence and drugs. In summary they challenged the U.S. political system in many ways.

WHO ARE THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS? continued...

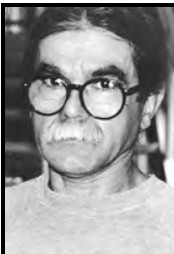
Throughout their lives they suffered the Puerto Rican colonial reality and the consequences of their political and community involvement. They were fired from their jobs, kicked out of schools and universities, denied scholarships, threatened, spied on, attacked by the police and the FBI. And when they rose up and fought against these injustices they were branded as terrorists and placed in some of the worst prisons in the U.S. Despite their incarceration, they continue to fight for the freedom and liberation of their people, in the U.S. and Puerto Rico!!

The U.S. invaded Puerto Rico on July 25th, 1898 and for over 110 years has exercised colonial control over the people of Puerto Rico. International Law defines colonialism as a crime against humanity and gives a colonized people the right to use all means at their disposal to end the colonial domination by a foreign power. United Nations Resolution 1514 calls for a transfer of all political power to the colonized nation, the withdrawal of all military and paramilitary troops, reparations for the colonized people and the freedom of all political prisoners for a process of de-colonization to be a genuine one, in compliance with International Law.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS:



Carlos Alberto Torres was born in Puerto Rico in 1952. His family emigrated to New York and later to Chicago. He studied sociology at Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois at Chicago. Carlos Alberto was involved in the struggles to recruit more Latin@s to the University, against racism, and police abuse. Carlos Alberto was arrested in 1980 and charged with “seditious conspiracy” and related charges. Carlos Alberto was sentenced to 78 years in prison. His release date is 2024. He is currently in prison in Oxford, Wisconsin.



Oscar Lopez Rivera was born in Puerto Rico in 1943. Oscar’s family emigrated to the U.S. when he was 9 years old. He was drafted into the U.S. army and served in Vietnam. When Oscar returned home in 1967, he found that drugs, unemployment, housing, health care and education in the Puerto Rican community had reached dire levels and he became a community activist. Oscar was arrested in 1981 and sentenced to 55 years in prison for “seditious conspiracy”. He was held in solidarity confinement during most of his years of incarceration. He was held at ADX facilities where sensory deprivation, drugs and other “hi-tech” measures of torture were used on him. As a result of a mass national and international campaign, Oscar is today in general population. Oscar is presently in prison in Terre Haute, Indiana.



Avelino Gonzalez Claudio was born in the town of Vega Baja on October 8, 1942. As a student at the University of Puerto Rico, he became a member and then vice-president of the Pro-Independence University Federation (Federación Universitaria Pro Independencia-FUPI). In the mid-1960’s, he married and moved to New York City, earning his living on Wall Street, and working with the Puerto Rican community, joining and then leading the Vito Marcantonio Mission of the Movimiento Pro-Independencia (MPI) in New York. He and his family of four children returned to Puerto Rico, where he worked in the independence movement, including administering the political journal Pensamiento Crítico (Critical Thought).

In August of 1985, Avelino González Claudio was accused of participating in the planning and authorization of an operation to secure \$7,117,000 from a Wells Fargo armored truck in Hartford, Connecticut on September 12, 1983, along with other Puerto Ricans and two North Americans. The operation was carried out by a clandestine organization fighting for the independence of Puerto Rico, the PRTP-Macheteros. Avelino was not arrested at the time. However, more than 20 years later, he was arrested in Manatí-, Puerto Rico, on February 7, 2008.

When the arrests of 1985 took place, and Avelino was not arrested, he assumed the identity of José Ortega, and, while the FBI pursued him, he lived a quiet life, working as a computer teacher to support his family and contributing constructively to his nation, seeking to improve the services provided by the Department of Education.

The charges against those arrested in 1985 had various results: Carlos Ayes, Filiberto Ojeda, Juan Segarra, Norman Ramirez and

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS continued...

and Roberto Maldonado went to trial in 1989; Ivonne Meléndez Carrión also went to trial—some were acquitted, others convicted and sentenced to terms ranging from one year to 55 years; while Orlando González, Hilton Fernández Diamante, Jorge A. Farinacci, Isaac Camacho, Elías Castro and Angel Días Ruiz negotiated a plea agreement in 1992.

They were sentenced to terms of five years in prison. Two others have never been arrested: Avelino's brother Norberto and Victor Gerena, and are being sought by the FBI.

Avelino is currently being held in Somers, the state of Connecticut's supermax prison, far from his family and his nation, where he is locked down 23 hours a day, with no access to family visits or phone calls, in conditions which are calculated not only to interfere with his ability to prepare a defense, but which are tantamount to torture. He is awaiting trial in federal court in Hartford.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

- Federal regulations stipulate that prisoners should be put in prisons as close as possible to their homes and families. Nevertheless the Puerto Rican political prisoners have been kept far from their families and communities in the United States and/or Puerto Rico.
- Even though U.S. law stipulates that prisoners should receive medical service equal to that of the standards available to the general community, the Puerto Rican political prisoners have been denied adequate medical attention.
- Some of the prisoners have been locked in underground prisons with the goal of destroying them physically and psychologically.
- In the United States common prisoners are allowed to visit an immediate family member who is dying or to attend his or her funeral. This gesture of decency has been denied the Puerto Rican political prisoners.
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- The Political Prisoners have been denied visitation from family and friends. They have been denied physical contact with visitors as well. All of the above is against standard prison law.

THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE FREEDOM FIGHTERS: PUERTO RICO'S COLONIAL CASE



Puerto Rico has been a colony for 500 years, first of Spain and then of the United States. In 1898, at the conclusion of what is called the Spanish- American War, Spain was forced to cede the island nation to the United States pursuant to a treaty between Spain, France and the United States. No one conferred with the people of Puerto Rico, in violation of a Charter of Autonomy signed by Spain and Puerto Rico which provided that the island's status could not be altered without consulting the Puerto Rican people. The U.S. military declared martial law, installed a U.S. governor, and began a program to alter and destroy the fiber of Puerto Rico.

Over the years, the U.S. destroyed Puerto Rico's agrarian economy; devalued its money; imposed citizenship on its people to facilitate drafting its men into the U.S. army to fight the U.S.' wars; imposed the teaching of the English language and U.S. history on its students; polluted its air, land, and water; sterilized its women; and installed 21 U.S. military bases on some of the best land.

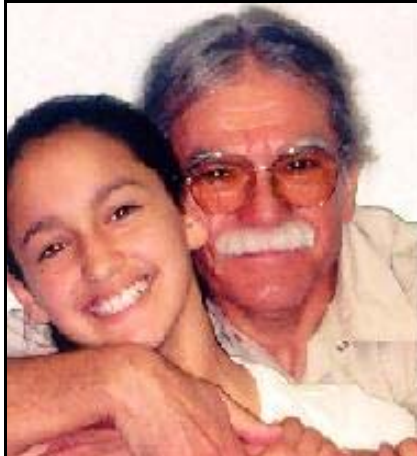
Puerto Rico's colonial reality cannot be overlooked. International law denounces colonialism as a crime and recognizes a colonized people's right to end colonialism by any means at their disposal. The United Nations recognizes that these laws apply to the case of Puerto Rico. For many years now, the United Nations' De-colonization Committee has approved resolutions recognizing the inalienable right of Puerto Rico's people to independence and self-determination.

The actions of the Puerto Rican political prisoners are comparable to those of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Washington and Jefferson denounced the tyranny of British control over their colonies. They fought for the principle of democracy, and gained independence. Similarly, the US government recognized that Nelson Mandela's imprisonment by the South African apartheid government was unjust. Mandela was jailed for 27 years on charges of attempting to overthrow the apartheid government through violent means. Like Washington, Jefferson and Mandela before them, the Puerto Rican political prisoners are conscientious activists for freedom and justice, not criminals.

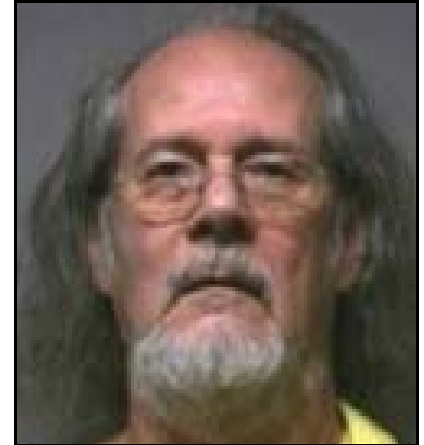
WRITE TO THE PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS!!



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Terre Haute, IN 47808



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287 Bilton Road
Somers, CT 06071

MAKE A DONATION TO PROLIBERTAD

ProLibertad can only do the work it does through the support of all of our allies. Send your tax deductible donation to to:

IFCO/ProLibertad
418 w145th St.
New York, N.Y.
10031

Remember to endorse the check or money order to IFCO/ProLibertad and to sign the check!!

NEVER SEND CASH!!

SEND THE PRISONERS A DONATION

The commissary donations we send prisoners allows them to make telephone calls to family, legal counsel and friends; it also allows them to buy much needed toiletries and stationery. If you want to send money to the prisoners, it must be sent to the following address and in the following manner:

Federal Bureau of Prisons
(Prisoner's Name and Prison Number)
PO Box 474701
Des Moines IA 50947-0001

The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) will only approve/accept the following items, which it calls "Negotiable instruments": Money Orders, government checks, Foreign Negotiable Instruments or Business checks. NOTE: No Personal Checks; they will be sent back to you.

Endorse the money order/check out to the prisoner's committed name and register number (prison number) on the funds.

The name and return address of the sender must appear in the upper left hand corner of the envelope to ensure that funds can be returned when necessary. Don't send items other than funds to the above provided address; the BOP will discard letters, pictures and anything else you send.