

9-1-1988

Que Ondee Sola- September 1988

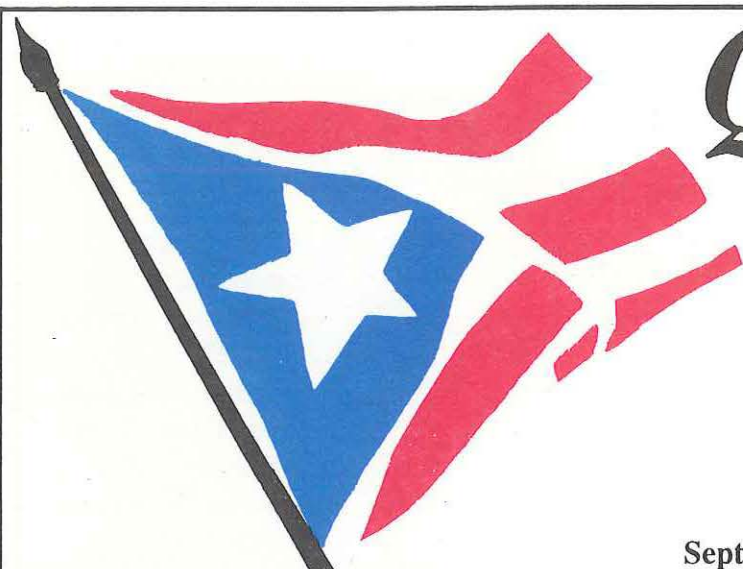
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Medina, Robertico, "Que Ondee Sola- September 1988" (1988). *Que Ondee Sola*. 140.
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Que Ondeeé Sola

September 1988, Volume 22, No. 3

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El Grito de Lares

A Nation is Born

This historical event has been the most denied, oblique and distorted episode in Puerto Rican history. Yet it was also the turning point for the Puerto Rican people as a nation. On September 23, 1868, the First Republic of Puerto Rico was proclaimed.

On this date, lead by the father of our homeland Ramón Emeterio Betances, a group of Puerto Ricans waged an armed uprising against Spanish colonization.

Among the revolutionaries that participated in the uprising were: Mathias Bruckman from the US; Manuel Rojas from Venezuela, whose Puerto Rican father fought side by side with Simón Bolívar; Mariana Bracetti, known as the woman with the "Golden Arm" because of her bravery and dedication to independence and Lola Rodríguez de Tió known as "the daughter of the islands" who wrote the words to the Puerto Rican revolutionary anthem "*La Borinqueña*." When she wrote the anthem she expressed:

"I want the words to make people leave their homes and take up arms."

The revolt originally scheduled for September 29, 1868, had to be carried out earlier because of the discovery of a paid informer.

Betances who had been living in exile, was immediately arrested, while the authorities captured a small ship named "El Telégrafo." The ship carried 500 rifles and six cannons. When the Revolutionary Committee at Lares received the news that the Spaniards knew of the revolt, Bracetti, Bruckman and Rojas decided to attack at

once. On September 23, six days ahead of schedule, 400 Puerto Ricans armed with knives, machetes and a few guns surrounded Lares. After a short battle, they triumphantly marched into the main square. Workers built fires and burned their **libretas*, prisoners were set free from jail and Black slaves smashed their chains and rejoiced at their new freedom. Above the plaza two flags waved, one made by Bracetti and

now referred to as the Lares flag, the other on a white streamer with the words "Liberty or Death, long live a Free Puerto Rico."

* The Republic of Lares was short-lived. Spanish troops armed with cannons overwhelmed the rebels and captured the town. Bracetti was imprisoned where she would later give birth to a still-born child. Rojas and Bruckman were executed. Hundreds of men and women were arrested and the cells

at "El Morro" were saturated by "independentistas."

