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EX-10121
11 May 1972

SUBJECT: Movement Activity in the WDC Area

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d. Juan MARIBRAS//.....

Subject is in some fashion involved with the Institute of Policy Studies in WDC and has written some sort of book on the Puerto Rican scene. I think he probably has Young Lord Contacts. [REDACTED]

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Date 6 APR 1983

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CAN JUDGE INDEXING

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ARCHAOS

Puerto Rican Independence Movements

Reference:

Attached for your information and background use is an article entitled "There Are Few Independentistas In Puerto Rico, But ---," which appeared in the 21 May 1972 edition of the New York Times Magazine.

Attachment: A/S

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**There Are Few *Independientistas*
In Puerto Rico, But—**

By RUTH GRUBER



VISIONARY—Ruben Berrios, the messianic young lawyer who leads the largest party in the Independentista movement. "By 1976," he says, "we will declare the Republic. The United States will have to negotiate with us. We will become the Socialist Republic of Puerto Rico."

Though perhaps only 5 per cent of the people favor independence, it is a poignant cause for those who have been the dependent if well-treated stepchildren of a giant neighbor.

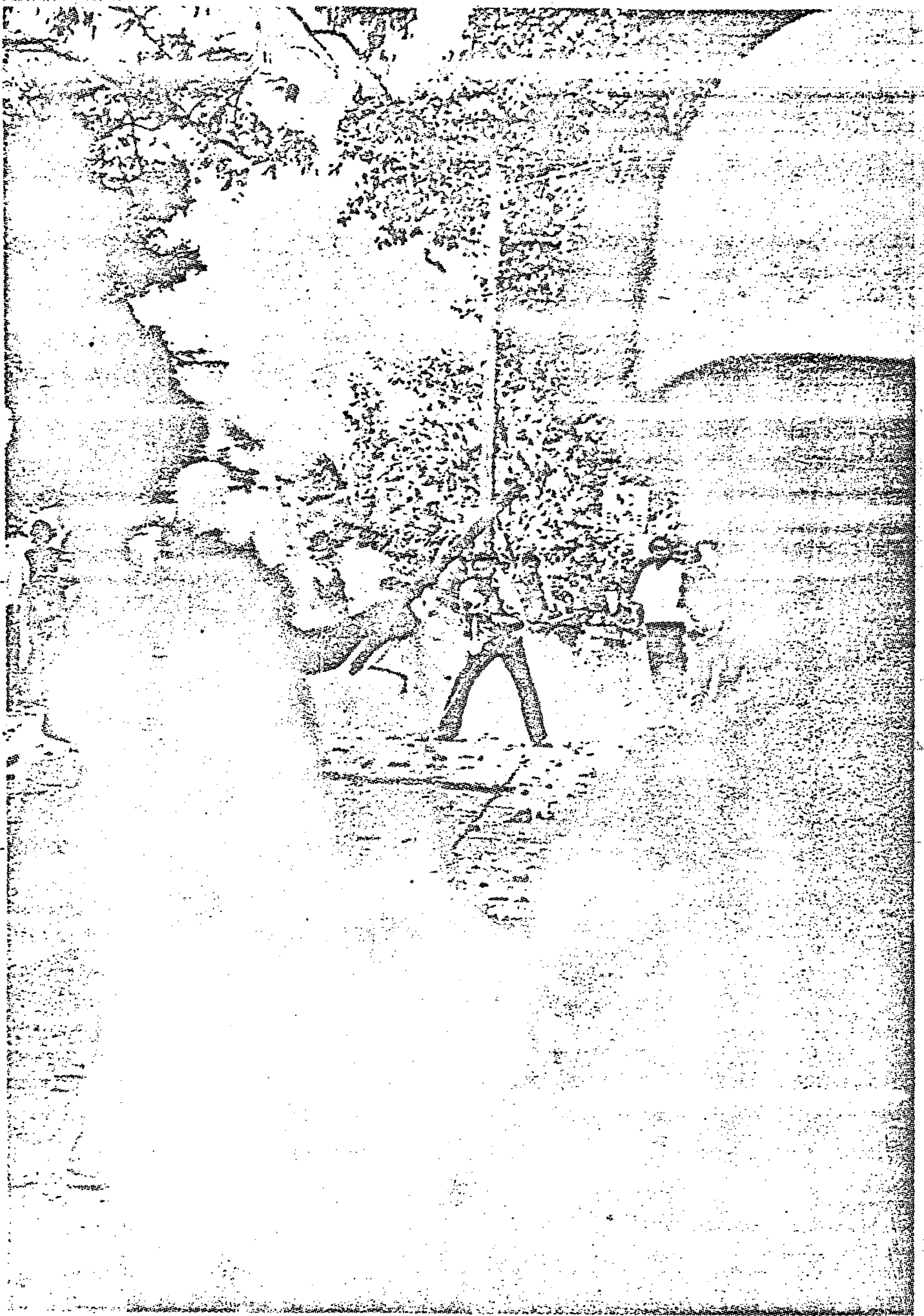
It is 1984. The Socialist Republic of Puerto Rico has sealed its borders, thousands of people besiege the American Embassy seeking flights to the mainland. The Ambassador is helpless. But there is dissension in the five-party coalition which brought President Ruben Berrios to power. Economic Minister Juan Mari Brás is demanding immediate expropriation of all American-owned businesses and the expulsion of all North Americans. Education Minister Antonio Gonzalez is urging restraint; he is known to favor maintenance of ties with the U.S. However, in two long, impassioned, televised speeches Berrios has coupled his routine attacks on American "imperialism" with boasts of support from the Communist bloc.

