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Puerto Rico: Colonized, Controlled, and Exploited by the US

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Puerto Rico is a US Colony, its people grievously harmed by the presence of US military bases.

After colonizing Puerto Rico in 1898, the US denied its residents control over their lives, welfare, and future.

For over 120 years, Puerto Ricans have been exploited to serve US interests, notably corporate America's.

The island state is part of the US, its residents US citizens without rights. Under international and US law, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is a US colony, its sovereign independence denied by its colonial master.

In 1981, a statement by Puerto Rican Independentistas, falsely convicted of "seditious conspiracy," said the following:

"Our position remains clear. Puerto Rico is a nation intervened, militarily conquered and colonized by the United States," adding:

> "We are prisoners of war captured by the enemy. Our actions have always been and continue to be in the nature of fighting a war of independence, a war of national liberation."
>
> "The US interventionist government has absolutely no right, no say so whatsoever in regards to Puerto Rico, ourselves, or any Puerto Rican prisoner of war."
>
> "The US interventionist government has only one choice…and that is to GET OUT!"
>
> "It is our right to regain and secure our national sovereignty. Nothing will stand in the way of achieving our goal."

For decades, the UN Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples — called on "the Government of the United States to expedite a process enabling the people of Puerto Rico to exercise fully their right to self-determination and independence, and to take decisions in a sovereign manner to address their challenges."

> "It also noted with concern (in 2018) that, by virtue of the decision by the

> United States Congress under the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Act — known as PROMESA — the already weakened area outside which the prevailing regime of political and economic subordination in Puerto Rico operated had been reduced even further."

The Special Committee called on the UN General Assembly to prioritize the question of Puerto Rican independence as soon as possible.

The issue became especially of concern following Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, devastating the island state and its people, killing around 5,000, wrecking the lives and welfare of most others.

In their aftermath, the Trump regime denied devastated islanders funding to rebuild their homes, shattered lives and welfare.

Hospitals were ordered not to report deaths to conceal an accurate body count.

Organization for Culture of Hispanic Origins' Walter Alomar joined other petitioners for vitally needed US aid, accusing the Trump regime of "tossing out paper towels to my people, mocking their plight and insulting them, (so) we we're coming together and rising up."

Other Puerto Rican activists accused the Trump regime of "economic terrorism." It continues unabated, supported by the White House and vast majority of congressional members.

Like his predecessors, widely despised Puerto Rican Governor Ricardo Rossello betrayed islanders by serving US interests, working in cahoots with the Trump regime.

He ignored the vital needs of his people, focusing instead on disaster capitalism — pursuing greater privatizations than already so US business interests could more greatly exploit islanders.

After mass protests throughout much of July, demanding his ouster, he announced his resignation, effective Friday August 2.

Popular anger boiled over. Hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans mass protested in San Juan and elsewhere, leaving Rossello no choice but to step down.

Either that, be impeached and removed from office, or face possible rebellion to forcefully remove him.

A change of the guard won't likely help long-suffering Puerto Ricans, cabinet member/Justice Secretary Wanda Vazquez Garced replacing him as governor, a figure also involved in dubious practices.

She's despised for being complicit with Rossello, signs carried by protestors saying: "Wanda, we don't want you either!" Some protesters chanted "Wanda, you're next!"

Corruption and other wrongdoing by island officials pale in comparison to Washington's complicity with monied interests at the expense of equity and justice for ordinary Americans, exploited to serve their interests.

It’s why the only solution is national grassroots revolution, voting a waste of time in farcical elections, assuring dirty business as usual always wins.

Following Rossello’s resignation, mass protests continue, opposing his appointed successor, mass anger directed at ruling authorities, serving US political and business interests, including forced-feeding austerity, imposing greater hardships on beleaguered islanders.

Trump regime hardliners, most congressional members, and their press agent media want Puerto Rico’s mass uprising prevented from spreading to the mainland — where it’s most needed.

Right wing Wall Street Journal editors expressed concern about the threat of “democratic socialism,” fearing “bondholders will be scalped.”

They called for the congressionally established Financial Oversight and Management Board to “impose discipline,” wanting exploitive business as usual continued.

To contain mass revolutionary fervor by Puerto Ricans, Plan A in Washington may be to throw crumbs on the fire to try assuaging public anger — likely too little too late if this step is taken.

Whatever happens ahead, US political and business interests will continue exploiting long-suffering Puerto Ricans, the same thing happening on the mainland.

US ruling authorities assure that privileged interests are served exclusively at the expense of ordinary people everywhere. Governance of, by, and for everyone equitably is a notion long ago rejected.

Ordinary Americans and Puerto Ricans have few allies in Washington, none in positions of power, notably not in the White House under both right wings of one-party state rule.

People have power when they use it. Sustained grassroots commitment matters most. Americans did it before. Anti-war activists helped end war in Southeast Asia almost 45 years ago.

Abolitionists ended slavery. Civil and labor rights were won. They’re lost because energy waned.

Change requires longterm struggle. Former Supreme Court Justice William Douglas (1898 – 1980) once said: “Power concedes nothing without a demand.”

US politics doesn’t work. Replacing bums with new ones assures same old, same old.

America’s political system is too debauched to fix — reflecting how power corrupts and absolute power does absolutely.

The late Doug Dowd once called the US “a sick and dangerous nation run by a handful of the politically powerful.” Public dismissiveness lets them get away with mass murder and much more.

Transformational change is needed. Sustained collective defiance alone can make a difference.

Will Puerto Ricans continue their liberating struggle, or will public energy wane the way things happen time and again in Western societies and elsewhere?

Hardships propel people to collective action, but mobilized disruptive power usually fades.

Puerto Ricans suffered under the yoke of US colonial exploitation since 1898. If past is prologue, little is likely to change ahead for its long-suffering people.

The same is true for the vast majority of Americans, used and abused by their ruling authorities.

Democracy in the country is pure fantasy. Powerful monied interests run things, the way it's always been from inception — notably since the neoliberal 90s, accelerated post-9/11.

Nothing in prospect suggests positive change, not for Puerto Ricans or Americans on the mainland — not as long as powerful interests run things for their own benefit exclusively.

The self-styled "land of the free and home of the brave" is pure illusion.

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