(Next page)

- *Abolition of slavery**
- *Right to reject taxes**
- *Freedom of religion**
- *Freedom of speech**
- *Freedom of press**
- *Freedom of commerce**
- *Right to assemble**
- *Right to bear arms**
- *Right to elect
own representatives**
- *Protection of citizens
from search and seizure**

The *Ten Commandments of Liberty*
issued by the Lares revolutionaries

Que Ondeé Sola

is published at Northeastern Illinois University. The opinions expressed in *Que Ondeé Sola* do not necessarily reflect those of the administration. Responsibility for its contents lies solely within the staff. We appreciate and encourage any and all suggestions or contributions.

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Mariana Bracetti



Ramón Emeterio Betances



Segundo Ruiz Belvis



Lola Rodríguez de Tío

Some of the gains obtained from the Lares uprising were: the abolition of slavery and the hated **libreta* system, the democratization of Spain as well as the positive influence it had on the Cuban revolutionary struggle and "*El Grito de Yara*," Cuba's cry for freedom. A stronger unity grew between Puerto Rico and Cuba. This can be better appreciated in the following three statements:

The spirit of Lares and Yara are one, in the future, as they have in the past, Cubans and Puerto Ricans are one in preparation today, as they were yesterday in prison and exile, and they must be one in action to hasten their common liberty through a double effort—José Martí.

When Cuba becomes independent, I will ask for permission to fight for the freedom of Puerto Rico.—Antonio Maceo.

Cuba and Puerto Rico are two wings of the same bird. They receive bullets and flowers in one heart.—Lola Rodríguez de Tío.

In 1873 chattle slavery was also abolished on the island. Finally, a more sophisticated form of war began to take shape known as the "Secret Societies" which continued the legacy of struggling from clauddestiny. These "Secret Societies" would advance the ideas of autonomy and revolution that lead Spain to grant Puerto Rico the "Charter of Autonomy", thirty one years later.

Although the Lares rebellion was detained by Spanish troops, the spirit of Lares has surpassed the defeat, because it exists today, in every Puerto Rican that is proud to be Puerto Rican. This sentiment is also exemplified in every Puerto Rican that has magnanimously given his/her life for the freedom of their country, Puerto Rico.

** A pass system similar to the Pass system of South Africa, both used to control the "Black" population.*

THE KKK...

A history of crime, violence and terrorism.

A little over two weeks ago the Ku Klux Klan, the Nazis and neo-Nazi skin-heads held a rally in Martquette Park. Five hundred people gathered to hear their racist message of white supremacy while another separate group of people, were at the park to commemorate the 20th anniversary of a civil rights march through the park led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr..

In order to better understand this new upsurge in organized racism we at **gOS** have decided to reprint *The KKK... A History of crime, violence and terrorism* from the March 1987, issue of **gOS**.

Racism has been institutionalized in the US since the signing of the Declaration of Independence when the US government claimed that Black men were only three-fifths of a human being. One off-shoot of this racism has been the Ku Klux Klan. It is estimated that there are at least 10,000 Klan members in the US today. Today's Klan leadership talks of a "new Klan," yet evidence shows that the country's most enduring hate group is continuing their tradition of violence.

History of the Klan

In December of 1865, six young confederate veterans decided to form a "social club" in Pulaski, Tennessee near the Alabama border. The new society had to be a secret. The members called each other ghouls so that if their meetings were overheard the identities of the members would remain secret. Since they wanted a mysterious name for this social club, they turned to the Greek language. Richard R. Reed

suggested the word *Kuklos*, (meaning circle and cycle in English). John B. Kennedy added the word *clan*. They then decided to wear white robes and rode through the town on horses. The sight of white robed horsemen stirred the town so much that the Klan decided to officially use the sheets as a regalia of the organization. But if that had been all there was to the KKK, it would have probably disappeared as fast as it came. At some point in 1866, they recruited members from nearby towns, thus expanding this new secret organization known as the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan's primary objective was to threaten and terrorize Black people.

Gladys Marie Fry, author of ***Night Riders in Black Folk History***, believes that the reason Klan members chose to wear white sheets is because many Black slaves were superstitious and feared ghosts.

