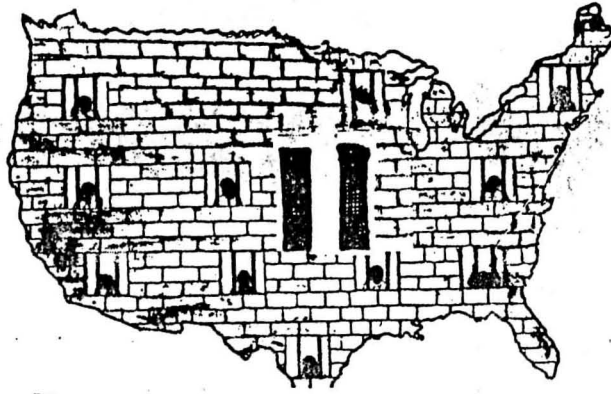


FROM BEHIND BARS



HUNGER STRIKE HALTED

STATEMENT BY THE 10 P.O.W.

On Wednesday, May 27, 1981, we, the 10 Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, decided to end our hunger strike which had entered its tenth day. Our decision to end the hunger strike took into consideration a direct appeal by the family of Alfredo Mendez, by way of mailgram to us, to end the hunger strike. There were also recommendations from the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, the Civic and Family Committees, and the Puerto Rican community.

When Alfredo Méndez was first kidnapped from Pontiac Correctional Center on April 30, 1981, his family, consultants, and support committees decided to use legal channels to force the government to reveal his whereabouts and produce his person. Our concern for Alfredo's life and well-being became acute when we learned from his family that they had received a call from him in which it became obvious to them that they had received a call from him in which it became obvious to them that he was not himself. Immediately, a writ of Habeas Corpus was filed in federal court on behalf of Cynthia Méndez, Alfredo's wife. This legal measure was ignored by the government, thus effectively strangling legal possibilities as a means to produce him. It became necessary for us to utilize the protest of hunger strike as a means of applying pressure.

As the hunger strike approached its tenth day, it became apparent that the U.S. government, in its zeal to destroy us, and the Puerto Rican independence movement in general, was more willing to accept the consequence of our eventual death, rather than move from its intransigent position of not producing Alfredo Méndez. As background to the disappearance, the U.S. courts, as well as U.S. propaganda were doing all possible, not only by isolating the comrade amidst reports of division and rifts, but also by projecting and bringing about doubt as to the integrity of Alfredo Mendez - the old divide and conquer

routine.

As of this day, Alfredo Méndez is still in the custody of the U.S. government, which continues to deny direct access to him, on the part of his family, legal consultants, and the Puerto Rican community. We are at a stage where we recognize that the government has eliminated all legal channels, thus guaranteeing them time to utilize whatever methods and instruments at their disposal to further isolate Alfredo Méndez. Furthermore, they can now continue to go unchecked in their elaborate machination of attempting to shatter the integrity of the political positions espoused by Alfredo.

This should serve as a warning to the Puerto Rican independence movement that the U.S. government in its attempt to safeguard imperialism, will utilize gangster tactics, vicious propaganda, and criminal behavior to destroy our movement for national liberation.

TEN PUERTO RICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

