

# THE SPIRIT OF LARES



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*Compañeros* and *compañeras*, the first thoughts and words that I have been expressing in San Francisco, California and throughout North American cities and towns, in the territory occupied by the U.S. Army and stolen from México and the *chicano* people of Pueblo, Alamosa, Tierra Amarilla, Albuquerque and San Francisco, California—my first words and my first thoughts go to the heroic people of Nicaragua that are today disputing their national territory with yankee monopoly capital and the armed forces that serve it. (applause) I passed from my adolescence to my youth being a Sandinista, and I continue to be a *Sandinista*. (applause) And that is how I was treated by the *Sandinistas* in San Francisco and Albuquerque. In reminiscence and with deep gratitude, we embraced in revolutionary will to defeat yankee imperialism in every place it needs to be combated. (applause)

*La Liga Socialista Puertorriqueña* (Puerto Rican Socialist League) dedicates this, their portion of the event in Lares today, to our immortal honorary members Arnaldo Darío Rosado and Carlos Soto Arriví. (applause) With us here is the *compañera*-wife of Arnaldo Darío Rosado, and for her we have affectionate words.

The most important phenomenon to appear in years in Puerto Rico, and evident within the revolutionary and historical boundaries of today, is the appearance and the obvious development of a revolutionary and clandestine mind, of armed struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico. To the half-dozen clandestine and revolutionary organizations such as the *Ejército Popular Boricua* (Puerto Rican Popular Army), the *Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Popular* (Armed Forces of Popular Resistance), the *Comandos Revolucionarios del Pueblo* (People's Revolutionary Commandos) and any other that I may have forgotten—when we dedicate this ceremony to Arnaldo Darío Rosado and Carlos Soto Arriví, we are certain that we can say in your name that you salute with arms the memory of the *compañeros* murdered in the Cerro Maravilla. (applause) And we believe we represent your willingness and your thoughts when we express here the unconditional commitment of the armed clandestine organizations to the struggle that Nicaragua is waging for its national liberation against yankee imperialism, a battle of fire and blood for their sacred land. (applause)

I want to say a few other words about the clandestine struggle in Puerto Rico. There have been in the course of a year—exactly in the course of one year—actions carried out as notable and important as that of the *Comando Revolucionario Obrero* (Revolutionary Workers Commandos) that executed Randall a year and one day ago; as that of the *Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Popular* (Armed Forces of Popular Resistance) that seized the police station at

Montebello, forced the garrison to surrender (applause), righteously carried off all the electronic equipment, the arms, the ammunition and all of that which does not belong to the police of Puerto Rico, but which belongs to us; and then retreated victoriously and gallantly without suffering a single casualty or a disturbance in their historic deed. We also point to the instantaneous seizure of the United Press International offices by the *Comandos Revolucionarios del Pueblo* (People's Revolutionary Commandos), which they carried out with total agility, speed, efficiency and then withdrew victoriously.

We also call attention to the important skirmish between a platoon of comandos of *Los Macheteros* of the *Ejército Popular Boricua* (Puerto Rican People's Army) in the vicinity of Naguabo, a skirmish in which the police suffered a fatality. In spite of the combination of an occasional police patrol and a group commanded by the chief of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation in Humacao, the guerrillas of *Los Macheteros*, after a violent shoot-out, withdrew victoriously, without suffering a casualty, and without being captured in the ensuing pursuit—a pursuit which continued through the following day, when the combined forces of the state police and the military police from Roosevelt Roads base, with dogs marauding and scrutinizing the area, were unable to capture, or get in reach of, or even find fingerprints of the victorious guerrillas of *Los Macheteros*. And to these military actions there has to be added the seizure of the Consulate of Chile (applause) in which Nydia Cuevas and Pablo Marciano deliberately and with the knowledge and consciousness of what awaited them, knowing that in order to carry out the action they carried out they had to sacrifice their freedom and risk their lives—risked their lives and sacrificed their freedom to make known to the world our protest of the pernicious and impudent clamor to celebrate the victory of the independence of the United States while trampling on the independence of Puerto Rico; (applause) calling international attention to the real kidnapping, the imprisonment by the federal kidnapers of the government of the United States of the *compañeros* Oscar Collazo (that smiling challenger of the electric chair) and of Lolita Lebrón, Irvin Flores and Rafael Cancel Miranda. Just last night, in the early hours of the morning, a *compañera* just back from the prison where they keep Lolita communicated to me that the day before yesterday the State Department in Washington was discussing at length the release of Lolita Lebrón; and that the insolent Federal Justice Department was insisting that Lolita accept conditions on her freedom, conditions which the heroine has never accepted and will never accept, the conditions of imperialism on her freedom. (applause)