By 1916, the Klan decided that all members had to watch a movie entitled ***Birth of a Nation***. The film was based on a novel written by a minister named Thomas

Condolences

The staff and members of **Que Ondee Sola** and the **Union for Puerto Rican Students** wish to extend our most profound condolences to Dr. Maximino Torres and his family for the death of their beloved daughter Victoria Ann Torres, who past away Wednesday September 7, 1988.

We share your grief in this most difficult period.

KKK Cont...

Dixon, Jr. from North Carolina. In making this epic, Dixon made the Klan members seem like heroes trying to rid the land of all Black folks that descended upon them. The movie and book were credited for creating the first Klan revival.

Modern Klan leaders are required to use the book and movie as a recruiting gimmick. The movie is so blatantly racist that it is rarely shown in public theatres because of the aspirations and demonstrations staged against the screening.

History of Terrorism

The Ku Klux Klan has been responsible

have also felt the sting of the Klan's whip.

The most ruthless faction of the Klan during the 1960's were the secretive White Knights of Mississippi. The White Knights had 6,000-7,000 members and earned the reputation of the most blood-thirsty faction of the Klan.

The most shocking crime the Klan has committed to date were the murders of Andrew Gordon, James Chaney and Michael Schwerner, three civil rights activists. The Klan burned a Black church in Neshoba County in order to lure the three men outside. When the men went to investigate the fire, they were arrested by a local sheriff who



for some of the worst blood shed and acts of terrorism in the history of the US. Its weapons have ranged from whips to bundles of dynamite. Through the years, tactics have included hanging, acid branding, castration and other forms of mutilation. Also, tar and feathering, torture clubbing, fire branding and shooting.

Blacks were and continue to be the most likely victims of the Klan. Since the early 1920's Jews, Catholics, labor leaders, strikers, socialists, orientals and immigrants

was also a Klan man. They were released and several cars full of Klansmen chased them, finally pulling them over to a remote area. All three were shot by the Klansmen, who used a bulldozer to bury their bodies in an earthen dam. Forty-four hours later, the bodies were found, but no murder charges were ever filed against the Klan.

Another recent Klan attack occurred in 1979, in Greensboro, North Carolina. A group of KKK members and Nazis murdered five members of a left wing group that were

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KKK Cont...

demonstrating against them. After a lengthy trial, the killers were acquitted.

KKK and the Law

Even the worst violence against Black civil rights workers was met by indifference by the national officials and very few Klansmen were ever prosecuted.

When three civil rights workers were murdered in 1964 in Philadelphia, Mississippi for example, a local grand jury refused to return an indictment against the accused killers, who were later convicted in a higher court for conspiracy.

On September 20, 1966, the home of a Black woman active in the civil rights movement was blasted. Three white KKK members were arrested and after a mock trial, the judge suspended their sentences.

In East Texas, during the 1920's, Klansmen did not worry about the punishment they would receive because they had seized political control and were rarely punished.

KKK and Politics

KKK members have a history of running for public office. However, a candidate who openly identifies himself as a Klansmen gives himself the political *kiss of death*. Some Klansmen decided to drop the Klan's insignia in order not to alienate potential recruits.

KKK and the Youth

Today, in fact, Klansmen have adopted the motto of Hitler's youth *Tomorrow belongs to us*. The Junior Klan started in the 1960's. Now more than ever, the Klan is composed of predominantly young members. 15% of the Klan sympathizers at rallies are teenagers. The Illinois Knights of the KKK operate freely in Illinois, working with gangs like the Uptown Rebels and the Gaylords. Two years ago a Black man was beaten to death and a white supremacist was charged with his murder. One group of Klan youths threatened to do battle with Haitians, and tried to portray their words and deeds as patriotic.

KKK Today

Some experts think that the media publicity has encouraged Klan members to maintain a high level of activity and may have helped them attract new members. There are two basic truths about the Klan. First, wherever the Klan goes, violence follows. The second is that the core of racism is in the Ku Klux Klan. Klan members involved in violent crimes have often been praised by their colleagues and called patriots.

