



Que Ondee Sola
September - October 2004
Vol. 32 No. 6

Editorial: Que Ondee Sola Back in Effect

Yvonne Esther Nieves

We are glad to be back on NEIU shelves and in your hands. This edition documents our busy, yet exciting, summer. Among many things, we represented NEIU in Humboldt Park's Puerto Rican activities, including the community's 11th annual Fiesta Boricua. We attended Paseo Boricua's newest mural unveiling, "A Sea of Flags" at the corner of Campbell and Division Streets. We hosted poetry open mic nights at Café Teatro Batey Urbano and co-sponsored activities at the Museum of Contemporary Art's Division and California Street kiosks. We were able to continue our work with organizations such as Centro Sin Fronteras and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center on the "La Familia Latina Unida" campaign. In this campaign, we have marched proudly along side their representatives Elvira Arellano and Emma Lozano at the Mexican Day Parade and the "March for Legalization." Our work with the all-Latina/o student group Latinos United to Changing Higher Education (LUCHE) has been successful as we were able to get Latina/o high school graduates admitted and enrolled at NEIU, as well as help other universities develop their very own Puerto Rican student organizations on their campuses.

A notable highlight this summer was sitting down and having a delicious meal with one of Puerto Rico's most celebrated nationalist heroes, Lolita Lebrón. We were able to engage her in a conversation about the positive work going on in our community. Her eyes twinkled as she gave us words of love, inspiration, and encouragement. Resident poet, Michael Reyes of Batey Urbano dedicated a heart-warming poem called, "Lolita, You May Cry Now," which spoke to her strength, courage, and determination. Members of Que Ondee Sola teared up when she, in turn, shared her phenomenal poetry with us at Batey Urbano.

As the struggle for freedom, equality, and autonomy continues all around the world and even right here at home, we here at QOS remain persistent in critically examining the social situations that surround us. We remain aware of all the injustices of the "War on Iraq," the federal government's dismissal of the life-threatening environmental issues in Vieques, and the outright racism and discrimination against undocumented immigrants. We urge you to vote in this upcoming election and demand justice and a major change in **La Casa Blanca**.

Editor
Yvonne Nieves

Staff

Jovannie Vargas	Jason Lopez
Omar Zamora	Michael Reyes
Oliver Camacho	Melissa Gonzalez
Elba Rivera	Elisa Aquino

Que Ondee Sola is published at Northeastern Illinois University. The opinions expressed in Que Ondee Sola do not necessarily reflect those of the Administration. Responsibility for its contents lie solely within the staff.

We appreciate all suggestions and contributions.

Contact Que Ondee Sola
5500 N. St. Louis Chicago, IL 60625

E-041 • 773.442.4583
queondeesola@hotmail.com

adentro QOS

In This Edition

- 2 Editorial: QOS Back in Effect
- 4 You Ain't Got to Gentrify
- 6 Poem: Lost, but not forgotten
- 7 UPRS: Who We Are
- 8 Philly Meets Paseo Boricua
- 10 Gentrification: A Trail of Tears from Philadelphia to Chicago
- 12 Did You Know????
- 13 Batey Urbano's Cultural Exchange with Lorain, Ohio
- 14 Making History at the DNC
- 16 Statehooders Face Setback at DNC
- 18 Lolita Lebron Visits Paseo Boricua
- 20 Poem: Lolita You May Cry Now...
- 22 11th Jornada Albizu in Chicago with Lolita Lebron...
- 24 Historic Moments with Lolita
- 25 Clarissa Visits Oscar
- 28 March for Legalization
- 30 Voting for the Voiceless...
- 31 Howard Dean Attests to Vieques Contamination
- 32 A Letter to George W. Bush
- 35 A Lares, Tierra Santa hay que entrar de rodillas
- 36 Noche de Gritos...
- 37 Puerto Rican Parade Committee Referendum...
- 39 11th Fiesta Boricua

MISSION

Que Ondee Sola is a 31 year old Puerto Rican/Latina/o monthly student magazine. Our mission is to provide our campus with a relevant and engaging publication that deals with student issues, particularly those of Latinos and issues that are of importance to our communities.

Que Ondee Sola continues to affirm the right of Puerto Rican self-determination.

You ain't got to gentrify

Amid Tirado



Amid Tirado in front of what was once his and his mother's home

I have lived in the Humboldt Park community for 15 years, which is now Paseo Boricua or El barrio. I have seen and experienced many things in this community, many of it is still the same but a lot has really changed. Humboldt Park has change in many wonderful ways, though sadly it also changed in many terrible ways. Being young and a little ignorant I didn't see these wrongful changes, I might even say I was blind, not seeing the fact that my community, my home is in danger of being taken away. When I speak of wrongful changes, I don't mean the increase in gangs, drug abuse, or the Latino high school drop out rate. Those are problems or struggles that we deal with in Humboldt Park, but now the community has a new struggle, the people of this community are now facing the process of gentrification.

Gentrification or displacement is the process of one's property being bought, then torn down to build a condominium and then later sold for three or more times the amount it was originally bought. Humboldt Park is facing this struggle now and the inhabitants are doing all they can do to stop gentrification from spreading. The many ways we are doing this is through the D.S.B.D.A, Participatory Democracy Project, and the Batey Urbano.

Through the D.S.B.D.A they will inform you on how to get affordable housing and through the Batey Urbano we have the Participatory Democracy Project, which is mainly to make sure that the people of color living in this community, stay in this community.

Even with all these resources the battle is not done yet. I myself have been a victim of gentrification, and as a person who has gone through this, I can honestly say I feel as if something has been stolen from me. But I am not the only one who feels this way, so I interviewed my mother Zoraida Tirado Nieves on her opinions on being gentrified and this is what she had to say:

1. How do you feel knowing you have been gentrified?

"I feel terrible and abused; my rights as a tenant have been taken away. The reasons why I felt and feel abused is that we hadn't yet lived one year in our home and our lease hadn't expired, but still the landlord came and told me I had to move. His reason: he is selling to build condos. I feel like a virgin that has just been raped. It makes me feel like I'm not good enough."

2. What are your thoughts on the fact that you are not the only one who's been gentrified?

"It is hard to think that so many people are being thrown out of their apartments on to the streets for condos to be built. They know we cannot afford \$800.00 a month, so this is their excuse to kick the people of color out of the community. Years ago this used to be a white American neighborhood and now they're trying to take it back. We've been hit hard through the years, the three *compares*, which are the Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and African-Americans and now we have found an area that we can call home. Sadly, they're trying to take it away from us."

After, I heard my mother's comments, I realized how much this community means, and luckily thanks to the Participatory Democracy Project my mother and I do not have to leave. We will now live on Paseo Boricua. In my conclusion, I will end with a statement, I will not forget this help and I will do all that I can in the name of Jesus Christ to help fight gentrification.

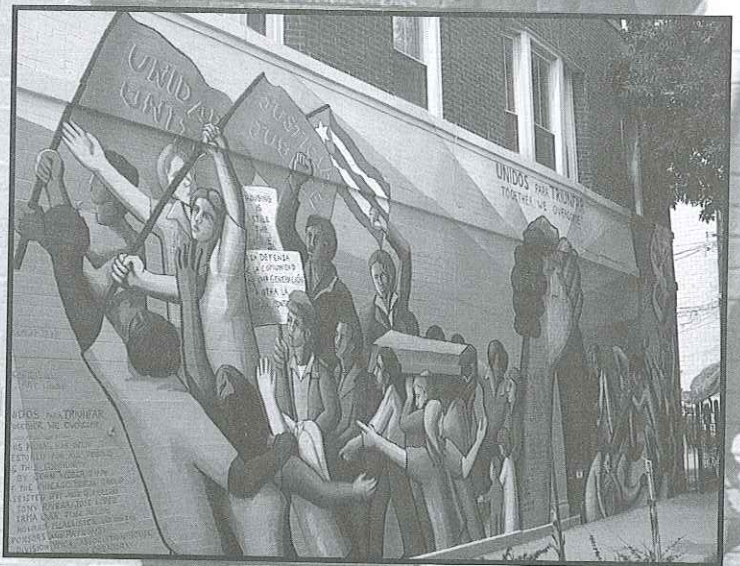
Amid Tirado is a student at Dr. Albizu Campos High School, who is interested in attending NEIU upon graduation.

Lost, but not forgotten

I can still remember that smell as a shorty
 That smell of freshly baked *pan de agua*
 That smell of cream coconut cake
 Not to mention my all time favorite
Biscocho de guayaba
 I can remember the frosted designs of the Puerto Rican flags
 That great one of the Puerto Rican seal
 My grandmother thought it was artistic
 I just thought it was tasty
 It was hard in the hood to find a bakery that was around
 Especially one that was Puerto Rican proud
 But sadly it was taken down
 By the yuppies greed
 To them it was a money making spot
 I'm sure in their minds they really didn't give a fuck
 About what that place meant
 Puerto Ricans were push to the west
 More yuppies started to invest
 Like a giant powder bomb
 More homes were now gone
 And they replace it with a tanning salon
 The whitey's have overrun
 All the Latinos were now shunned
 But at the corner of hoyne
 There is still a piece of hope, a piece of pride
 A sign that symbolizes Puerto Rican and African unity
 A mural that shows the true owners of this community
 Even though gentrification is still spreading
 And all this crap still seems rotten
 That area that once was home maybe lost
 But surely not forgotten

Amid Tirado

SPONSORS
 BANK ONE
 SERGIO DISAPIO
 TINGO SUK
 OWEN WEITERPRISE
 CHICAGO PUBLIC
 ART GROUP
 NANCY ABBATE
 TOGETHER WE OVERCOME
 WEBER © 1974
 UNIDOS PARA TRIUNFAR
 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



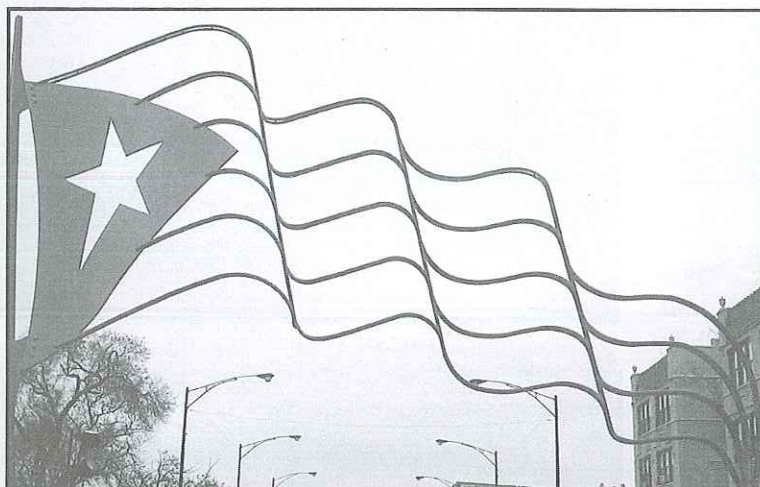
Who We Are Union for Puerto Rican Students

Jovannie Vargas, UPRS President

The Union for Puerto Rican Students is a Northeastern student organization established over 30 years ago to promote Puerto Rican history, culture and an understanding of our present reality. U.P.R.S. accomplishes its mission by sponsoring Puerto Rican cultural/historical activities. We organize events like Bombazos, open mics with poetry and hip-hop expression, as well as discussions and Latino Status speak outs.

U.P.R.S. is very active in our community and sets specific goals for students to get involved so they can take these tools learned at the university and apply them in their barrios. U.P.R.S. is linked to the Batey Urbano, a Puerto Rican/Latino youth space for high school and college students to do poetry, hip-hop and express themselves on a collective level in their own space. As part of this effort, college students from several Chicago-area universities have joined Batey Urbano in setting forth a Latino agenda revolving around strengthening Latino student organizations and the inequalities we face at our different campuses.

U.P.R.S., together with these Latino student organizations, discusses specific problems and responsibilities confronting our community – everything from preventing gentrification of Humboldt Park through the Participatory Democracy Project to informing youth about systemic problems like colonialism in an attempt to outsmart and override it's constructs.