All of these clandestine actions of the Puerto Rican underground—exactly in the course of one year—these are the real homage, the real offer of red roses, of the red spirit of the Puerto Rican revolution—the real homage which today Puerto Rico brings to the heroes of the revolution of Lares. (applause) As their spontaneous spokesperson, in the name of the clandestine organizations of the armed struggle: Long live the Puerto Rican revolution, long live the heroes of Lares! (applause and Vivas!)

We have seen that the most profound and revealing phenomenon of these

years and of this moment is the appearance and clear development of a clandestine mentality in Puerto Rico. I want, out of necessity, to point out that a conspiratorial mentality is one thing, and a clandestine mentality another. There is not one revolution, and no possible leap forward in the development of a revolutionary process, without the inclusion of a conspiratorial process that requires the most strict conspiratorial mentality. In order to accomplish El Grito de Lares, the immortal heroes of Lares conspired for a very long time. In order to carry out the revolutionary process of the thirties, with the leadership of Albizu, they needed to scientifically and consciously conspire about what they were doing, because they were making a leap forward in the revolutionary process of Puerto Rico. For the revolt of Jayuya, for the attack on Blair House, for the attack on the federal capitol building in Washington, there needed to exist a process of conspiracy, because these things cannot be settled in a public plaza, nor through plebiscites or public consultations. The revolutionary conspiratorial mentality is a historical, political, military necessity; a prelude to the realization of all events where a leap forward is going to happen in the revolutionary historic process of a determined people. (applause) And there is no authority, orthodox or heterodox, marxist or non-marxist, that can be invoked against the historical, political and military necessity of a conspiracy and a conspiratorial process preliminary to the realization of a political-military act that carries forward the struggle for the revolution of a people: in this case, the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico.

But the revolutionary mentality and the conspiratorial mentality, I mean to say the conspiratorial mind and the conspiratorial necessity, is one thing—and the clandestine mentality is another. The conspiratorial mind is a necessity. It is always a preliminary part of any leap in the revolutionary process. It is produced in the tactical link of the revolutionary process, when the vision is extended to all things strategic and at a specific or calculated distance from the principal objective of the struggle and before reconstituting itself in the maneuver that is the very soul of tactics. The clandestine mind on the contrary is a modern, permanent fact of the revolutionary, historical process. It functions within the marxist concept of protracted war. It requires constant organization and constant exercise. Because it is not only produced by the extended vision that reaches up to the ultimate end, up to the final objective—whose calculated or specific distance off we want to be able to approximate—but also contains within it and within its development the concept of maneuvers as the soul of tactics, and of tactics as the necessary link whose total sum adds up to the winning strategy of the revolution. (applause) The time will arrive when the clandestine mind—which acts daily, struggles daily, and daily plans the next day's actions, that continues striking at the enemy until he retreats at the strategic moment—must enter into an immediate conspiratorial process, and combine the great capacity of the daily action of the clandestine mind with the intensification of conspiracy, in order to carry the country, the people and the liberation movement to a great qualitative leap in the development of the struggle that one day will transform itself, by the same combination of many

links together, into the leap that will carry the revolution to its definitive triumph, to the revolutionary seizure of power. (applause) Glory to the *compañeros* of the *Comando Revolucionario Obrero*. (applause) Glory to the *compañeros* of the *Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Popular*. (applause) Glory to the *comañeros* of the *Comandos Revolucionarios del Pueblo*. (applause) Glory to the *compañeros* of the *Macheteros* of the *Ejército Popular Boricua*. (applause) Because from them will come, unifyingly, in the revolutionary unification of our people, the final victory of the independence of Puerto Rico. (applause and Vivas!)