Though the Klansmen say the Klan has changed, their literature, rallies and violent acts indicate that things have not changed.

In 1987, Klan activities continued to

We challenge our readers to see the problems of racism, not as a mere manifestation of a few fanatical groups, but rather as an institutionalized policy in this country.

grow. Uptown is part of the violent world of Chicago street politics and is a Klan stronghold.

Black families who moved into white neighborhoods have had their homes fire-bombed, swastikas painted on synagogues and crosses burned on their lawn.

Racism in Chicago

Racists have gained much ground in Chicago. The white supremacist movement has come to "need" inner city neighborhoods like Uptown.

The KKK members are against all non-white groups except Cubanos and American Indians. They call Jews the Seeds of Satan and descendants of Cain.

Klan Membership

1871	550,000 members
1920	5,000 members
1925	4,000,000-5,000,000 members
1927	550,000 members
1981	10,000-12,000 members

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Naming Ourselves

The following article was written by Puerto Rican poet and artist Julio Noboa Polanco. Following many years of research and investigation, he designed the new Puerto Rican coat-of-arms and wrote the meaning behind the symbols also printed here.

Symbols have developed an increasingly vital role in our modern world of mass communications. Corporations, grocery stores, ethnic, international and other organizations of all types and persuasions have symbols that represent their services, history or ideology. Especially powerful are the symbols which represent a nation or a people because these alone can reflect and stimulate strong patriotic emotions. The raising or the burning of its flag is the ultimate elevation or degradation to a nation.

Our Island-Nation

Another national symbol, namely the coat-of-arms, also serves as a source of pride and identification. Many national coats-of-arms and some flags as well display a ferocious animal of prey to represent the attitude of militant defense of the interests and dignity of a nation. The standards of ancient Rome, the seal of the United States and the flag and seal of Mexico all display the eagle as their central figure. Great Britain and Iran both use the lion. The Soviet Union is symbolized by the bear and a dragon represents China. It is clear

that strength and power are associated with such symbols and serve to remind the people of their nations' fighting spirit in times of crisis.

In view of these facts and in consideration of Puerto Rico's colonial history, there are many implications to the "coincidence" that a gentle lamb is the central figure in our island's escudo. It would not, in fact, be difficult to analyze the significance, both historical and symbolic, of Puerto Rico's coat-of-arms and to demonstrate its inadequacy for representing the true spirit, culture and aspirations of the Puerto Rican people. Perhaps we need to project a new symbol and create an alternative design for a new coat-of-arms. This nuevo escudo de Borinquen has already been developed for the explicit purpose of representing the complete and authentic heritage of our island-nation.

Some Puerto Ricans will, no doubt, consider this discussion impractical, unnecessary or even threatening. However despite the tremendously overwhelming power of the United States in all vital aspects of economic, political and social life and in the mass media, the

struggle for independence as well as the attempt to revitalize our culture and to reinterpret our history has not been destroyed. It is to this internationally supported struggle for self-determination that the issue of our national symbols must be addressed.

To those who express alarm at my attempt to question this time honored symbol let me clarify my position. I believe we should maintain and perpetuate those symbols and traditions which truly represent our heritage and which contribute to our concept of national development. One such symbol is our flag whose historical roots are imbedded along with Cuba's flag, in the anti-imperialist struggle against Spanish colonialism. Our flag was adapted by Puerto Rican patriots in the year 1895 when the final Cuban war of liberation was initiated at the death of José Martí by Spanish bullets. Our flag truly represents our past history as well as our aspiration for liberation; however, the same cannot be said of our coat-of-arms. To understand the reason why, it is necessary to look at our

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NAMING OURSELVES...

history as a basis for understanding the context in which the present escudo was elaborated.