IT is not likely to happen, but it is not entirely fiction, either. The men are real, plucked from the spectrum of Independentista leaders of 1972, and their projected views are fairly derived from those they hold today. They are determined and astute, certain that Puerto Rico will someday be an independent nation, free of the unique Commonwealth status which makes it America's voluntary, quasi-imperial outpost. They have set themselves a difficult, perhaps impossible goal; parties favoring independence received 3 per cent of the vote in the 1968 elections in Puerto Rico, and a poll taken last July showed Independentista sentiment of only 5.2 per cent.

For most Americans old enough to remember, the Puerto Rican independence movement is represented by a single awful image, the attempt to assassinate President Harry S. Truman by a band of fanatical followers of the insane mystic, Pedro Albizu Campos—a bloody remembrance, unframed by historical context, symbolizing nothing. It is a misleading image for the Puerto Rico of today. The Independentista movement is now centered in the island's largest university; its proponents include four former presidents of the Puerto Rican Bar Association and many of the heirs of the island's establishment; its leaders include sophisti-

RUTH GRUBER is the author of "Felisa Rincon de Gautier: The Mayor of San Juan," to be published in the fall.

21 May 1972
THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE



cated lawyers, anxious to use the process of government to change it.

Some of them are willing to take the long road of democratic procedure, no matter what the odds, patiently proselytizing reluctant voters, manipulating a hostile Government with selective acts of civil disobedience. They know that not far beneath the surface of life in Puerto Rico—neither American nor Spanish,

nation nor colony—lies a disquieting search for identity. There remain many who are not willing to wait. They boast of their connections with Italy and the United States, which often claim the authorship of acts of violence—as many as 150 in the last two years. It is probably an exaggerated claim. Most American tourists, shuttling between the beaches and gambling tables of San Juan,

remain unaware of the violence, and most Puerto Ricans, at least so far, remain unmoved by it. But the police, including the F.B.I., have good reason to be wary. Grenades and sophisticated bombs have exploded in some plush hotels; sabotage and arson have damaged a number of Yankee establishments, including a Woolworth's and a General Electric plant. One American couple drive

CAMPUS UNREST—A ... in March, 1971, at the University of Puerto Rico, which for months had been divided in bitterness between Independentista students and R.O.I.C. cadets. Three persons died in the disruption and 62 were hurt.

through the streets of San Juan every night to see if their chain of small stores is still standing.

The worst incident of violence occurred on March 11, 1971, at the University of Puerto Rico in San Juan, the center of Independentista sentiment and activity. For months the campus had been divided in bitterness between the Independentistas and student cadets in the Reserve Officers Training Corps. A fist fight in the student-center cafeteria quickly became a riot, with chairs flying and hundreds attacking one another. Some of the cadets raced to their training building; the Independentistas took positions atop the adjoining student center. Rocks were hurled from the rooftops; soon the rocks were joined by bullets, and scores fell bleeding. The island's riot police marched onto the campus and again shots rang out. The commanding officer of the riot squad, another policeman and a cadet were killed; 62 were wounded. The campus was closed, but the rioters spilled out into the city, looting, wrecking shops and burning a supermarket to the ground.