Upcoming Event UPRS Presents

Gentrification in Humboldt Park

- Film: Divison & Western
- Poetry by DVS, a Puerto Rican poet and collective member of Batey Urbano
- Discussion on gentrification in Chicago's Puerto Rican community.

November 16

Student Union 216 • 1:40-2:50

U.P.R.S. is for Puerto Rican Students to come together and make a difference on campus and off it. It's time to build our community before it is stripped from our roots. Take leadership roles and mark a path our children can follow. It's time to unite because if we don't, we will lose the struggle. U.P.R.S., therefore, is an opportunity to grow as a Puerto Ricans concerned with the future of our community.

If you are interested in checking out U.P.R.S. or have any questions, please call us at ext 4583 or email us at uprs_30@hotmail.com

Philly Meets Paseo Boricua 16 Puerto Rican Youth travel to Humboldt Park

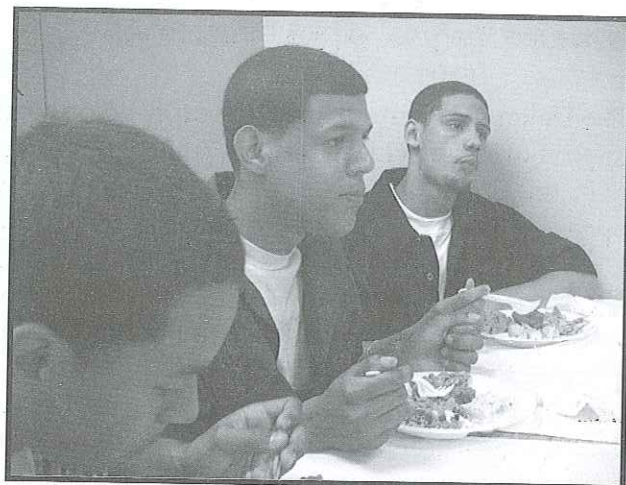
Michael Rodríguez Muñiz

All week long you could see them walking up and down Paseo Boricua. Either they were cleaning the street, passing out copies of our Paseo Boricua paper, or making their presence felt—Philly was in the house! During the first week of September, 16 youth and several adult coordinators from the Puerto Rican community in North Philadelphia, along with several Batey Urbano youth, took part in an intense, yet rewarding “Participatory Democracy” training program.

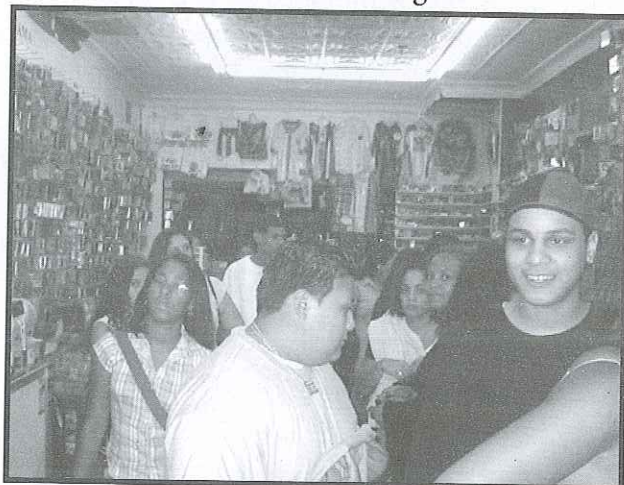
The Program included workshops, discussions, and skill-building exercises for community organizing. Discussions were held about the challenges facing Puerto Rican communities across the US, such as gentrification and displacement, poverty, and lack of good schools. In workshops, they learned door-knocking techniques, as well as the importance community participation. In just a week, these remarkable youth were even able to organize and produce a newsletter, appropriately called Boricua Exchange, which was about their encounter with Chicago. Several of their poets will also be featured in the upcoming Batey Tech Summer 2004 poetry and hip hop CD.

Each night, Batey Urbano’s “Nights of Expression” came alive with the creative energy of these Latino youth. From poetry and mc battles to even spontaneous Philly vs. Chicago salsa battles, each night was a memorable cultural experience for everyone present.

While in Chicago, they were also able to enjoy Fiesta Boricua and even had the honor of meeting with our national heroine, Lolita Lebrón. Organized by long-time Philly activist Inez Ramos and Batey Urbano, this historic exchange was funded by Philadelphia’s Beacon Center. Once again we came face to face with the potential in our Puerto Rican and Latino youth. As they worked on their projects and grew together, it became clear that the future of our community rests on these young leaders, both here and in Philly. And we need not worry... not at all.



Welcome to Chicago



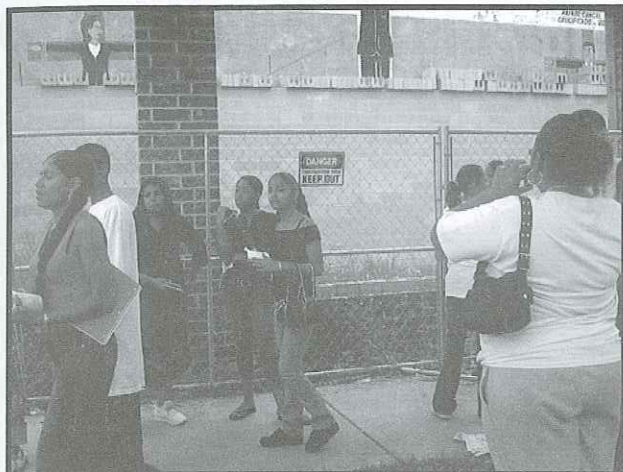
Tour of Paseo Boricua



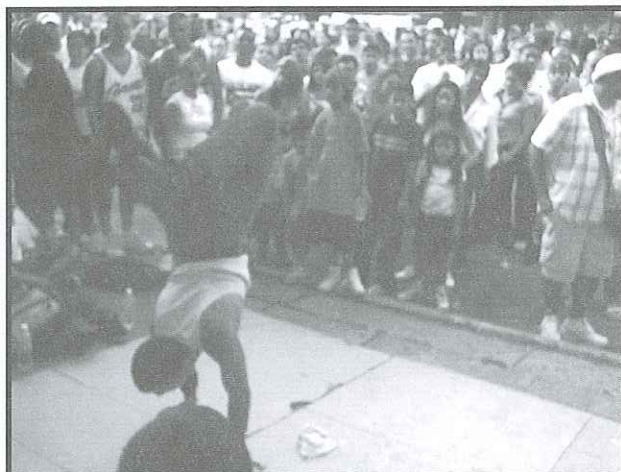
First time on the Turntables

Photo Essay

Que Ondee Sola is glad to provide our campus community with two articles written by Philadelphia youth who came to Chicago to learn about our Puerto Rican Community. The articles can be found on pages 10-13.



Gentrification at work



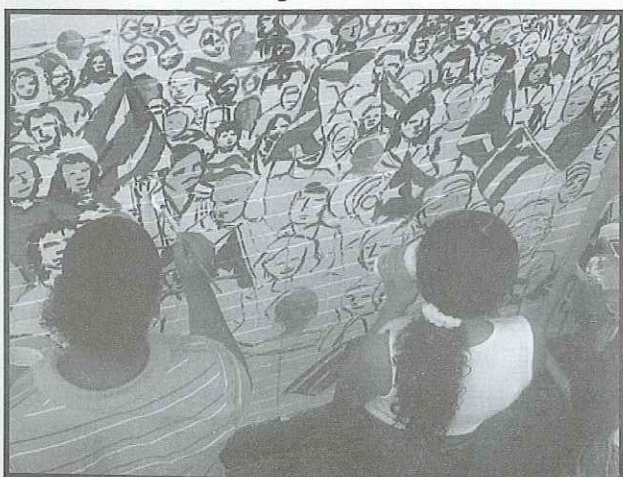
Breakin' in front of the Batey



Cleaning Paseo Boricua



Meeting Lolita Lebron



Painting the Mural



In front of the Flags

Gentrification:

A trail of tears from Philadelphia to Chicago

José Maldonado



Construction of a condo, being built over a the oldest Puerto Rican mural in Chicago

In our first edition of *Boricua Exchange*, we will be able to read about has been happening in Chicago; how badly Puerto Rican/Latino/ and poor communities have and continue to be gentrified.* Well, as you know, in Philly this process is also happening, only in a slightly slower pace. In actuality, gentrification of the Puerto Rican community is nothing new to our community in

Philadelphia- nor in Chicago, or even New York City. The first time we had seen this process affect us was in the 1970's when Puerto Ricans occupied the Spring Garden and Fairmount sections of the city. This process of displacing Latinos or people of color to redevelop communities for professional and middle/upper-middle classes of people (mostly whites) eliminated the

Puerto Ricans in this area, pushing us further north towards North Philly's Northern Liberties and Kensington sections.

Today, this same process of gentrification is again threatening to displace today's generation of Puerto Rican and Latinos who have worked hard to develop these same sections we were once forced to occupy. Now, with years of sweat and effort, North Philly is a vibrant part of Philadelphia. We have a diverse Latino community with neighborhoods occupied by a majority of Puerto Ricans who make up 76 percent of the Latino population, and a 15 percent Mexican population, and a 9 percent Dominican population, and other smaller Central and South American Latinos. These numbers will continue to quickly increase.

I live in North Philadelphia; my community is Kensington and my neighborhood Norris Square. I have been living here all my life. I even remember when Norris Square park was called Needlepoint Park and the community worked hard to develop it to the present as one of the most beautiful neighborhoods in the city. Once non-Latinos would not consider even passing through my neighborhood except to buy drugs. Today, I can clearly see that gentrification is hitting us Boricuas hard again. It's right on the corner of my block! There are new, unfamiliar neighbors I don't want to take a Jell-O Mold to!! To hell with that! Un platillo de flan says get out Yuppies I don't trust or want you here.

Gentrification is a subliminal process that happens and before you know it, you are displaced! The city of Philadelphia, with Mayor Street's "Neighborhood Blight Removal" project is supporting the gentrification of our Puerto Rican/Latino community. For us Boricuas/Latinos who have built North Philadelphia, the city project really means "Black and Latino Removal." Let's think critically people! What was supposed to be an Empowerment

Zone to bring us Boricuas/Latinos jobs and businesses turned out to be a slick opening to a process of gentrification. Girard Avenue to Norris Square and beyond is being taken over by this process. This will soon be sped up with riverside gambling now permitted, not to mention our neighborhood is within minutes of Center City, has excellent public transportation, small business strips close transportation (Front Street & Kensington Avenue), it's also located within miles of Columbus/ Delaware Avenue, not to mention Temple University- one of the biggest and oldest gentrifying forces in North Philadelphia.

So many people in my neighborhood do not know what is going to happen and those that do have already packed their bags and gone. Yuppies are quickly buying our properties to again displace us, push us out, and redevelop our community for themselves. Around the corner from me now sits a Yuppie business right across from a Latino owned business. What was once a neighborhood bodega owned by an elderly Puerto Rican lady is now an Italian deli that caters to non-Latino people- yuppies and yuppie artists who are now moving in. Yuppie students come to my neighborhood and- without any knowledge of, or connection to my community, our history, and culture- draw murals of what they think a Taino looks like without even asking. These murals and community gardens built with little African huts painted by yuppies with little to no input by community residents or community.

Jose Maldonado is a dance instructor in North Philly.

**This article is an excerpt from "Boricua Exchange," a youth-led publication created by Chicago and Philadelphia High School students.*

Did U Know ??????

Ivana González

Did you know that Philadelphia's Puerto Rican population is almost as big as the Boricua population of Chicago. According to the U. S Census 2004, Chicago's Puerto Rican population is 113,055 while Philadelphia's Boricua population accounts for 91,527.

Did you know that both cities- Chicago and Philly hold an annual Puerto Rican Parade to celebrate Boricua pride, but Philadelphia's parade is in September and Chicago's Parade is held in June.