The perfection in the method and execution, and the constant improvement of our process and our actions, is an ideal desired by all of us. Along the road of struggle, of public and political struggle and the still more difficult clandestine struggle, perhaps we have made errors; and we will commit more in measure with the actions which the clandestine armed struggle for independence and socialism develops in Puerto Rico. When we consider the forms which the struggle has had to take, compared with the greatest military, political and economic power in the modern capitalist world; when we think that in Puerto Rico one has to act in clandestinity in a country subjected to daily x-ray examination by imperialism; when we remember that in Puerto Rico not only does the FBI function, but also the CIA—which, violating the laws of its own country, the very laws that founded it—operates with full knowledge that the legal conception of its country about Puerto Rico is illegal—because the CIA, from the point of view of its own constitution, supposedly doesn't operate in the territory of the U.S. But the CIA knows better than the Congress of the U.S., because it believes and knows that Puerto Rico is territory subjugated by force, an invaded nation rebelling against U.S. imperialist impudence. (applause)

I had the privilege fifteen years ago to denounce an agent, and to make known where he had taken up lodging in a Chase Manhattan Bank building in Río Piedras—an agent that had come to Puerto Rico from Buenos Aires to organize, and who in Buenos Aires had acted as the head of the Mormon Church but in reality was the head of the CIA in Argentina. So we have here the CIA and the FBI, a fact that everyone knows and confirms daily; and there is also the Secret Service of the White House, the secret service that guards the President of the United States. And there is the Federal Treasury Service of the U.S. and there are the intelligence services of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force. And there are all these investigative and repressive agencies, organized under the mantle of federal statute, colonial statute.

And in addition to all this vigilance, which is the equivalent of living in a country subjected to x-rays, a company organizes and contracts a private firm such as Security Associates—consider the name! (laughs)—that goes throughout the commercial offices of Puerto Rico, that has access to buildings of twenty stories, observing all the office workers and interviewing their bosses. And when they find a person in a commercial office who they judge to be approachable, they get close to him and bribe him; they pay him the same salary that he earns in the commercial company, and he remains employed

there earning his salary, and he could be there a month, two months, three months, a year without informing Security Associates—until one day he hears a suspicious word on the lips of a friend or *compañero*, and then informs on him; but during all this time, on top of his salary as employee of the commercial firm, he has been earning a salary paid by Security Associates, as well as the use of a bank that cashes the checks that this snitch takes there, checks made out as to amount but without his name.

Against all this investigative adversity of informers and surveillance, the clandestine organizations of Puerto Rico operate. There is nothing more in common for all the parties and all the public organizations of Puerto Rico—from the *PIP* and the *Partido Socialista*, *La Liga Socialista*, to the *MSP*, the *Partido Nacionalista*, the *Partido Socialista Obrero*, the *Partido Socialista Revolucionario*, all the organizations of the *Liga Internacionalista*, to all the public organizations that operate in Puerto Rico—we have one point of unity: we have to unite ourselves solidly, as iron, with all the ardor of our patriotism, to shelter, to give refuge, to protect and never condemn one single revolutionary clandestine action in Puerto Rico. (applause) And outside of the public organizations, where the majority of *independentistas* are found, it is also the duty, the inescapable and never-unattainable duty, to give shelter, protection and money when it is needed; and even when it is not absolutely needed, to give it anyway. Give them everything. In the protection of a single member of Puerto Rican clandestinity in need, we all have the obligation to go to his side, and if it is absolutely necessary, to die there with him. (applause) This, friends, is the spirit of Lares, and whoever does not feel this way does not live the spirit of Lares. (applause) We walk onward toward independence, without hurry and without impatience, but with bravery and decision.

In the last few years I have frequently been asked if I believed I would see the independence of my country. Systematically I answer that I have already seen it. Whoever fights with all he has for the independence of Puerto Rico lives independence, is free, is sovereign, is independent (applause) as all our people will be on the day of victory. (applause)

At long last, the international legality represented by the United Nations, and specifically by the Decolonization Committee, has told the brazen ones in Washington that Puerto Rico is a colony. Imperialist legality, international legality, sanctioned all the plunder of the U.S. in Latin America, such as the incredible dispossession of Mexico of more than half of its territory—still retained by the army of yankee occupation—legally camouflaging its territory in a non-existent status, without having denied the “right” of yankee imperialism to subjugate, to mutilate, the Mexican nation and subjugate the *chicano* people. That international legality sanctioned the barbarous U.S. intervention in Santo Domingo, Haiti, Nicaragua, and continues to sanction it today as the sons and grandsons of General Sandino die and kill for the independence of Nicaragua. That international legality confronted the people of Puerto Rico in 1898, and faced with a brutal act of military aggression like the yankee invasion of Puerto Rico, and faced with a juridical brutality like the Treaty of Paris

which is still today null and void, it has legitimized the Treaty of Paris and the imperialist war of the U.S. against Puerto Rico.