SOME Independentista leaders deplore the violence, but they believe their movement will benefit from its polarizing effects—before 1984. Says Ruben Berrios: "By 1976, we will declare the Republic. The United States will have to negotiate with us. We will become the Socialist Republic of Puerto Rico." His messianic manner matches his words. At 33, Berrios is the island's best known Independentista leader and president of the largest party in the movement, the Puerto Rican Independence party (PIP). A lawyer, he was on the faculty of the university—his well-financed party's modern headquarters is just off the campus—until last May, when he was dismissed for spending too little of his time teaching law. Like many sons of the elite who now lead the independence movement, he studied abroad, at Georgetown University, Yale Law School and the Oxford Graduate Law School. And, like more Puerto Ricans than mainlanders realize, he has blond hair and blue-green eyes. "Many Puerto Ricans are blond with blue eyes," he says. "Mine are the

(Continued on Page 32)

Independentistas in Puerto Rico

(Continued from Page 31)

result of 250 years of Basque ancestors in the hills. I am a *jibaro* [hillbilly] from Oxford."

He is also an Independentista by way of Marx and, more recently, Allende; Berrios attended the Chilean leader's inauguration. He advocates and practices militant civil disobedience up to the border of violence; his proclaimed guiding principles, socialism and democracy, are defined in vague terms:

"Socialism and democracy. But neither the socialism of Russia nor the democracy of the U.S. They have defamed the concepts. We want to rescue them. By socialism, I mean a multiparty system ruled by the dictates of the Constitution we will write. By democracy, I mean individual rights fully guaranteed, not the kind of democracy one of our poets, Luis Llorens Torres, described: 'The poor have the freedom of expression to tell each other their misery in the slums at night.'

"There may be a civil war, but that will depend on the empire. We think it will be a massive confrontation, not civil war. We can paralyze the American empire through mass strikes, mass boycotts, noncooperation, civil disobedience, refusal to pay taxes. We won't fall into the trap of the imperialists who want us to use violence so they can arrest us."

THE one time Berrios was arrested, it was in dramatic fashion and did his cause no harm. He led the highly publicized demonstrations over the U.S. Navy's use of Culebra, a tiny island 20 miles east of Puerto Rico, for target practice. Berrios had found the classic enemy—the armed might of America—and his defense of the little island was popular throughout Puerto Rico. His manipulation of events, and the media covering them, was masterful.

He forced the Navy to tow away a fleet of small boats filled with demonstrating Independentistas, students, American Quakers. Then the protesters built a small chapel on Culebra itself, announcing ecumenical services. The Navy responded by bombing the chapel, which was quickly ripped down. Berrios obtained a Federal Court order barring Berrios from the firing area; he refused to leave and was arrested with 13 of his followers, mostly young students. Berrios was sentenced to three months in prison, the first time an im-

portant political leader had been sent to jail in democratic Puerto Rico in 30 years.

Nothing could have served his purposes better. He reached an important mainland audience with his letter, "From a Puerto Rican Prison," published in *The New York Times*. It was an indictment of the American military presence in Puerto Rico, a presence the Pentagon had already promised would be diminished. His imprisonment also produced a highly effective propaganda poster showing Berrios staring from a cell, his left arm thrust upward through the bars in the clenched-fist salute. Headlined "Desde La Carcel [From the Prison]," the poster reads in part:

The food, bad; but the majority of Puerto Ricans eat worse.
The cell, small; but the small rooms of our slums are even smaller.
Here no one dies of hunger; there, yes.
Puerto Ricans, we are all in prison.

Since last summer Berrios has been waging a sporadic battle with the government over housing. He and his followers have helped the poor seize land and build shacks, prompting the passage of a law that makes inciting squatters a felony. PIP decided to test the law, invading a government-owned farm west of San Juan and setting up some primitive shelters. The case is still pending in the courts, though some poor families remain on the land. "Of course they're violating a law," Berrios says, "and we're helping them violate it. It's an immoral law. We believe the land should belong to the people who work it."