Did you know that Chicago's Puerto Rican community is famous for its "Jibarito", a delicacy prepared with cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, mayonnaise, and steak on a smashed green plantain (tostón). The Jibaritos are like our Philly Cheese Steaks, but instead of using bread, our people in Chicago use the green plantain. Mmmm, are you hungry, yet?

Did you know that like Chicago, Philadelphia has many cultural landmarks that are a display of our cultural heritage. While a visitor can enjoy the food, murals, art galleries, and the cultural attractions that show the rich history of the Puerto Rican nation, Philadelphia is also rich with institutions, businesses and cultural centers that reflect the community contributions to the United States.

In Philadelphia, one can pick up a café with a sandwich planchao at El Bohio, along the business corridor of El Bloque de Oro. If you have a taste for some Puerto Rican art, you could visit Taller Puertorriqueño, art gallery and book store, and most important do not forget to visit el mural de Dr. Albizu Campos at 5th and Dauphin Streets.

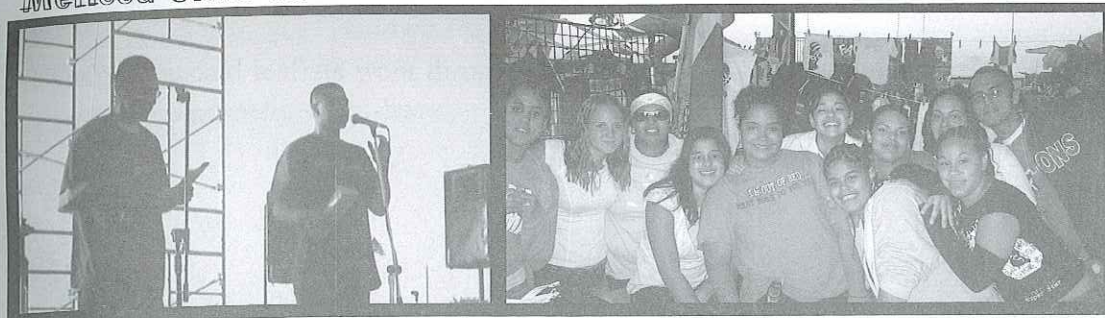
In Chicago, a visitor can take a stroll through the sidewalks of Chicago's Paseo Boricua, marked by two huge banderas weighing 40 tons each and measuring 59 feet into the air. At Paseo Boricua, one can taste the sandwiches criollos de Café Colao, dine at La Bruquena, Galeria Tinta Roja, and enjoy the murals that speak to the visitor about the resistance of the Puerto Rican community.

Did you know that Philadelphia and Chicago have many cultural schools such as José de Diego Grammar School, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School, Roberto Clemente High School, Roberto Clemente Middle School, Marianna Bracetti High School, Julia de Burgos Elementary School, and Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School.

Did you know that there are absolutely no youth spaces in Philadelphia like the Batey Urbano in Chicago. A place where youth can go to rap, recite poetry, dance, make music learn how to help the community in many different ways and have fun doing it. Oh, and this youth center is run by the youth and monitored by the adults.

Batey Urbano's Cultural Exchange with Lorain, Ohio

Melissa Cintron



Reyes and D.V.S throwing down

Lorain students with Chicago crew

Five Batey Urbano representatives, two of which are NEIU students, packed into a tiny car and made a five hour drive to Loraine, Ohio for the Latinos Del Norte Festival on August 20th, 2004, one of the largest Puerto Rican festivals in the state. Despite the cold and rainy weather, we were pleased to find, over thirty-five people crowded into a small tent waiting for us to conduct a poetry/hip hop workshop. At the activity, we met a dynamic group of talented Puerto Rican young people who had no problem standing up and sharing their poetry, song and rap skills with us. We were very impressed by this group of 15-17 year old Puerto Rican performance artists who were very energetic, warm and welcoming.

This same group of young people came back the next day when Batey Urbano was scheduled to perform at the Latinos Del Norte Festival. Within twenty minutes of arriving two girls approached our literature table where we passed out *La Voz del Paseo Boricua* and talked to students about attending college. The students were very much impressed by the pages of our student magazine *Que Ondee Sola*. We also distributed the National Boricua Human Rights Network's flyer, which speaks out on the Latino agenda. The flyer addresses three major concerns: 1) Puerto Rico's right to self-determination, 2) the clean up of Vieques, 3) support for Congressman Luis Gutierrez's SOLVE Act for the legalization of over 11 million undocumented workers who often

work under slave-like conditions.

As the day progressed, the number of young people walking up to our table began to multiply until about twelve. So, we sat down for a discussion about what was going on in each of our communities. We explored social and political issues and shared how we have stubbornly endured systematic oppression.

Knowing that Batey Urbano was to perform as an opening act for salsa legend Tito Nieves, poets Reyes and DVS invited three of Loraine's young women to come up and perform with them. They performed extremely well under pressure and for the first time in their lives before a crowd of over 2,000 people, and together, along with the Batey poets, raised important issues such as the need to build a national Latino agenda.

After the performances, the work and exchange continued. Jack P. Kilroy, a long time solidarity activist observed, "It ended up with the Batey group and the Lorain kids pairing up and leafletting the passers-by with the Latino agenda flyer." For us this exchange foreshadowed the possibilities of collectively building from the ground up. These were amazing, genuinely motivated, receptive Latinas and seeing them in action was truly an amazing act of resistance. All over this country in our Latino communities, it is very apparent that something very special is beginning to take shape.

Making History at the DNC

Judy D'az



Chicago group from National Boricua Human Rights & Batey Urbano working the DNC

History made at the 2004 Boston Democratic National Convention (DNC) was instantly recognized. A Chicago delegation of nine, including youth, went to the DNC representing the National Boricua Human Rights Network and La Campaña Familia Latina Unida to disseminate a leaflet to as many hands as possible. The leaflet presented three key Puerto Rican/Latino issues: Puerto Rican self-determination, the clean up of Vieques, and support for the SOLVE Bill.

The first issue: since 1898, the U.S. has invaded Puerto Rican culture, the course of our history. It is imperative that our voice for self-determina-

tion be heard and respected. After more than 100 years of U.S. colonization, self-determination is a demand. The leaflet called upon all Latino delegates to support Puerto Rican initiatives for complete self-determination. Second, off the coast of Puerto Rico, Vieques suffers from shocking illness and death rates caused by heavy metals and chemicals deposited in the land. For more than 60 years, US military bombarded Vieques for military testing. Even after the U.S. military left, the after-effects of such detrimental contaminants must be compensated. Third, the leaflet supported Congressman Gutierrez's SOLVE Bill, which calls for the legalization of all undocumented

immigrants. Without a doubt this nation was built in large part by the hard labor of undocumented immigrants. To use immigrants as scapegoats for social problems is to deny they are pillars of this country.

Twenty thousand leaflets went through hotels, during brunches, meetings, and at the parties, finding its way to positive change in the Puerto Rican/Latino community. As soon as media coverage of the leaflet's contents went public, antagonized sectors of the Democratic Party began to interfere with our aspirations for justice and democracy. In Puerto Rico, mainstream media took notice as well, such as the August 1 San Juan Star report on the DNC. "The flyers were flying all over the Fleet Center from the National Boricua Human Rights Network and the United Latin Families Campaign." News coverage on the island was also found in El Nuevo Dia. History began unfolding. The youth valued this event not only for its historical meaning, but as a learning experience. One youth in particular, Jessica Hernandez, 17, says, "If they ask me to go again, I wouldn't think twice". This enthusiasm for the Puerto Rican/Latino agenda becomes the driving force for historically significant change. Alejandro Molina said, "The Network went to Boston and, along with its friends and allies, changed the course of how the Kerry campaign relates to Latinos".

The leaflet called for the Democratic Party and Presidential candidate John Kerry to take into account the importance of 38 million Latino U.S. citizens. Because Puerto Ricans are the only Latinos with automatic citizenship, we have the responsibility to represent those without the right to vote. In the swing states, therefore, our vote is a decisive factor in the upcoming elections. History is made and recognized when, in solidarity, we demand the rights that others have been denied.

Learn more about the National Boricua Human Rights Network, visit

WWW.BORICUAHUMANRIGHTS.ORG.



Jessica Hernandez passing out flyers

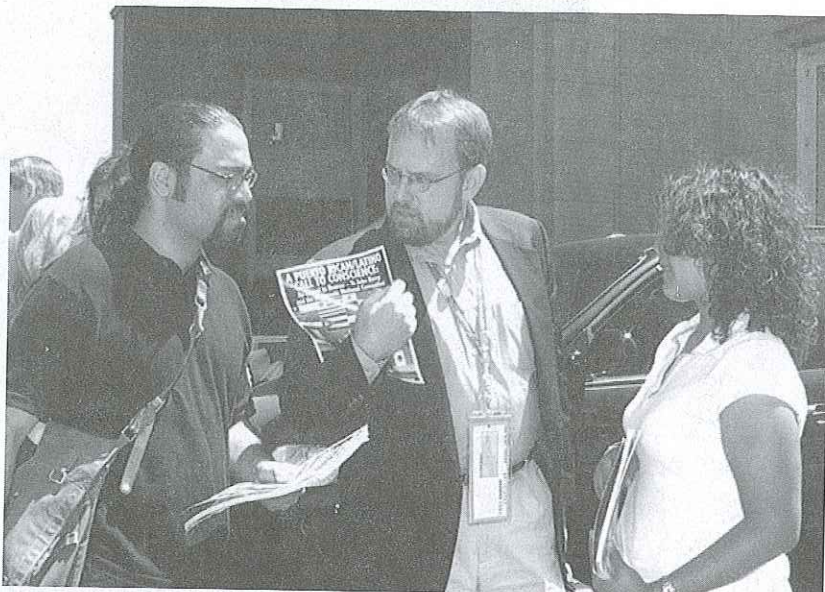


Batey youth taking a break for a photo

DNC photos taken by Samuel Reyes

Statehooders Face Setback at DNC

Michael Rodríguez Muñiz



Miguel Morales from National Boricua Human Rights working the DNC

No stranger to scandal, the Puerto Rican Statehood Party, also known as the New Progressive Party (PNP in Spanish), has recently met a major setback in the battle over Puerto Rico. The setback, surprisingly so, came via a highly-motivated Puerto Rican/Mexican contingent from Chicago and a number of delegates “inside” the Democratic National Convention (DNC), who blitzed Boston with of all things, a humble flyer calling for support of three issues. The issues raised by the National Boricua Human Rights Network (NBHRN) included: supporting the legalization of undocumented immigrants, specifically, support for the SOLVE Act, justice for Vieques residents, and to the dismay of Statehood advocates, support for “Puerto Rican initiatives for Puerto Rican self-determination.”

Suddenly, the party was over. After over 10 years of strategic lobbying using public funds to wine and dine Democratic members of Congress, the Statehood Party has lost much of its VIP status. This is a heavy blow the PNP, indeed, considering its enormous investments in the Democratic Party. To be clear, these investments were used, in a sense, to purchase Democrat backed legislation that support statehood for Puerto Rico, like 1998’s defeated Young Bill.

The Young Bill’s ever persistent politics, endorsed by a large sector of the Democratic Party— thanks to the Statehood strategy in Washington DC— called for a congressionally-driven process to solve the status question of Puerto Rico. Essentially, under this legis-

lation, the United States Congress, not Puerto Rico, would determine the island’s future.

In clear opposition to the Statehood position, the National Boricua Human Rights Network’s flyer rightly declared, “The Puerto Rican People, not the US Congress nor the US President, should determine when and how [self-determination] can be exercised.” Statehood representatives were shocked to encounter a genuine vision of Puerto Rican self-determination at the DNC. They are no longer the only voices to be heard on the status of Puerto Rico. For too many years they had been crafting and spreading a distorted view of Puerto Rican self-determination.

But their strategy is more profound. Recently, chairman of the Democratic National Committee’s Hispanic Caucus, Alvaro Cifuentes, who is first and foremost a Statehood leader in DC, has been heard saying that race is not an issue in the United States. He is currently involved in drumming up Latino support for the Democratic Party throughout the US. Jonathan Tilove of the Newhouse News Service in Boston, quoted Cifuentes, “I don’t believe in a minority approach.” He went on to say, “I have never in my life felt discriminated against. I cannot head a Hispanic effort at the national level based on something my heart and mind do not believe in.”