It's important to remember that whereas our flag was designed and adapted by a group of Puerto Rican patriots, the coat-of-arms was neither designed nor adapted by native Puerto Ricans but by Spaniards. Most other nations, large or small, have designed their own coats-of-arms. Why didn't our nation do the same?

That is a matter of history. Our status was completely subordinate to the mother country and as a colony our island was dependent on Spain for everything associated with authority including its very own symbols of identity. It is also evident from historical documents that the very purpose of its presentation to the Spanish colonists living on the island was clearly anti-native in intent.

By contrast, Mexico's coat-of-arms, an eagle perched on a cactus and devouring a snake, re-

affirms their native heritage since it is based on the prophetic dream of an Aztec priest who upon seeing the above omen knew the spot

The Contrast of Symbols

No longer docile as a Lamb, the Ram's mature and regal
It can defend and make a stand against the alien eagle

The Machetes of the valient struggling for our liberation
Have released us from the Yoke of cruel domination

Now that the Book is opened to our many histories
It can reveal the truth and wisdom lost for centuries

With patriots always at the Helm to guide our navigation
Not so called noble Ferdinand could bring manipulation

Our tropic Sun glows with a wealth of fruitful, golden bounty
More bright than Isabella's jewels, it shines with glorious beauty

The African Congo here displays the most ancient eternal Cross
Of civilizations denied and forgotten, much to our cultural loss

The Taino Cemi by smiling can inspire deeper love
Than Flags of conquistadores proudly waving from above

The Castillian Castle here preserves our strongest Spanish traditions
Our language, faith and families stood for countless generations

The Coqui sings only in his island home his song of enchanting melody
Its magic soothes the hearts of Lions roaring with wild ferocity

Our island was named after John the Baptist, a saint of virtuous fame
But patriots know and history shows that—Borinquen is its Name!

Julio Noboa Polanco

Taino Heritage

Puerto Rico's coat-of-arms, on the other hand, was bestowed in 1511 by Ferdinand and Isabella to honor the early colonists in recognition of their military victory against the native Tainos. However it was not a "victory" in which Puerto Ricans should take pride, for as we know, the Tainos were peace-loving people who were brutally enslaved and exploited by the Conquistadores who lusted for gold, wealth and power. Nevertheless, as many other native and Third World peoples overwhelmed by European conquest, the Tainos made a brave and heroic defense against a cruel enemy with greater destructive weapons of war.

As such, the present seal of the commonwealth government adapted in 1952, but displaying all the symbols of the original

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escudo of 1511, remains a blatant rejection of our valuable Taino heritage.

It is those very symbols within the present escudo that more than anything else reveals the extent to which it represents Spain and not Puerto Rico. Not one symbol in the present escudo is of Puerto Rican origin.

Our nuevo Escudo de Borinquen displays a contrasting set of symbols which not only incorporate our Taino, African and Spanish roots, but also represent our struggle for national dignity and self-determination.

It was designed by and for Puerto Ricans and is presented as a shield of struggle against foreign aggression not against native defense as is the present escudo.

The inscription Borinquen es su Nombre, honors our island's original name Boriken used by the noble Tainos and revived by patriots of Borinquen who recognize the tremendous value and significance derived from the power of naming ourselves.

(An extended version of the article as well as color reproduction of the design is available for a donation.)

KKK Locations

The Klan has their rallies and activities in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Wisconsin and Illinois.

The Challenge

On several occasions, *Que Ondee Sola* has been the target of racist attacks. We have always denounced the presence of white supremacist groups and individuals on this campus and addressed the roots of the problems. We challenge our readers to see the problems of racism, not as a mere manifestation of a few fanatical groups, but rather as an institutionalized policy in this country. Racism is becoming a growing force in the US. Almost daily you can read in newspapers such as *The New York Times* of racist violence.

We challenge you to take a stand against racist violence. Look around you, see it critically, do something about it! **End Racism, No KKK, No Facist USA!**

Information taken from *Klanswatch*, 1986 and *Breakthrough Magazine*, 1987



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