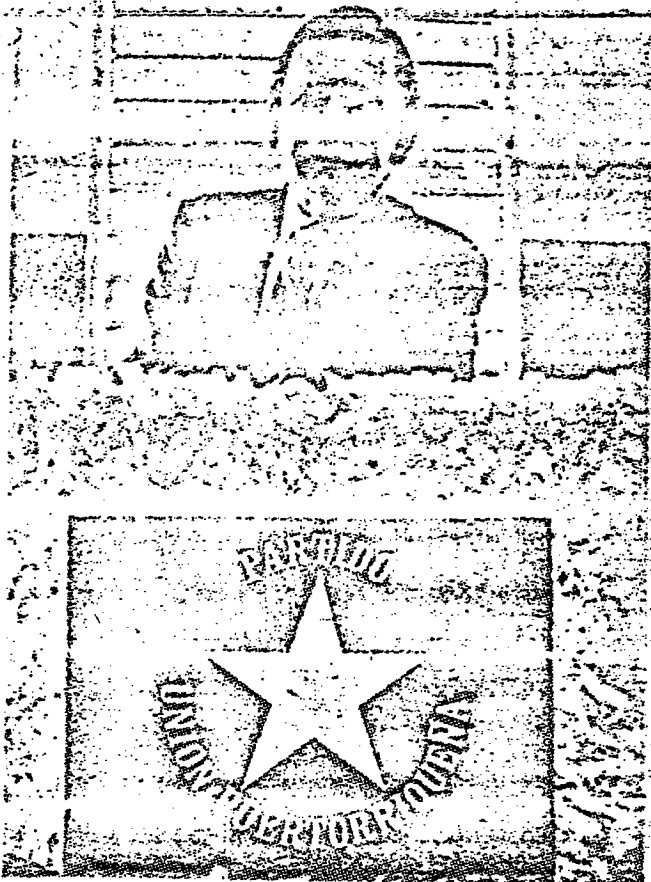
Berrios has brought a level of party organization and discipline to the independence movement to match his highly developed sense of public relations. He says hundreds of regular contributors finance the party, and from the available evidence there is no reason to doubt him. His elaborate organization was on display a year ago, when Berrios convened a general assembly of PIP members from the 33 party chapters on the island. (They met in the banquet hall of the old Normandie Hotel, overlooking the Atlantic in San Juan, made available at no cost by the hotel's Independentista owner, tycoon Felix Benitez Roxach.) Most of the delegates were men in their early 20s; there

were a handful of women and middle-aged lawyers, judges and university professors. They looked like what they were—mostly sons of the middle and upper class, planning the revolution. The party program they approved calls for a total reorganization of Puerto Rican life, including the nationalization of major industries.

BERRIOS is convinced that his Marxist appeal to the poor, coupled with attention-getting, nonviolent tactics, will eventually make headway in the urban slums and rural shack towns of the island. That is not the view of Juan Mari Bras, secretary general of the second largest group of Independentistas, formerly known as the Movement for Puerto Rican Independence (M.P.I.) and recently renamed the Puerto Rican Socialist party (P.S.P.). It was the M.P.I. that claimed credit for the riot at the university; Mari Bras calls it "our greatest triumph."

A heavy-set, mustachioed man of 44, Mari Bras is one of the committed veterans of the independence movement as well as a doctrinaire Communist. The aura of New York's Union Square in the nineteen-thirties hangs over him; in fact, his party has a walk-up office on 14th Street, just off the square, that used to be called Mission Vito Marcantonio. He founded the M.P.I. in 1959, when the Independentistas were at their lowest ebb. Like Berrios, he is a lawyer practicing revolutionary politics. He presides over a tiny, cluttered bookshop near the university and edits his party's newspaper, *Claridad*. He claims 15,000 members for his group, but even he concedes that his Communist philosophy and violent methods have little appeal for the island's masses. Its greatest strength is at the university. "We don't have much force in the rural areas," he says, "first, because of the lower political awareness of the rural people, and secondly, their social mobility. The farmers are forever leaving to work on the farms in the States, then they come back for sugar and other crops." The lack of popular support is not likely to deter him.