Cifuentes' view demonstrates an appalling ignorance of the history of racism lived and suffered by Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and other Latinos in the US. His disturbing comments lead to one question. How is it that a Puerto Rican conservative from Puerto Rico becomes a powerful player in the Democratic Party, especially being that he is so terribly out of tune with the Latino reality in the United States? He is a living example of the statehood strategy at work— an offensive based on penetrating the Democratic Party, masquerading as progressive Latino leaders, all for the purpose of cultivating support for Puerto Rico to be the 51st state.

Notwithstanding their political clout, the annexationist strategy has one substantial weakness. They may have high-level support but are without an organized grassroots base within the United States. With all their focus on Washington DC and various national Latino civic organizations like LULAC, Statehooders forgot one important factor: the Puerto Rican community in the United States.

During the DNC, some Puerto Rican political commentators discussing the Puerto Rico status issue noted the discord between the Statehood agenda and the US Puerto Rican community. José Delgado, in a featured commentary in *El Nuevo Día*, Puerto Rico's largest periodical, wrote that just three months before the election, Kerry's advisors might have thought that he had done enough for his "statehood friends," so as to avoid confrontations with

Boricuas in the United States who might resent him putting pressure on the status issue." Unfortunately for Kerry and his advisors, they were wrong.

Puerto Ricans make up sizable, possibly election determining numbers, in the swing states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida and New Jersey. Without a doubt, Kerry's campaign must be aware of this demographically significant reality. The discourse triggered by the National Boricua leaflet blitz, which attracted an extraordinary amount of media coverage, called on Kerry to take a better position on the Latino community.

The Latin American flag laden flyer accentuated the discord between the Puerto Rican diaspora and the statehood agenda, while simultaneously clarifying political tensions inside the Democratic Party with regards to Puerto Rico. A simple survey of media coverage of the DNC would reveal two divergent positions— that of statehood supporter New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and supporter of genuine Puerto Rican self-determination Congressman Bob Menendez. In very real terms, the question of Puerto Rico within Congress is again a debate, gone is the PNP stranglehold on Washington DC.

Now, as a result of the distribution of over 25,000 flyers, both the Democratic Party and the PNP know that members of the Puerto Rican community, and by extension the broader, progressive Latino community believe in Puerto Rican self-determination.

A self-determination defined by Puerto Ricans, not defined by Congress or crafty Statehooders. A position, we can gladly say was publicly endorsed during the DNC by none other than Democratic Vice-presidential candidate, John Edwards. As of yet though, John Kerry has not publicly rescinded his support for congressionally-driven initiatives to solve the Puerto Rico status question.

In conclusion, the leafleting, in concert with the activity inside that altered the political climate regarding Latinos in general, and Puerto Ricans in specific. The rhetoric of the estadistas is drying up, as a true Latino voice emerges. A voice that does not accept the distortion and appropriation of concepts like self-determination, used to advance agendas antithetical to justice and human rights. Though individuals like Alvaro Cifuentes still command influential positions in the Democratic Party and dollars continue to be used to lobby for Puerto Rican statehood, National Boricua activists exposed a political pressure point. The strategic distribution of flyers calling for "Puerto Rican Unity: Towards a Latino Agenda," challenged Democrats to recognize who they have far to often taken for granted and ignored. A growing number of Puerto Ricans and Latinos intend to make history— at the DNC and anywhere else it must be made.

Lolita Lebrón

Lolita Lebrón (1919 -)

On March 1, 1954, Lolita Lebrón led three male members of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party into the U.S. House of Representatives. From the gallery above the Congressmen, they fired shots at the ceiling, unfurled the Puerto Rican flag, and shouted *Viva Puerto Rico Libre!* (Long Live Free Puerto Rico). No one was killed in the action. Lolita Lebrón was convicted and sentenced to fifty-six years of prison.

Lolita Lebrón was born in Lares, in the mountainous interior of Puerto Rico. In 1868 Puerto Ricans who sought independence from Spain launched their rebellion in Lares. The revolt failed, but the small town carried on the legacy of anti-colonial feeling.

In the 1940s Lebrón, like many other young Puerto Ricans, left the island looking for work. As a U.S. citizen (the U.S. had imposed citizenship on Puerto Ricans in 1917) she had no difficulty traveling to New York City. There she found low-paying work as a seamstress, as did many other Puerto Rican women. While in New York City her patriotic feelings and desire to establish an independent Puerto Rico blossomed. She grew to admire Pedro Albizu Campos, the leader of the pro-Independence Nationalist Party, and dedicated her life to ending U.S. colonial control of her country. (The U.S. acquired Puerto Rico in 1898, following the Spanish-American War.)

Several events convinced her that a dramatic action in support of Puerto Rican independence was necessary. In 1950 the Nationalist Party had staged an unsuccessful uprising in Puerto Rico, and the U.S. government imprisoned Albizu Campos as a result. In 1952 Puerto Rican governor Luis Muñoz Marín, working closely with the U.S. government, converted Puerto Rico into a U.S. commonwealth, a status that it retained in 2004. Also in 1952, in response to the formation of the Commonwealth and U.S. pressure, the U.N. Committee on Decolonization removed Puerto Rico from its list of colonies, declaring Puerto Rico's status to be an internal matter for the U.S. to decide. To call world attention to what she and the Nationalist Party considered Puerto Rico's ongoing colonial status, Lebrón organized the attack on the U.S. Congress.

Lebrón spent twenty-five years in U.S. federal prison in Alderson, West Virginia. During her time in jail she did not renounce her act or give up her demand that Puerto Rico be independent. She did become very religious and wrote a book of poetry, *Sandalo en la celda* (Sandalwood in the Cell). Considered a political prisoner by many around the world and in the U.S. who mobilized for her freedom, she was released from jail in 1979 when President Jimmy Carter granted her and her fellow Nationalist prisoners clemency.

She returned to Puerto Rico and continued her activism. In 2000 she joined hundreds of Puerto Ricans and North Americans to protest the U.S. Navy's use of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques as a testing ground for weapons. At age eighty she entered restricted land and was sentenced to two months jail for this act of civil disobedience. Lebrón refers to herself as a patriot, not a terrorist; she condemned the September 11, 2001, attacks against the U.S. and distinguished what she did from them saying that when she shot at the U.S. Congress she had no intention of killing anyone.

Margaret Power
Illinois Institute of Technology

References:

Lebrón, Lolita. *Sandalo en la celda*. Cataño, Puerto Rico: Editorial Betances, n/d.
Roig-Franzia, Manuel. "A Terrorist in the House," *The Washington Post Magazine*, 22 February 2004.

Visits Paseo Boricua



Lolita Lébron greeting the crowd during Fiesta Boricua

Lolita You May Cry Now

A Gift from A Mexican Poet

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the oppressed
Hungry for food, knowledge and hope*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the millions upon millions
Of the indigenous peoples of the Americas
Tears for those names, languages, customs and cultures
We will never know
Lost like the leaves that fall into the streams and rivers*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the African slaves that were
Chained, shackled, raped and whipped
Their backs dripping with red teardrops of their own*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for those who worked and toiled
Tears of sweet dripping into the soil they bled to cultivate
So others could prosper from the suffering of others*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the massacres, broken treaties, diseases,
Death and stolen land and nature*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the murdered Mexicans lynched, hung, dragged, cut, and shot
In the southwest of the united stated*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for those who worked the large sugar
and coffee plantations and never had a chance to taste either*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the cries of independence and freedom on September 16th 1810 Grito de Dolores
Tears for the Grito De Lares September 23rd 1868*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for Betances and Segundo Ruiz Belvis
And for all of those who fought ternary injustice and treachery*

*Lolita you may cry now
Tears for the prisoners of war in 1898
Tears for Albizu Campos in and out of prison for more then 25 years*

Tears for the radiation his body was exposed to like
 Children of Vieques crying contaminated tears for lost souls
 Tears for the POWs of 1954 and 1980
 For Rafael Cancel Miranda, Andres Figueroa Cordero,
 Irving Flores Rodriguez
 Tears for Alejandrina Torres, Carlos Alberto Torres,
 Oscar López Rivera and all the prisoners of war from the movement
 Tears for all those that gave us vision through the roughest storms
 Steady and calm they steered us clear
 Tears for Juan Antonio Corretjer, tears for Consuelo Lee Corretjer
 And tears for our beloved mystic José López
 The love for his people shown in the humblest of ways
 From the picking up of trash to the enormous vision he puts forth
 and tears for those that make up our community
 tears for those in this space the Batey Collective
 the people I call my comrades my closest and dearest friends
 the people that have helped me feel human once again
 tears for those who are the faces in the crowd at actions against
 the occupation of Palestine, and Iraq
 and tears for the people of Vieques voices unheard
 tears for the undocumented workers that toil in the belly of the beast
 with no rights with vocal chords that have been ripped out
 tears for Cuba, Venezuela, Brazil, and Chiapas,
 for they stand in the shadow of a giant
 and do not budge from what is just, right and equal
 and tears for you Lolita tears for your strength, endurance, and constant resistance

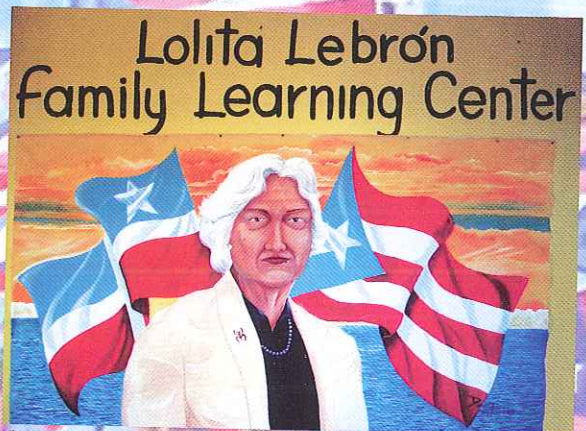


Yes Lolita you may cry now
 Tears for the time away from loved ones
 Tears for the times they tried to break you
 And you stood fearless
 Challenging the empire
 Standing like a mountain against a hurricane's attack
 Tears for the times you could not feel the warmth of the sun
 Or the warmth of a loving hand
 Tears for lost memories
 Tears to fill the ocean's depth
 Tears for all those times you wanted to cry but could not would not
 To show them that you were unbreakable

Lolita you may cry now
 Tears of sadness and tears of joy because our freedom will come

Lolita you may cry now
 And if you can not
 You are home
 And we will cry for you

Poem by Michael Reyes on behalf of the Batey Urbano Collective



11th Jornada Albizu in Chicago with Lolita Lebrón: a celebration of culture and struggle



Lolita Lébrón addressing youth at the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center

The National Boricua Human Rights Network and the Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center celebrated the 11th Jornada Albizu in Chicago with the National Heroine, Lolita Lebrón, who had arrived in Chicago with her husband, Dr. Sergio Irizarry, and her nephew. The Jornada began Saturday, September 4, with a dinner reception at the Cultural Center, located at 2739 W. Division. Lolita was warmly welcomed with signs of affection and love by a full room of community residents, youth, and a delegation of youth from Philadelphia. The Batey Urbano youth shared

their poetry with the National Heroine. The audience also included community activists, like independence leader Pablo Medina and the president of Chicago's Puerto Rican Parade Committee, Efrain Malave. After the delightful dinner, several bomba and plena groups from Chicago held a great show at La Casita de Don Pedro to give an energetic welcome to Lolita and her family. Almost 200 people participated and attended this great and memorable event.

