

BUILD A WALL OF RESISTANCE!

FORUM WITH GRAND JURY RESISTERS

STEVEN GUERRA of the MLN 5

SHELLEY MILLER of the New Movement

DISCUSSION

FRIDAY - JUNE 3 - 7:30

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH 3126 - 22nd St. (At Capp St.)

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No to Political Internment!

If you don't squeal, you go to jail. This is the choice the U.S. government is offering public supporters of the Puerto Rican independence movement. This is how federal grand juries are being used to jail people for their political principles. Just like in Ireland and South Africa, this is political internment!

The government claims the grand juries are "investigating" the Puerto Rican movement. In theory, they are supposed to be impartial panels of jurors protecting suspects from unjustified indictments. In fact, they have become a shady extension of the FBI. Because the FBI can't legally make people talk, they haul you before the grand jury and then if you refuse to talk they can send you right to jail. Many Puerto Rican, Black, Mexicano and North American activists have been jailed by grand juries in recent years.

Why is the government out to get the Puerto Rican independence movement? Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States that is of enormous economic value and is a strategic military fortress that guards U.S. interests throughout Latin America. The U.S. must crush any serious revolutionary movement that threatens to free the island.

The grand jury is a weapon to achieve this. The government uses the threat of jail to try to force independence activists to betray their movement or to go underground. However, this has failed. One after another of the independentistas called to the grand jury have refused to collaborate in any way and have denounced the grand jury for what it is: a political witch hunt.

Steven Guerra is one of five members and supporters of the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional (MLN) who have refused to collaborate with grand juries many times over the past 20 months. He and his four comrades were convicted of criminal contempt for their principled stance and now face as long as five to ten years in jail. The MLN is a revolutionary public organization of Puerto Rican and Mexicano people in the U.S. that has built deep sentiment for independence in their communities. The MLN has also openly supported the armed clandestine organizations on the island and in the U.S. that are fighting for Puerto Rico's freedom.

Shelley Miller also faces a long term in jail. She is a public political activist in New York City, a leading member of the New Movement in Solidarity with the Puerto Rican and Mexican Revolutions. Shelley and Silvia Baraldini of the May 19th Communist Organization refused to collaborate with the same federal grand jury that called the MLN Five. They have set a standard for white North Americans in confronting government repression. They now also face criminal contempt charges.

Jailing the MLN Five or the other grand jury resisters on long sentences for criminal contempt has so far proven to be more difficult than the justice department had planned. The stance of non-collaboration has won widespread respect. Thousands of letters have been written to the presiding judge protesting the repression. Four bishops of the Episcopal Church testified on behalf of the MLN Five at their trial, and even establishment newspapers on the island, like the San Juan Star, have been prodded by public outrage to editorialize against the grand jury repression, calling it "an example of irrational fury."

It is critical that all progressive North Americans take a stand against the grand jury and FBI attacks of the Puerto Rican independence movement. We encourage you to attend our forum on June 3rd where Steven Guerra and Shelley Miller will give presentations. These will be followed by an open discussion where you will have the opportunity to ask questions and express opinions on any aspect of the grand jury struggle.

Independence and Socialism for Puerto Rico!