"We believe we have the right to reject colonialism, and reject it violently," Mari Bras says. "We believe violence is the means by which colonialism is rejected. When the U.S. came to the island in 1898 and took it away from Spain, they came shooting. They didn't come with electoral devices. They came with guns and stayed with force. We have the right to fight



CAPITALIST—Antonio Gonzalez, an economist and leader of the Puerto Rican Unity party. "We can have independence," he says, "and maintain economic and social relations with the U.S."

colonialism with the same means. We have the right George Washington had to obtain our freedom. We believe every Puerto Rican has the right to use as much violence as necessary to get the Yankees out of this country."

He has ties of "international solidarity" with the regimes in Havana, Hanoi, Moscow, Prague and Peking—he recently traveled to China for meetings with her leaders—but denies that his party is responsible for the growing sabotage and bombings. He admits only open resistance to the authorities. Few accept his protestations; he is believed to be actively involved with two terrorist groups, MIRA (Movement of the Left Armed Revolution) and CAL (Armed Commandos for Liberation).

IN both style and program, the leader of a new Independentista party, Antonio Gonzalez, an economics professor, has brought to the movement an attractive alternative to Marxism or violence. Gonzalez ran for the governorship on PIP's ticket in 1968, but broke with the party when Berrios led it into socialism; now Gonzalez leads his own Puerto Rican Unity party (MIRA). Of his split with Berrios, Gonzalez says: "Berrios wanted a Marxist approach; he wanted anti-American propaganda; and he wanted the tactics and strategies of civil disobedience. I wanted none of them."

Gonzalez believes that independence can come only through the electoral process, but like Berrios he hopes an independent Puerto Rico can escape what he calls "the vices of Russia and China, and the typical capitalist economy with wealth in the hands of the monopolists." He does not consider the U.S. a present or future enemy. Says Gonzalez: "Once we have power we will ask the U.S. for a transitional period to help us make the adjustment to nationhood, to look for new markets, etc. We can have independence and yet maintain economic and social relations with the United States. We want a treaty among equals."

Not only his philosophy but his personal style may make Gonzalez a more appealing vehicle for the expression of Independentista sentiment than either the flamboyant Berrios or the stolid Mari Bras. He has the appearance of a middle-aged banker: He is the only Independentista leader who customarily wears a suit, dress shirt and tie. When he seeks support among the voters, it is with the island's traditional small gatherings, called *tertulias*. His presentation is direct and unadorned, and he says what he has to say calmly. His answers questions are usually engaged in a dialogue with the group.

Two other parties, both minor, are involved in the independence movement. One, the Authentic Sovereignty Party, is headed by Jorge Luis

men and women whose standard of living rose along with each new plant at the side of the main road. Independentistas see Fomento as the agent of their island's economic enslavement, but each year large numbers of official and nonofficial experts from developing nations come to Puerto Rico to study it as an admired model. The arts flourish in the hotbed of independence sentiment, the university, where the 16th annual Casals Festival is expected to open without incident late this month.

THE man who presides over Puerto Rico's national life today is Gov. Luis A. Ferré, a gracious mixture of Spanish aristocrat and American technocrat. Ironically, he leads the Commonwealth though he is one of the few political leaders on the island who has unwaveringly advocated statehood, and he has become one of the island's wealthiest men—cement factories, foundries, real estate, a daily newspaper—in the Commonwealth era. Like officeholders everywhere, especially those seeking reelection, Ferré emphasizes the positive: The island is booming, its growth rate as high as Israel's and Japan's. He cites Government statistics—others dispute their accuracy—showing an unemployment rate of 12.4 per cent—a figure that would mean economic collapse on the mainland but indicates relative prosperity in the Caribbean. "We have delivered everything we promised in the 1968 campaign," Ferré says, "a raise for the teachers, the policemen, the government workers. We made business give the workers Christmas bonuses. We increased wages for the *jiboros* from 65 cents to \$1 an hour."

Not every one is so sanguine. One of Puerto Rico's leading economists, Hubert C. Barton, says official unemployment figures are based on the number of people who are actively looking for work but ignore those who grow weary of seeking jobs that do not exist. The pace of industrial growth slowed in 1970: plant closings increased sharply, with textiles and shoe factories having the greatest difficulty. Several luxury hotels catering to tourists were also shut—an unwelcome trickle-down effect of the mainland's economic problems—and later taken over and reopened by the Commonwealth government. Barton estimates that the true unemployment rate is not 12.4 per cent but 33 per cent, 300,000 people. There have been times in

Landing, a lawyer who, like Gonzalez, broke with PIP. The other is a link with the bizarre past: the ultranationalist Socialist League headed by poet Juan Antonio Corretjer, an intimate friend of the late Pedro Albizu Campos, who exhorts his followers to "arm to the teeth to fight Yanqui imperialism." Not long ago, both Corretjer and his American-born wife, Consuelo Lee, were imprisoned for the illegal possession of arms.