The Jornada festivities continued for one week. On Sunday, September 5, Lolita participated in

two Jornada activities. First, was the unveiling of "Sea of Flags," a new mural on the corner of Division and Campbell. The second activity, was the 11th annual Fiesta Boricua. At 11:00 a.m., dozens of people congregated to participate in the unveiling of the new mural that now adorns Paseo Boricua. The painting of the mural was a joint effort by known community muralists, Gamaliel Ramirez and Star Padilla, along with the help from many youth from el Barrio. There, Lolita engaged the enthusiastic crowd with a brief, but inspiring speech. Later that same day, thousands of Boricuas received Lolita with acclaim during the famous singer-songwriter, Jose Nogueras's concert, waving their flags and exclaiming, "Viva Lolita!"

Then on the morning of Tuesday, September 7, at 11:00 a.m., Lolita participated in a brief visit with the toddlers from the Centro Infantil Consuelo Lee Corretjer. The toddlers delighted her with their songs, and Lolita responded with loving hugs and kisses. That afternoon, Lolita attended a dinner at the La Bruquena hosted by the Tañon family. The following day, Lolita had dinner with the leadership of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and National Boricua Human Rights Network, where she expressed her deep gratitude for the respect and compassion she experienced during her Chicago stay.

The next day, Wednesday, September 8, the Family Learning Center (FLC) was officially dedicated to Lolita. From that moment on, the center at 2636 W. Division will be known as the Lolita Lebrón Family Learning Center. Visibly moved, Lolita related with the young mothers and their children. Besides the renaming of the FLC, Philadelphia native Danny Torres' magnificent mural of Lolita herself was unveiled. Torres flew all the way from Philadelphia to create an amazing piece that now adorns the wall of the reception area of the FLC.

Two other events were also organized in her

honor. The first was a dinner with various Puerto Rican activists and their allies, like Mexican Emma Lozano, Rev. Slim Coleman, Dr. Steve Whitman, Lic. Melinda Power, Professor Margaret Power, and Social Worker Nancy Kurshan among others. The other event organized in honor of Lolita was a poetry night at Café Teatro Batey Urbano where the youth shared their poetry and Lolita read from her collection "*Grito Primoroso*." It was an unforgettable event. The young poet, Michael Reyes read his new poem, "Lolita, You may Cry Now," which rightly moved the audience as well.

The Jornada officially ended Thursday, September 9 with the unveiling of the restored mural, "Unidos Para Triunfar" on the corner of Division and Hoyne. There, muralist John Weber and Lolita had an emotional meeting when she learned his uncle was Abraham Unger, the lawyer who had stood out in the defense of Puerto Rican Nationalists during the 40's & 50's in New York. The family of Orlando Quintana, the young Boricua organizer who been assigned to the mural before the police brutally murdered him in the early 70's, also attended the ceremony. Young painter Josue Pellot and long-time ally Michael Deutch, the lawyer who represented Puerto Rican political prisoners since the nationalist era, were also present. Lolita spoke to those gathered, reminding them that the political work and ethics that form Chicago's Puerto Rican community definitely live at the height of Albizu inspired ideals.

Undoubtedly, the 11th Jornada in Chicago with the participation of National Heroine Lolita Lebrón was an unprecedented historical moment for the Puerto Rican community. With her magnetism and her charisma, Lolita touched the hearts of everyone during an unforgettable and monumental week in our community.

Historic Moments with Lolita

Jornada Albizu en Chicago

As she entered the Mariano Del Valle Cafeteria of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, everyone rose to their feet fervently clapping as the national heroine of our beloved island entered the room. As she entered, Lolita Lebrón, leader of the 1954 attack on the U.S. Congress, 25-year political prisoner, timeless figure of Puerto Rican resistance—simply smiled, she was home.

Her aura, mystique radiated as she embraced several generations of displaced Puerto Ricans. In her characteristic humility, Lolita Lebrón thanked the audience for their presence and seemed slightly astonished by the energetic welcome. Throughout the night of memory, Lolita spoke about the challenges facing Puerto Rico, reminding us about the quest for freedom against colonialism. Eyes filled with tears, as she passionately described the pain and suffering of the Puerto Rican people. But she also spoke of hope, hope that she saw in the tearful eyes before her. Lolita commended the Puerto Rican community of

Chicago for continuing to be *Boricua*, of never forgetting our *patria*.

For many present, this encounter with Lolita was beyond extraordinary, as if they had come face to face with a maker of history... and surely they had. But this was only the beginning.

Lolita Lebrón had been invited to partake in the Puerto Rican Cultural Center's "*La Jornada Albizu en Chicago*," an annual weeklong cultural-historical celebration in Paseo Boricua. During this historic *Jornada*, Lolita and members of our community shared, discussed, cried, and celebrated who it is we are and what we must struggle must. Although always a special and memorable experience, the *Jornada* with Lolita was like seeing a comet, a once in a lifetime encounter.



Lolita greeting Philadelphia youth



Lolita & José López, at La Casita de Don Pedro

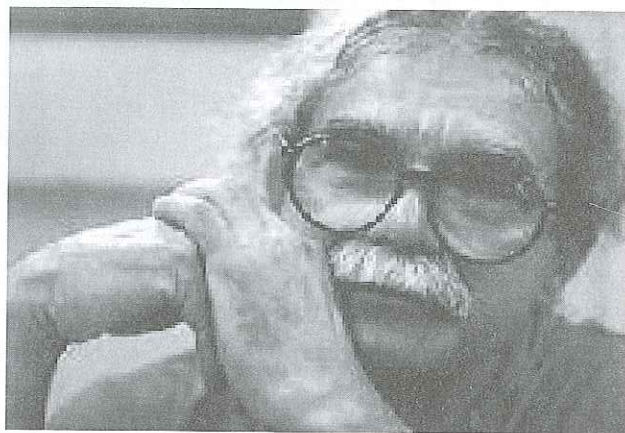
Clarissa Visits Oscar

June 3, 2004

Clarisa called me, excited, "I'm going to visit mi papá" but somewhat frantic, "but I don't remember the dress code. Can I wear my new Gap dress? It has sleeves, but not long sleeves. It's not too short." I promised to call the prison to learn the latest rules, and promptly called Clarisa back, admonishing that the rules could very well be changed or applied differently by the time of her visit the following week. But that, yes, the Gap dress sounded like it would pass muster; no, her sandals would not do no open-toed shoes allowed. But that's what we wear in Puerto Rico! The only other shoes I have are my boots and my tennis shoes. What could I wear with my boots?

So many things on her mind that she can barely think about the time she will actually spend with her father. Not just whether her clothes will meet the ever-changing rules. How to get from Chicago to Terre Haute, Indiana, three and a half hours away? Will one of the compañer@s from Chicago be available to take her? Will she have to stay in a motel? Where will the money come from? Will the long waiting line move fast enough to get her into the visiting room before count, when all movement stops, for if not, she would lose two precious hours of visiting. And will she pass the infamous electronic drug detection device known as the ion scan, for if this most fallible machine gives a false positive, her long, expensive trip will be for naught she will be turned away from the prison, ordered off prison property. And given the three strikes and you're out rule (three positives and you are forever banned from visiting!), the tension is great, for she already has one strike.

In August of 1998, Oscar was transferred from USP Marion to USP Terre Haute, where, for the first time in twelve years, he would enjoy the privilege of contact visits. Clarisa arrived on September 11 to share three days of visits. On September 12, 1998, which was to have been the second visit, the ion scan test showed positive, although she had used no controlled substances, nor had she been in contact with any such



Oscar López Rivera

substances², which she told to the personnel present at the time. They refused to re-test her³, and turned her away, saying the rule provided that she must wait 48 hours before attempting to visit again. By then she would be on a plane on her way back to Puerto Rico.

Devastated at being denied the opportunity to see her father, she was also devastated to be accused of being in contact with a controlled substance, of being criminalized, when she has done nothing except seek to maintain a relationship with her father, in spite of all the many, many obstacles the Bureau of Prisons has placed in her path.

Such heartless application of what was then a pilot project was only part of the Bureau's ongoing efforts to punish Oscar for his political associations and beliefs, and to attempt to break him through isolation and lack of meaningful human interaction, cruelly using his family in the process. As recently as Easter of 2004, his eleven-year-old granddaughter Karina was turned away, after allegedly testing positive, proof that the use of such a device on visitors functions as a show of force to discourage visits rather than as a legitimate instrument of penology, in spite the Bureau's express policy of encouraging family and community ties. No

continues on next page

such device was ever used before 1998; staff are ever vigilant, monitoring visits in person and on numerous video cameras; and, as statistics demonstrate, visitors are not the main source of contraband in any event.

What in 1998 was a pilot project has now been implemented as a permanent fixture, even though visitors have been turned away in droves after false positives, even though a 2001 U.S. Department of Justice Report cautioned on the use of the technology⁴, even though the reliability of this equipment for use with prison visitors has been questioned throughout the United States. Because of the unreliability of the technology, the Missouri legislature placed a permanent moratorium on its use.⁵ The same machinery has been the subject of litigation on behalf of prison visitors in Massachusetts⁶ and New York⁷, and faced challenges in Colorado, California, and Louisiana. Its use was limited in Iowa and Pennsylvania as well. Indeed, the state of Massachusetts stopped using the equipment.

And so Clarisa took every possible precaution. She stored her clothing in zip lock bags; Karina's were fresh from the dry cleaners. She spread sheets on the seats of the car she rented. They washed their hands five times with an anti-bacterial soap product. Still, Clarisa almost didn't clear the ion scan. On her first attempt, which could easily have been her only chance—the machine came up with a false positive. He asked if she had stayed in a motel or rented a car, noting that in his experience in testing visitors, both increase the likelihood of a false positive. She had done both. Luckily that day, the officer allowed a second try, and she tested negative.

Thus, Clarisa and Karina cleared the ion scan and managed to visit Oscar, though their visit was tainted by the fact that Laura Ruth Johnson, the Chicago community activist who accompanied them, did not share their luck, but rather, tested falsely positive and was turned away. After the visit, Laura Ruth expressed that, "although it was a frustrating experience, I'd never let it keep me from visiting. I had a premonition that it was going to be this visit and that my number was up. It was bound to happen eventually as I had a perfect track record. I had just picked up some pants from the drycleaner and think that may have done it as they use a lot of related chemicals. The guard took a photo of me and ordered me to leave. I'm just glad that Clarissa and Karina were able to visit."

Not having seen her father for two years, Clarisa enjoyed

a wonderful visit. They took five photos, talked all day long, and tried to make up for so much lost time. Back home, exhausted from the journey, but charged with the energy of having enjoyed a day with her father, Clarisa returned to her daily routine, looking forward to Oscar's next call.

(Footnotes)

¹ A positive ion scan reading allegedly indicates only that the person has had contact with illegal drugs or explosives; it does not indicate that the person has any illegal item on their person or in their possession. The person is thus denied permission to visit with the potential for being permanently banned, even though prison staff has no reasonable grounds to believe the person is attempting to introduce contraband into the prison.

² False positives can be triggered by medicines, perfumes and even chlorine baby wipes. New York Civil Liberties Union Press Release, Ion Scanner Abuse Cited by NYCLU, April 6, 2004.

³ Visitors who test positive in New York, for example, are tested a second time. Joel Stashenko, Associated Press, Civil Liberties Union says scanners deterring prison visits, *Newsday*, April 7, 2004, <http://www.newsday.com/news/local/wire/ny-bc-ny-contrabandscanner0407apr07,0,55472.story>.

⁴ New York Civil Liberties Union Press Release, Ion Scanner Abuse Cited by NYCLU, April 6, 2004.