With distinct mistrust of their concept of independence and of international legality, we have kept ourselves away from the United Nations and the Decolonization Committee until this year. We went there to tell the international community about the clandestine activity in Puerto Rico, so that later on they could not say that no one had told them. The *compañeros* that have worked there for so many years have done well: the resolution presented by Cuba and Iraq was passed by the Decolonization Committee last week. This is the first act of international legality that has responded to true criteria of justice, of equity, to the criteria of law in the face of the northamerican invasion of Puerto Rico; and this fact has to be greeted with all the respect, with all the respect that it deserves. But before the resolution passed and after the resolution passed, we have maintained that with or without the United Nations, the armed struggle for the independence for Puerto Rico will continue. (applause)

The arrogance and conceit of the U.S. government is so great that the most minimal dissidence against it is received as though it were an affront. And instead of giving thanks to the Decolonization Committee of the United Nations for having given them an opportunity to be decent persons, they have received it as an affront, and have ordered the world silence of all their information agencies on the decision of the Decolonization Committee. When the resolution passed, I was in San Francisco, and I can assure you that after traveling through practically all the northamerican west and southwest, that the only newspaper that published anything in reference to the resolution at the United Nations was the *Chicago Tribune*, which printed 11 lines in a column quoting Romero Barceló. In N.Y. *compañeros* have told us that only the Spanish press has spoken of the resolution, and that the anglosaxon press in New York (what shame for them, and they are capable of calling themselves newspapers, calling themselves journalists!) have not said a word; there has not even been an editorial opinion; even the *Washington Post*, who claim to be such decent people, are full of the shit of their silence. (applause)

Friends, these are the people with whom we have to fight, and if you want them to realize the anguish, the passion of the Puerto Rican people, and the necessity for them to be free and sovereign, then you'll have to give them a blow to the shoulder and knock them right down to Puerto Rico. Because from the deliberate and premeditated unawareness of their ruling class, from their insensitivity, what can one expect if not the brutality of a people stupefied and insensitized by misinformation and ignorance, by prejudice such as in the northamerican southwest, which we just traveled through—the irredentive heart of *Atzlán*. There they practically don't need police, although they have them and they have many; they practically don't need them because they have groups of Minute Men ready on all the *haciendas* and ranches; all the anglosaxon ranches are armed to the teeth with machine guns, magnum rifles and hand grenades in order to plague the *chicano* people and their struggle for

liberation, and even their struggle against the most minimal prejudice. What can be expected from a people in this condition of misinformation and ignorance, except for them to submissively respect the mandates of their own prejudices and the mandate of their government of murderers, land-thieves, sovereignty-thieves, water-thieves; because in New México and in the south of Colorado, the big anglosaxon landholders shut off the water supply to the *chicanos*, their hand-dug wells go dry and their cattle die of hunger! What are we to expect from these barbarians? That they will respect the United Nations? That they will respect the moral force of the United Nations and the Decolonization Committee? How are they going to recognize this moral force when they don't know what morality is? (applause) We know what the moral force is that the Decolonization Committee gives us; we know the importance of the sounding and testing of the moral force of the United Nations carried out by Puerto Rican organizations, above all in the last fifteen years, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party. The importance is that the testing of moral force equals, in the final instance, the testing of the material strengths for the subsequent confrontation in the clash of arms. (applause)

We have left a minute of the time they have assigned us. I am going to end with a call to the hearts of each of us, that each day our solidarity with the armed clandestine organizations that function in Puerto Rico be stronger, deeper and more decisive. This also applies to that great organization, true vanguard in this stage of the armed struggle, the organization that operates inside yankee territory and that is called the *Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional*. (applause) That is the spirit of Lares and it is the spirit of Lares that accompanies us toward Victory and beyond Victory! (applause) Many thanks. (applause)