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## Puerto Rico

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# The SPF's terrorist bridge to the U.S.

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In less than two years of existence, the Puerto Rico New Independence Movement (NMIP) has established itself as the official subsidiary of the São Paulo Forum in Puerto Rico and within the Puerto Rican communities in major cities on the mainland, such as New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. This gives the SPF a terrorist capability within the United States proper, with all that that implies.

The NMIP is a New Age version of the old Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), which has incorporated radical environmentalism and violent opposition to any war on drugs, to its long-standing ties to Castro's Cuba. The drug angle is key, because the NMIP's central campaign today is to mobilize and threaten terrorist actions against the Clinton administration's plan to install a sophisticated radar on the island to give early warning of incoming drug flights. The planned radar is of strategic significance, because it will extend U.S. detection capabilities to cover the entire Caribbean Sea.

### Radar proponents targeted

Since this plan was announced, the NMIP weekly *Claridad* has heaped a steady flow of invective upon anyone who wants to see the radar installed. In mid-July 1995, Julio A. Muriente Pérez, NMIP president, began to openly incite terrorist actions against the radar. "We Puerto Ricans know how to blow up towers," he bragged. Immediately afterwards, the "Vietnam Veterans and Families" (linked to and promoted by the NMIP) began a vigil at the site where the radar antennas are to be installed, and threatened to "fight for my land. . . . This will be my last battle as a forgotten Vietnam warrior." In mid-September, Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, an old Cuban agent of the terrorist Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS) and leader of the terrorist group "Los Macheteros," sent a video from hiding which calls for escalating military actions against the radar installations.

At the same time, *Claridad* and its "respectable" allies, such as Sen. Rubén Berríos Martínez, of the Socialist International, and Dr. Neftalí García, a leading environmentalist on the island financed by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), launched a publicity and electoral campaign to le-

galize drugs. In August 1995, NMIP head Muriente Pérez was in Buenos Aires at the continental São Paulo Forum seminar, where he also pushed the case for stopping the radar.

Is all of this a lot of hot air, or does it represent a credible terrorist threat?

### A history of terrorism

A little history answers the question. In 1950, Puerto Rican terrorist Andrés Figueroa Cordero attempted to murder President Harry Truman. In 1954, a suicide commando group of four Puerto Rican terrorists shot up the U.S. House of Representatives, wounding five congressmen. In 1979, the four were pardoned by President Jimmy Carter, and a few days later, Rafael Cancel Miranda, head of the commando squad, declared to the international press that he was ready to do it all over again, but this time using grenades instead of bullets!

Since then, these four terrorists have not ceased to fight, first together with the PSP and now with the NMIP, for the release of 15 other Puerto Rican terrorists, members of the National Liberation Armed Forces (FALN) and the Macheteros who are in federal prison for "bombings and revolutionary thefts" on the island and on the United States mainland. Both groups call themselves Marxist-Leninist, but they emphasize that their methods and tactics of struggle are inspired by the suicidal terrorist actions of their predecessors in 1950 and 1954.

The fact is that the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, through its Cointelpro operations, played a decisive role in the formation of both groups.

Several months ago, Cancel Miranda became part of the steering committee of the Fifth Congress of the Peoples of America and the Caribbean, held in Managua, Nicaragua. This meeting was headed by the top leaders of the Sandinistas, including Daniel Ortega and Tomás Borge, and voted unanimously in favor of a resolution calling on President Clinton to free the 15 FALN and Macheteros terrorists. The head of the Macheteros, Ojeda Ríos, sent a taped message to the meeting from his place of hiding.

Such prominent members of the Episcopal Diocese of New York as the Rev. Paul Wright, the National Lawyers Guild, and many other international groups, have joined the campaign to free the 15 terrorists. They insist on classifying them as "prisoners of war," whose armed struggle has been characterized by respect for human life and for "symbolic bombings" in favor of "Puerto Rican separatism." At the same time, the pro-terrorist editorial house "Common Courage" recently published a book, *Prisoners of Colonialism: The Fight for Justice in Puerto Rico*, apologizing for the terrorists. Ironically, in the book, sociologist Ronald Fernández documents some of the FBI's Cointelpro operations to infiltrate and create the National Liberation Armed Forces and Macheteros.