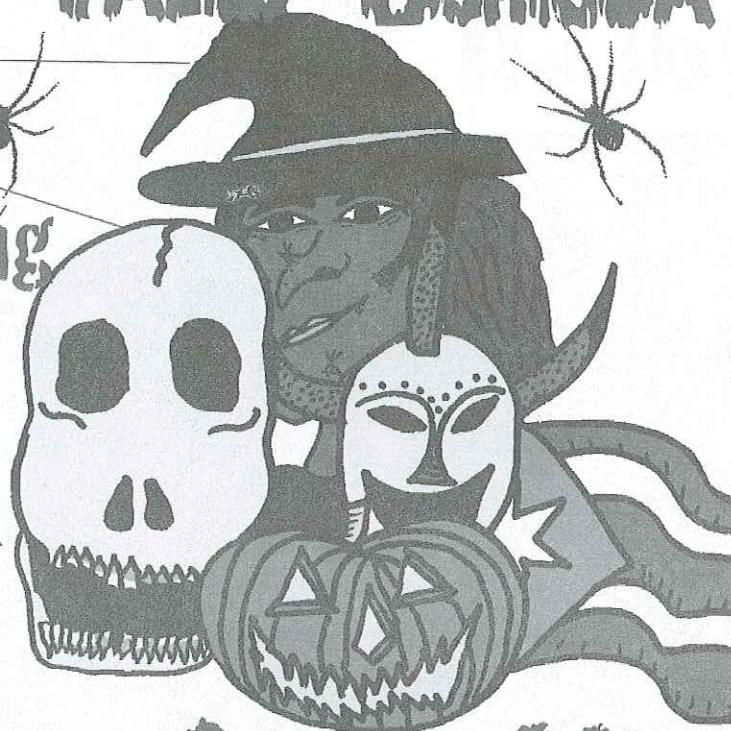
⁵ Kristen Lombardi, False alarm: A new machine designed to ferret out drug smugglers among prison visitors is targeting grandmothers, substance-abuse counselors, and other innocent bystander, *Boston Phoenix*, July 26 - August 2, 2001, http://www.bostonphoenix.com/boston/news_features/top/features/documents/01730790.htm.

⁶ *Bouchard v. Massachusetts Commissioner of Corrections Michael Maloney* (Superior Court, Suffolk) (noting that studies reveal that up to 97% of all currency circulating within the United States is tainted with sufficient cocaine so as to be easily detected by the ion scan).

⁷ *Giovanniello v. New York Commissioner of Corrections Glenn Goord* (W.D.N.Y. 2004).

HAUNTED PASO BORICUA

Candy
Face Painting
Games
Culture



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29

Providing a safe cultural space on Halloween Weekend for the families and the children of our community

Event Map



1. Face Painting
2. Altars
3. Games
4. Haunted Theater
5. Spiders Den
6. Bomba Cemetery
7. Dracula Lair
8. Witches Nest

Visit these participating businesses:

YGO Salon, G&T Auto, People's Choice Mortgage, Papa's Cache Sabroso Restaurant, Jayuya Barber Shop, Puerto Rican Federal Affairs Administration, La Casita de Don Pedro, Adalberto Methodist Church, Youth Service Project, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School, Café Colao, Vida/SIDA, Tamayo Sports, West Town Law Office, Best Sub, Joe's Hardware, Tropical Hair, Boca Ad Agency, Division Oral Surgery, Marin and Cesar's Jewelry, Lily's Record Shop, Sigma Surgical, Representative Cynthia C. Soto's Office, Care First Pregnancy Center, San Pablo Medical Center, Botanica Victoria, Latina Soul, La Municipal, Humboldt Park Performing Arts, Family Learning Center.

Sponsored By:

Division Street Business Development Association
Near Northwest Neighborhood Network YAT
Batey Urbano
Puerto Rican Cultural Center
Alderman Billy Ocasio

March for Legalization

Yvonne Nieves



At ten o'clock on Saturday morning, September 25, 2004, community residents gathered at Adalberto United Methodist Church on Paseo Boricua to march in support of legalizing all undocumented people here in the United States and demanding the clean up of Vieques.

As the procession took off from the church and moved east toward downtown, a wave of colorful visuals filled the sky, including Mexican and Puerto Rican

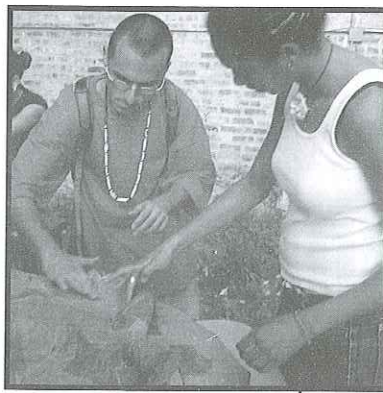
flags, signs with messages supporting legalization, and giant faces built by the youth of the Puerto Rican and Mexican community. Phrases like, "Boricua/Mexicano, luchando mano a mano," and "Queremos amnistia pa' tu tia y la mia," were among the charged chants that the group recited as onlookers passed by.

The campaign supporting undocumented immigrants and the rights derived from a long lasting solidar-

ity between the Mexican and Puerto Rican community. Puerto Ricans, the only group of Latinos that have natural U.S. citizenship due to the colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico, understand the importance of ensuring that the undocumented have the human rights that everyone else deserves. In addition, the Mexican community and other Latinos have supported the clean up of Vieques, which is an issue very close to the heart of Puerto Ricans. These two

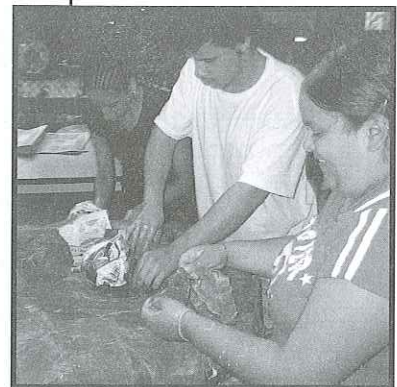
groups firmly walked through the streets that once made up their neighborhood, but due to gentrification, those who quickly do away with any type of meaningful culture now occupy it. The march continued intensely and paused for a brief rally at Union Park. There, the two groups met up with those from the Korean, Cambodian, and Palestinian communities to listen to other community leaders discuss the prevalent issues of immigration policy, legalization, and rights for the undocumented. From Union Park, these freedom fighters marched to Federal Plaza for a much larger rally. Congressman Luis Gutierrez spoke to this extended community about the importance of supporting legalization. Elvira Arrellano, spokesperson for La Familia Latina Unida and Centro Sin Fronteras, shed light on her experience as an undocumented immigrant living in the empire.

The large group was comprised of members from La Familia Latina Unida, Pueblo Sin Fronteras, Adalberto United Methodist Church, Juan Antonio Corretjer Puerto Rican Cultural Center, young people from Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School, the Lolita Lebrón Family Learning Center, Café Teatro Batey Urbano, the NNNN Youth Action Team, Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, Latina/o university students, and many other individuals who came out to supported these issues. With flags in hand and solidarity in our actions, we continue to build a Latino agenda to guarantee our human rights are respected.



Albizu Campos HS
putting in work

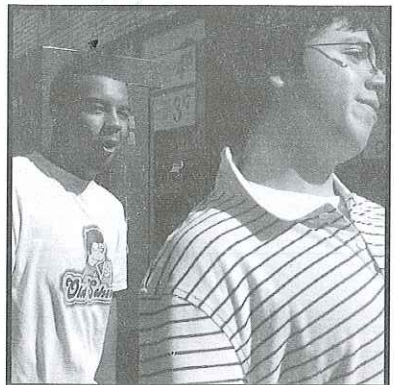
UPRS making
puppets for the
march



Paint applied
by the NNNN
Youth Action Team



Northeastern
students reppin
in the march



Lets march



Emma Lozano
demanding
legalization



Voting for the Voiceless: Familia Latina Unida

The latest predictions assert that by the end of this century there will be over 100 million Latinos in the United States. Without a doubt this is the most significant demographic shift in the past few hundred years. The impact of this largely Spanish speaking, rapidly growing, and culturally self-aware population must be analyzed along with the dramatic decrease in the birth rate of white America. The face of the United States will be much browner tomorrow than it is today.



Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Dominicans, Cubans, Central and South Americans in the US are entering a unique phase of history. In Chicago, our growing Puerto Rican and Mexican unity is based on building a grassroots Latino agenda. This agenda builds bridges locally, connects Latino communities nationally, and ultimately flexes our profound political, economic, and social muscle.

The latest effort by Centro Sin Fronteras and Puerto Rican Cultural Center to build a Latino Agenda is the "Familia Latina Unida" campaign. Familia Latina Unida believes that as a community we must increase our voter turnout. We must

go out to vote, but that is just the beginning. The Latino community must use its voting power more strategically. For example, in several key swing states Latinos can greatly affect the upcoming presidential election. Without having to exaggerate a point, Latinos can very well determine who will prevail on November 2.

Familia Latina Unida advocates that our vote should only *support* candidates who *support* the



burning issues of the Latino community. Currently, the two issues that have united the Latino community are: 1) The legalization of 11 million undocumented immigrants; 2) The clean-up of Vieques and reparations for the Viequenses. Both of these populations continue to suffer terrible injustice and do not have the right to vote. For that reason, on November 2 and on each election that follows, we will vote for them. We will vote for the voiceless, struggle for our community, and build a Latino Agenda!

Photos taken by Samuel Reyes at recent "People's Assembly in Humboldt Park."

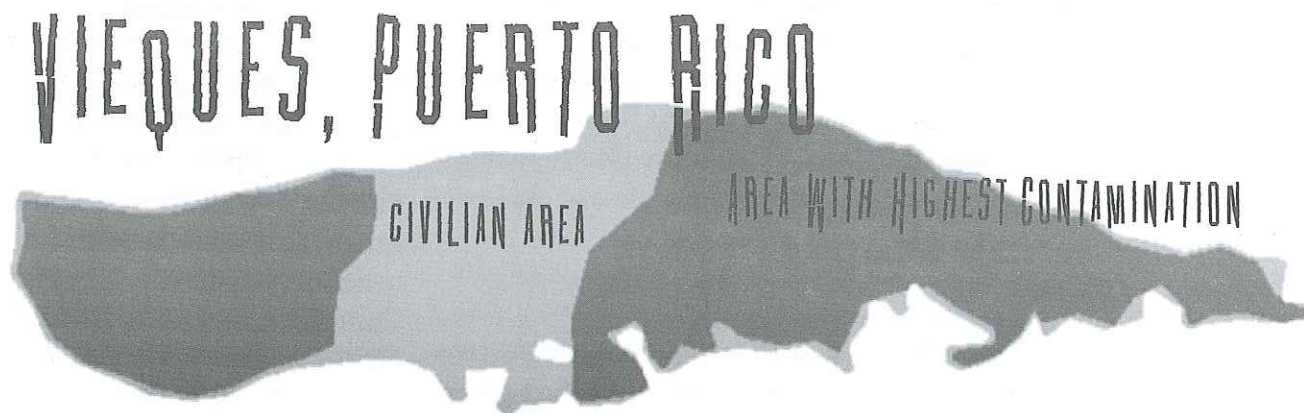
Howard Dean Attests to Vieques Contamination: Paradise Lost

Last June, Howard Dean visited Vieques and held a dialogue with cancer patients, fishermen, activists, doctors and veterans about the contamination of the island due to 60 years of military practices. In August, he issued a statement of his findings and attested to the deplorable conditions Viequenses undergo daily:

- Toxic substances from the bombing range migrate into civilian areas and the offshore environment.
- Gross disparities in cancer, hypertension, heart disease and diabetes exist between residents of Vieques and those who live in Puerto Rico.
- The crabs of Vieques are contaminated with toxic metals.
- Hair tests reveal that high levels of aluminum, arsenic, cadmium, lead and mercury are in the bodies of Viequenses.

Governor Dean poignantly closed his statement: "Vieques is a paradise; a beautiful, tranquil island. But, 60 years of Navy bombing has left an environmental catastrophe behind [we need to start] addressing the health crisis and clean up in Vieques."

Editor's Note: QOS has chosen to include this brief article to call attention to need to support the immediate clean-up of Vieques. Prior the US Navy's departure from Vieques in May 2003, Que Ondee Sola regularly published articles and commentaries demanding peace in Vieques. Today, we continue to demand justice for the people of Vieques. There will be no justice on "la isla nena" until the land is cleaned-up, the health needs of Viequenses are dealt with, and people of Vieques have the ability to determine what happens to their island.