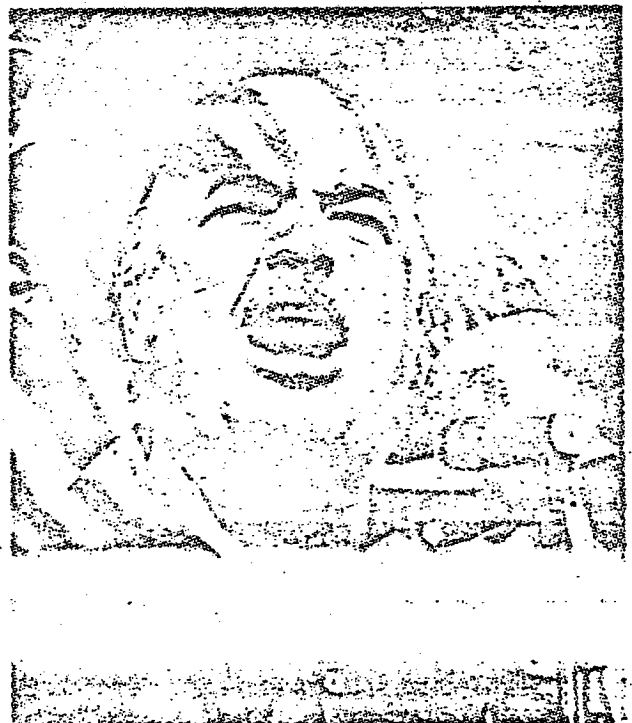
IF any or all of these men are successful and independence comes to Puerto Rico, it will bring to an end an unusual venture in international relations for the United States, whose imperial forays have occurred infrequently and usually with the kind of national guilt and pretense that the great colonizing powers of Europe disdained. Puerto Rico was a prize of the Spanish-American War in 1898, and though America treated the island's inhabitants better than the Spaniards had, the welfare measures they introduced could not reverse the devastating results of a high birth rate and a minimally productive agricultural economy. Franklin Roosevelt and his administrator on the island, Rexford Tugwell, had begun to attack the economic problems when World War II intervened; the island was heavily fortified and 60,000 of its people served in the United States armed forces.

After the war, with President Truman's support, the island became self-governing. Its first—and for 16 years its only—elected Governor was Luis Muñoz Marín, who is

universally regarded by Puerto Ricans as a national hero embodying the best qualities of Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt himself. By act of Congress, the Commonwealth became a fact in 1952. It is a voluntary arrangement: In 1953, the Eisenhower Administration told the United Nations the U.S. would support full independence for the island if the Commonwealth Government asked for it. The U.N. then voted to recognize Puerto Rico as a self-governing territory, and that is what it remains in the international registry.

It has also been a mutually beneficial arrangement. American businessmen flocked to the island to take advantage of its cheap and abundant supply of labor and a long period of tax-free operation. U.S. investments on the island, including giant petrochemical complexes, banks, luxury hotels and shopping centers, now run into the billions. American military men rushed in, too; the Air Force and Navy have huge bases on the strategically located island, and some of the 100 large and small military installations in Puerto Rico house atomic weapons.

While it has rescued thousands from poverty, Commonwealth status has not been able to raise per capita income above \$1,564, about \$500 less than that of Mississippi but high enough to surpass every other Caribbean and Latin-American nation. Fomento, the economic development agency which administers the island's program of industrialization, has brought 1,900 factories to Puerto Rico—and tens of thousands of jobs for



SOCIALIST—Juan Mari Bras, head of the Puerto Rican Socialist party, speaking at a rally. He says: "We believe we have the right to reject colonialism . . . violently."

Puerto Rico's history, most recently in the nineteen-twenties and thirties, when the most telling economic indicator was the mortality rate. People simply starved to death. That very seldom happens now, but it is abundantly clear that the island's standard of living is only relatively good. National economic growth rates are more impressive when they start from near zero.