A Letter to George W. Bush

Adolfo Perez Esquivel
Nobel Peace Prize Winner

Mr. George W. Bush,
President of the United States
of North America:

I don't know if you will read this letter, not because it will not reach you, but because you are incapable of reading it. Your heart is so hardened by hatred and fear, that you have neither the capacity nor the courage to open your mind and your spirit to compassion. In spite of that, however, I cannot keep from sending it to you, because if you do not read it, I am sure it will be read by many men and women, those who are asking you to stop the massacre of the people of Iraq.

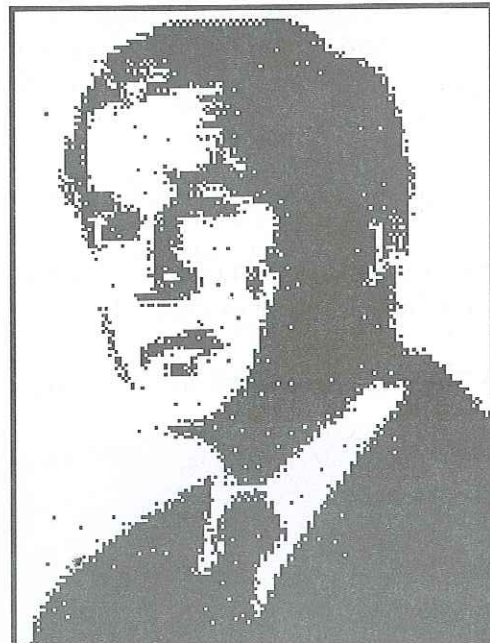
When you decided to invade Iraq, in spite of the opposition of the people of the world, you did not listen to their cries, "No to War, Yes to Peace;" you closed your ears and your heart when the United Nations, the Churches and humanitarian and human rights organizations demanded that the rule of law and respect of the people had to prevail. You were not interested in hearing that.

I asked you in another letter do not defy God, do not build the

Tower of Babel of pitilessness and hate; do not let yourself be ruled by your ambitions of power to impose your political, economic and military interests. I asked you to think, because you reap what you sow. Regrettably, you do not know how to honor life; you have profoundly damaged humanity as a whole and your own North American people.

You will win wars with your imperial army and with that of your allies; you will show the power of your weapons and the high technology of death; but none of that justifies you. The greatest of your defeats is that you have lost the respect of the people of the world, and, for all the crimes you are committing, you have earned rejection in the conscience of humanity. In this flight from decency you are joined by your deadly allies: Tony Blair, Jose Maria Aznar and Australia.

You hide the true motives of the invasion of Iraq and seek to justify the massacres to seize that country's oil resources and



dominate the Middle East to impose your plans of world hegemony and of globalized dictatorship. You have turned the United States into a terrorist State. Did you need to massacre the people of Iraq, did you have to kill children and women to oust a dictator who used to be your allied?

We need to remember, not to live in the past; but because it must illuminate our present. The long North American history of invasions confirms it: Vietnam, Cambodia, Yugoslavia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Cuba, and the

The many faces of old george w



**psychic
george**



**surfer
george**



**curious
george**

military dictatorships the United States imposed; the present militarization of and the military bases all over Latin America and in other parts of the world. You can dominate militarily; but you will never be able to convince anyone.

The people are not taken in by the campaigns of lies and disinformation the accomplice mass media of communications uses as psychological tools, showing North American and British soldiers in charitable acts, giving away candy to Iraqi children, after having massacred their families and bombarded the population. How will you try to justify your crimes, those you call, "collateral damages"? How will you explain to the world that you want to destroy the United Nations and refuse to acknowledge international law, seeking to apply your policies of domination, without concern for human suffering or for the destruction of other countries, applying State terrorism?

How to justify the unjustifiable? Can you sleep without being punished by your conscience? Your army bombs

cities and civilian populations with thousands of missiles; it fires against the people yellow "cluster bombs" and boxes of food also color yellow; aberrant methods used in Vietnam, Cambodia and in the Persian Gulf War. Your "medicines of death" are bombs and food. Your generals say that they don't count corpses; they only count the bombs that produce the corpses.

Perversion has no boundaries: you say to pray to God and believe you are predestined for humanity. Hitler thought the same when he unleashed his madness wanting to dominate the world. The God of Life will call you into account for your crimes. You are guilty of crimes against humanity and will be judged for so many murders and suffering you inflict against the people of Iraq and other peoples of the world.

The world sees with horror that you are parceling up and giving away that which is not yours, that the vultures that surround you are ready to throw themselves over the carcasses and the blood of the Iraqi people, to make lucrative business with

their oil. They talk of the "reconstruction of Iraq," colonized and subjected to the interests of the United States, and think of the profits they will make.

You talk of God. But you detest God. You talk of freedom and you destroy freedom. You talk of democracy and dignity, and you do not hesitate in sacrificing them in the altar of the god Molok, your god of destruction and death. You talk of human rights and you violate them systematically.

The United Nations are a nuisance to your interests. Or they subordinate themselves to your will, or you destroy them. You want to create a tribunal to judge your ex ally, Saddam Hussein, because he is no longer useful to you; but you ignore the International Criminal Court to judge crimes against humanity. You want to get impunity for the crimes of your soldiers and want your own impunity. Do not defy God and the peoples of the world. Empires fall, no matter how powerful they are.

continues on next page

You could have planted Peace and Solidarity; but you didn't do it. You could have generated programs for the life and development of the people, and you didn't do it. You elected to follow the worst of the paths. Who will be your next victims?

I cannot give you my greetings of Peace and Good Will, because you do not believe in Peace and you do not practice the Good. But I can tell you to repent from your crimes and start to mend the

Evil that you are doing.

From:
El Siglo Digital
Nº 216 - Year 2003

A Revised Free Translation done at
REFUGIO DEL RIO GRANDE, Texas

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I BELIEVE DEMOLISHING HUSSEIN'S MILITARY POWER AND LIBERATING IRAQ WOULD BE A CAKEWALK."



--DEFENSE POLICY BOARD MEMBER KEN ADELMAN, 2/13/02.

"SIMPLY STATED, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN NOW HAS WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION."



--VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY, 8/26/02.

"WE DO KNOW THAT (SADDAM) IS ACTIVELY PURSUING A NUCLEAR WEAPON."



--NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR CONDOLEEZZA RICE, 9/10/02.

"IT IS NOT KNOWABLE HOW LONG THAT CONFLICT WOULD LAST. IT COULD LAST, YOU KNOW, SIX DAYS, SIX WEEKS, I DOUBT SIX MONTHS."



--SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD, 2/7/03

"MY BELIEF IS WE WILL, IN FACT, BE GREETED AS LIBERATORS."



--CHENEY, 3/16/03.

"WE'RE DEALING WITH A COUNTRY THAT CAN REALLY FINANCE ITS OWN RECONSTRUCTION, AND RELATIVELY SOON."



--DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE PAUL WOLFOWITZ, 3/27/03.

"WE KNOW WHERE (THE WEAPONS) ARE. THEY'RE IN THE AREA AROUND TIKRIT AND BAGHDAD AND EAST, WEST, NORTH AND SOUTH SOMEWHAT."



--RUMSFELD, 3/30/03.

"IRAQ WILL NOT REQUIRE SUSTAINED AID."



O.M.B. DIRECTOR MITCH DANIELS, 3/28/03.

"MAJOR COMBAT OPERATIONS HAVE ENDED."



--PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH, 5/1/03.

"A YEAR FROM NOW I'D BE SURPRISED IF THERE'S NOT SOME GRAND SQUARE IN BAGHDAD THAT IS NAMED AFTER PRESIDENT BUSH."



--FORMER PENTAGON ADVISOR RICHARD PERLE, 9/22/03.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION: A TRACK RECORD THAT CAN'T BE DENIED

I'M GEORGE W. BUSH AND I DID NOT APPROVE THIS MESSAGE!



TOM TOMORROW © 2004... www.thismodernworld.com

A Lares, Tierra Santa, hay que entrar de rodillas

To Lares, Holy Land, we must enter on our knees.

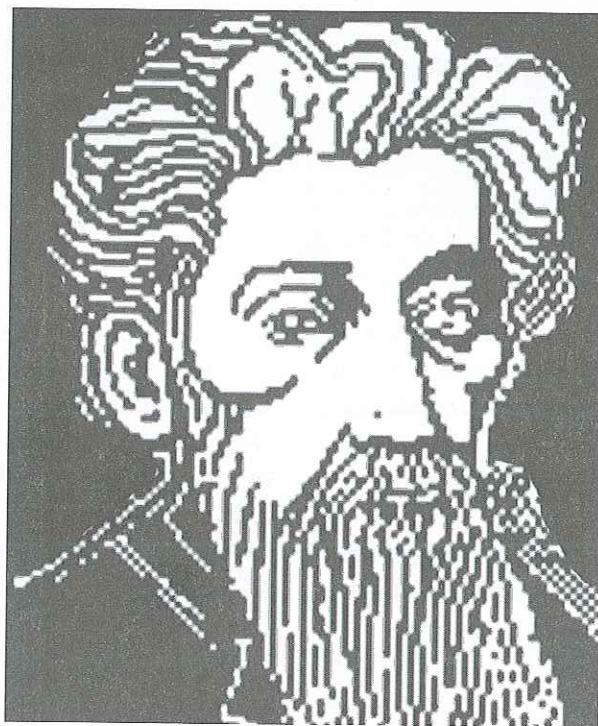
- Don Pedro Albizu Campos

For Puerto Ricans, the town of Lares symbolizes the struggle for liberty and national identity. On September 23 of 1868, after loosing hopes of acquiring a change in the political situation of the island through peaceful means, a group of Patriots, acting under the leadership of **Don Ramón Emeterio Betances**, took up arms against the Spanish colonial government. Their goal was to rescue our national sovereignty and to proclaim the independence of Puerto Rico.

In the mountains of the towns of Lares and San Sebastian, the cry of "Patria y Libertad" was heard. This glorious historical event is known as "El Grito de Lares", for it was in that town that the Republic of Puerto Rico was declared after the up-rising.

Sometime at the end of May or the beginning of June of 1868, Don Manuel Rojas presented to the Revolutionary Committee

Centro Bravo in Lares the original design of a flag conceived by Betances himself. This flag was formed by a white Latin cross in the center, two blue squares situated above the arms



of the cross, two red squares situated below, and a lone five-pointed star (in light yellow or white) situated in the upper left square. This design served as the model for the first Puerto Rican flag, sewn by Doña Mariana Bracetti. The cry of "¡Viva Puerto Rico Libre!" and

this flag became the symbols of the revolution and of the first expression of national identity in Puerto Rico.

During the Grito de Lares, two other flags were used, a red flag, and a white flag with the inscription "Libertad o Muerte, Año de 1868" (Liberty or Death, Year 1868).

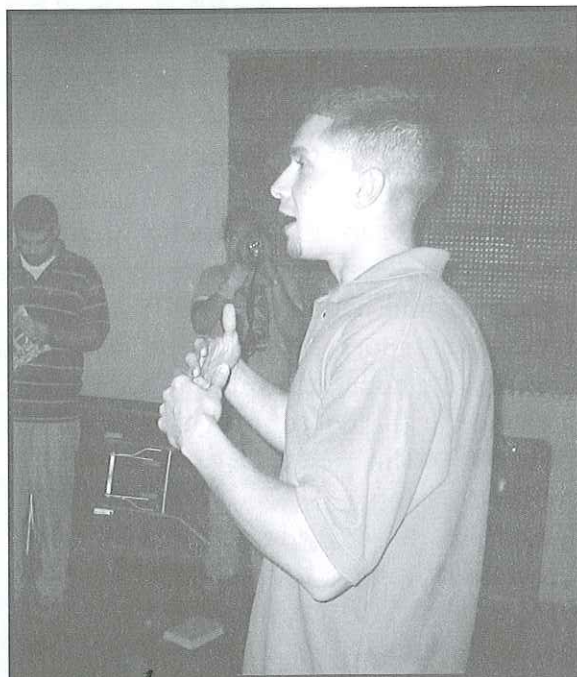
It was the flag with the white cross (the Lares flag) the one which became the symbol of the Puerto Rican revolutionary movement until the end of the 19th century. This flag was an adaptation of the flag of the Dominican Republic, the first Spanish speaking country in the Antilles to gain its independence from Spain. Dr. Ramón Emeterio Betances' family on his father's side was of Dominican descent. The flag symbolizes the bond of the Puerto Rican revolutionary movement with the Dominican struggle for independence.

Noche de Gritos-

a learning event for young and old



Cindy Ibarra speaking about the Grito de Dolores



Matt Rodriguez reading a poem

In a wonderful collaboration-the first of many- the Café Batey Teatro Urbano and the National Boricua Human Rights Network-co-sponsored the celebration of "El Grito de Lares" on Wednesday, September 23. "El Grito de Lares" was the insurrection that announced the birth of the Puerto Rican nation in 1868. Over 60 mostly young people jammed their way into the Batey Urbano for an evening of prose, education and poetry. The Network speakers, Marisol Morales and Miguel Morales, presented a short Powerpoint history of the Grito de Lares to the present that included examples of repression against Puerto Rican independentistas, including the Puerto Rican Nationalists- Irving Flores, Andrés Figueroa Cordero, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Oscar Collazo and Lolita Lebrón - and answered questions about the remaining Puerto Rican Political Prisoners - **Carlos Alberto Torres** and **Oscar López Rivera**. Write to the prisoners - their address is available at the Network site.

After the presentation, Matt Rodriguez and co-mc Cassandra Figueroa from the Batey introduced Cynthia Ibarra, who spoke about the Grito de Dolores, the uprising for Mexican independence-the first social revolution of the 20th Century. Cynthia spoke about the diverse coalition of political and social forces that made up different currents of the Mexican Revolution. The questions that followed were lively and then the first of several poets took the stage. Erika Abad, David Thibault-Rodríguez, and Judy Diaz, among others, read powerful poems. The Network also passed out the latest issue of it's newsletter "La Red" (the Network) as well as bookmarks of Carlos Alberto and Oscar with a short biography and the prisoners' address printed on the back. Download the newsletter in pdf format and view the bookmark from www.boricuahumanrights.org.

Puerto Rican Parade Committee Referendum A Victory for Lies and Deceit But Not for Our Community

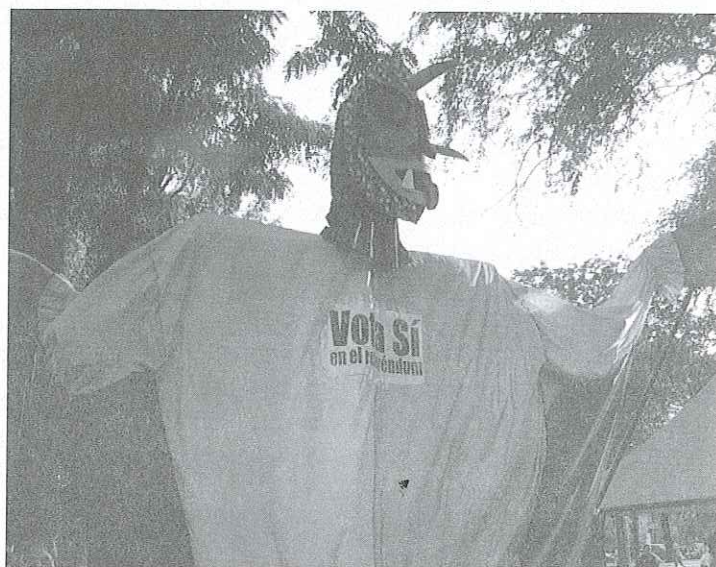
By Antonio Perez

In efforts to combat deception with truth, we feel compelled to respond to caustic falsehoods and dangerous rumors which are destroying rather than building up the Puerto Rican community.

Contrary to the statement of Leoncio Vásquez, executive director of the Spanish Action Committee of Chicago (SACC), published in the September 16th edition of Extra, the September 12th Puerto Rican Parade Committee Referendum was not a victory for democracy, but instead it was a victory for manufactured lies, coercion, and intimidation. He and his supporters have attempted to publicly paint a distorted picture of the events surrounding the referendum. But our community is much wiser and we know the truth.

In his facile declaration, he conveniently forgets to mention the slew of dirty tactics used by "No" supporters who supposedly wanted to "let freedom and democracy reign forever." Sensationalistic rhetoric aside, the reality is that the Puerto Rican community was denied the right to participate in a genuinely democratic process, i.e. a process free of disrespect, slander, character assassination, and even physical confrontation.

The historic referendum was to determine whether or not the Puerto Rican community was in favor of transforming the Parade committee into a non-for-profit organization, equipped with a Board of Directors responsible for selecting a President and ensuring accountability and fiscal



transparency. Mr. Vásquez could be counted amongst the 967 people who "resoundingly voted no" to the referendum, while 821 Puerto Ricans voted in favor of proposed changes. The resounding difference being just 140 votes.

The small margin of defeat for the "Yes" position is incredible considering the massive disinformation campaign carried out by the "No." Flyers were distributed far and wide depicting supporters of the "Si" position of being anti-democratic, opportunists, demagogues, and communists. One flyer stated, "If you believe you are just Puerto Rican vote No. If you believe you are Puerto Rican/American Vote Yes." Editorials written in community newspapers such as Chicago Ahora went as far as describing a vote for "Yes" as a vote in favor of the displacement of the Puerto Rican community from Humboldt

continued on next page

Park. This terribly false propaganda polarized our Puerto Rican community, exacerbating divisions we cannot afford in the face of rapidly spreading gentrification.

Many of our most committed leaders supported the proposed changes to the Parade Committee, including the standing president himself. Yet only some leaders and organizations were signaled out among the "Si." Those publicly slandered and attacked were Alderman Billy Ocasio and José López, Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center. In waging their dirty attacks, the "No" again conveniently forgot that Alderman Suarez and Senator Del Valle supported transforming the Parade Committee into a non-for-profit. Days before the referendum, the "No" escalated its dirty tactics, even destroying banners and signs, as well as attempting to physically intimidate "Si" supporters, including Professor José López. Be assured no one was intimidated.

Mr. Vázquez described the referendum as an "outstanding display of Democracy." Intimidation and lies? What a very confused and distorted definition of democracy. Where is the truth in his words? What about his attempted takeover of the Puerto Rican Parade Committee?

La Voz uncovered an interesting letter signed by Leonico Vázquez, as Executive Director of SACC, dated January 12, 2004. The letter, addressed to Puerto Rican Consortium members, discusses oddly enough, a plan to "restructure the process by which the President of the Puerto Rican Parade Committee is elected." Mr. Vázquez goes on to write, "This plan will call for the elimination of public elections to elect a President with one in which an Executive Committee, composed of representatives from long standing Puerto Rican organizations, would manage and elect a President to direct the Puerto Rican Parade Committee."

Oddly enough, his letter is exactly that of the

"Si" position, except there is no mention of a referendum. The idea of the referendum arises at a pivotal March 13 meeting at the Puerto Rican Parade Committee. At this meeting, Alderman Ocasio demands, with the support of various other elected officials, that a referendum be organized to allow the Puerto Rican community decided the Parade Committee's future. Ironically, the "No" would focus many of its attacks on Alderman Ocasio even though he was largely responsible for ensuring our community could participate. Infuriated by this demand on community participation, Mr. Vázquez realized his take over of the Parade Committee was prevented, and thus he stormed out of the meeting and commenced to help organize the "No" position.

Many good people supported the "No". We also know that many people were confused. In addition to it all, we also know some people were offered drugs and alcohol in exchange for votes. Lies were spread about important community leaders without reason or provocation. Sadly even respectable community newspapers became mouthpieces for this campaign of deception. Many Puerto Ricans came out to vote on both sides of the issues genuinely convinced that their vote would have a positive impact of the Parade Committee. Far too many people were misled. Our community deserves better. We are facing difficult times that call for unity and not division.

La Voz would not be surprised if Leoncio Vázquez and his associates will begin to turn their attacks towards us for proclaiming dirty tactics wrong. Our community is well aware of his dubious past and his relationship with members of Chicago's extremist Statehood Party. But to be clear— we write these words so truth and hope can take their rightful prevalence over rumors and lies.

Originally published in La Voz del Paseo Boricua.

11th Fiesta Boricua

Over 150,000 Puerto Ricans from around Chicago and across the U.S. attended the 11th annual Fiesta Boricua held on September 5th in our Puerto Rican passageway, Paseo Boricua. In between our beloved Puerto Rican flags was an extraordinary opportunity to celebrate our history and traditions through a showcase of Puerto Rican art, food, music, and dance.

There were a variety of performance styles this year including everything from bomba y plena, salsa, reggaeton, jibaro music to rapping, breaking, turntablism and poetry reading. Some of the performers were Mikey Perfecto, and Jose Nogueras. There was a little something for everyone.

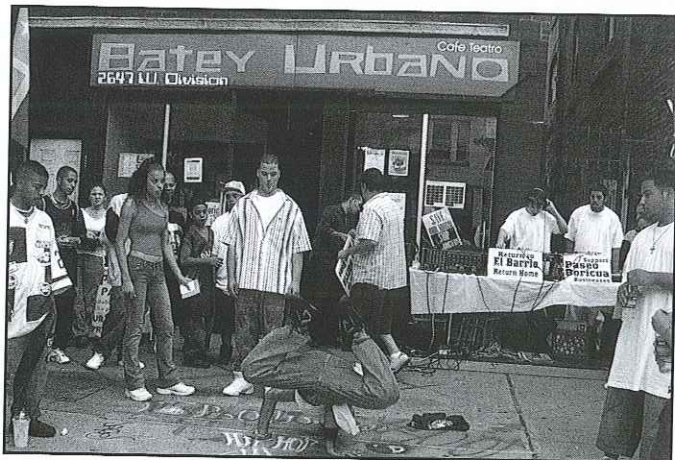
During Fiesta, a new mural on Campbell and Division called "Sea of Flags" was unveiled. This mural was dedicated to our special guest Lolita Lebrón. At the dedication and unveiling Lolita expressed her gratitude and satisfaction with the painting. The incredible new mural was designed and painted by Gamaliel Ramirez and assisted by Star Padilla, Luis Ortiz, Moncho, community youth and Batey Urbano members.

As many of you know, Fiesta Boricua lost a huge portion of its corporate sponsorships and its budget was reduced to a quarter of what it was in previous years.



Despite these challenges, Fiesta Boricua like each of the past 11 years brought a "pedacito de patria" to our Puerto Rican community. Thousands upon thousands of Boricuas returned to el Barrio and discovered a piece of themselves in the process.

We would like to acknowledge the visionary work of Alderman Billy Ocasio, the Division Street Business Development Association and the volunteers of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in organizing Fiesta Boricua. Without their tireless work, our Puerto Rican community would not be what it is today—the most wonderfully organized Boricua community in the United States. Fiesta Boricua is a beautifully magnificent example of this work to strengthen and stabilize our community!





FIESTA BORICUA

Fiesta Boricua is our community's premiere cultural celebration in Chicago. Every year, Fiesta Boricua, spanning "Bandera a Bandera" becomes a virtual "sea of flags" with thousands of Puerto Ricans from throughout the Midwest returning to el Barrio... returning home on Paseo Boricua!

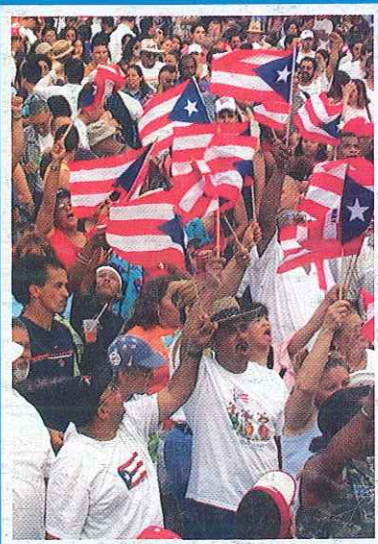


Photo Credits:
Samuel Reyes
Batey Urbano