SEVERAL years ago, when a Headstart program was instituted in San Juan, a 4-year-old boy walked into a classroom in the oceanfront slum of La Perla. He was stark naked, but he had a notebook and pencil under his arm—a symbol of Puerto Rican aspirations, the innocent in the tropical garden, too poor for fig leaves or shoes but bearing the tools to work his way out of poverty.

Those tools can serve only some. The overwhelming fact of life in Catholic Puerto Rico is life itself, a birth rate beyond the economic capacity of an island 105 miles long and 35 miles wide, with limited natural resources. For most Puerto Ricans, the alternative is a trip to the mainland, a migration undertaken by nearly a million of them in the last 20 years. Commonwealth status gives Puerto Ricans a mixed bag of rights and duties under their limited American citizenship. They pay no Federal taxes but cannot vote for Federal officials; they serve in the armed forces, but most important of all, they have complete freedom of movement in the U.S.

Now the migration figures have become the significant economic indicator. In 1970, in a startling and largely unreported phenomenon, the exodus reached the highest level in history. In a population of 2,700,000 people, 100,000 chose to leave, most of them for the barrios of New York, according to Hubert Barton's statistics. But migration is a two-way affair, and for many the city's enclaves and the island they consider home have become interchangeable. In 1970, while 100,000 were leaving for a better life, more than 25,000 Puerto Ricans returned from New York seeking the same thing. The returnees — Neoricans in island jargon — have added a new and distracting element to an already troubled scene. Many of them, by Puerto Rican measurements, have "made it": They have worked in urban industries and acquired skills, and they constitute formidable competition

for the island's already swollen labor force. They also come back—for some it is not coming back; they were born in New York—with a style and political sophistication alien to the island.

Their life-style is New York, their language is English and they have experienced the mainland's frustrating racial categories, where many have been considered, and some have considered themselves, "black" for the first time. Some come back with a racial militance ill-suited for a society where shades of skin color constitute an accepted spectrum and overt racial pride is limited to an "élite" who boast of their pure Spanish blood. And, while New York's school system struggles with the problem of making the Puerto Rican child truly bilingual, the island's schools have the problem in reverse: 20,000 Neoricans youngsters are trying to learn Spanish.

IT is the island's economy that provides the framework for debate over its future just as it regulates the ebb and flow of its citizens' migration. In the Marxist rhetoric of Ruben Berrios, American investments in Puerto Rico amount to unadorned exploitation by a colonial power. "Where is the miracle of Puerto Rico," he asks, "with a third of our people living in New York, 25 per cent of our people on the island living in miserable shacks and slums and a third of our population with incomes of less than \$300 a year? It is no miracle. The U. S. has failed us because it is a colonial power."

Those who would leave Puerto Rico's Commonwealth status unchanged accuse the Independentistas of misreading history and fear that nationhood would be, in Munoz Marin's phrase, "the independence of the graveyard." They mean graveyard literally: an independent Puerto Rico, they contend, could neither attract new industry nor keep what it has, its people could no longer freely migrate and the island would experience the starvation it has known before. Says one pro-Commonwealth leader: "Industries from the States did not come to the island as colonial exploiters. We begged and beseeched and cajoled industry to come. Sure, we offered them high tax advantages and high profits and lower minimum wages than they would pay in the States. So what? They rescued the island. Does life-saving have a price?"

Businessmen overwhelmingly believe that their current problems would be considerably worse if Puerto Rico

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Date 4 5 APR 1983

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MCHAOS

DOCUMENT AS REFERRED TO FBI

1. [REDACTED] JUAN M A R T I BRAS (201-353229) SECRETARY
GENERAL OF PARTIDO SOCIALISTA PUERTORRIQUENA (PSP); BORN 2 DEC
27 IN MAYAGUEZ, PUERTO RICO, US PASSPORT K-644540 ISSUED NEW
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2. [REDACTED], PSP (FORMERLY PUERTO RICAN
INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT MPIPR) IS A RECENTLY FOUNDED RADICAL
MARXIST-LENINIST PRO-CUBAN POLITICAL PARTY. IT IS SELF-
DESCRIBED IN ITS CONSTITUTION AS REVOLUTIONARY VANGUARD OF
PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE. [REDACTED]

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