

W. McK. JONES
PUERTO RICO

*He, who in a colony defends
justice, offends authority.*

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September 22nd, 1938.

Honorable Robert H. Todd,
Insular Capitol,
San Juan, Puerto Rico.

My very good friend Don Roberto:

I have your good letter of the 17th of September, enclosing the introduction to the book you are writing, "Governors on Parade." I want to thank you for sending it to me, and I believe that a record of your personal acquaintance with the various governors who have been sent to Puerto Rico will constitute an important chapter in the history of the Island.

To be perfectly frank with you, I am not entirely in sympathy with everything that you say in your introduction. I cannot agree, for instance, in the comparison you make of the two races and the resultant clash between them. I also feel that you do not place enough emphasis on colonialism under a so-called democracy, when that very colonialism was the main reason for the separation of the thirteen colonies from the mother country.

While my experience with officialdom in Puerto Rico has not been as extensive as yours, I still feel that I have had the privilege of living as close to the life of Puerto Rico as anyone not born on the Island. And I would like to add that your gesture in voluntarily giving up your position as Dean of the National Republican Committee, when you found that the Republican Party had no intentions of ever doing the right thing by the Island, has been one of the reasons for my sincere admiration of you, and has caused me many times to wish to do as you did. Although a life-long Democrat, I have come to realize after the years that I have spent in Washington, that the so-called liberalism of the Democratic Party is not an article meant for export, and if it exists at all, is meant only for home consumption.

But to go back to the evils of colonialism. It seems to me that as the years go by, this cancer has been working upon the body politic of Puerto Rico until today we find that none of the leaders of public opinion in the Island have enough courage to protest against the high-handed acts of the present governor, who to my mind, is the worst governor that we have ever had; to the extent that in the eyes of the Administration, Winship has the backing of all sectors of public opinion in spite of the fact that we know that even the Coalition, whose rubber stamp he is, privately express the opinion that never has the governor's chair been occupied by a man less fitted for the position than he is.

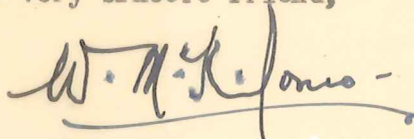
The curious part of the situation is that certain elements high in the Administration would welcome a protest from some sector in Puerto Rico regardless of how small that sector was, provided that it be made up of respectable elements.

The result is that you find me here fighting an absolutely sterile battle single-handed in favor of a country which is not the place of my birth.

I was not fortunate enough to have read all of your articles on the different governors, and shall therefore welcome a compilation of them in book form. No one better than you could write such a record, and I should much appreciate the various articles that you have written even before they come out in book form.

Thanking you for the opportunity you have given me of reading the introduction to your book, and looking forward to the receipt of the articles I am requesting, I am,

Your very sincere friend,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "W. McK. Jones". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Walter McK. Jones.

WMcKJ:mcc

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December 20th, 1938.

Honorable Roberto H. Todd,
P. O. Box 1329,
San Juan, Puerto Rico.

My dear Don Roberto:

I am writing you in English for the same reason that you wrote me in Spanish, as both you and I have the privilege of using either language indiscriminately. I was glad to have been able to help you to retain the services of our mutual friend, Frank Buckley, and feel certain that he will be satisfactory to you in every way.

To return to the discussion you and I are having on the matter of the Liberal Party; a matter which is of the greatest importance to the future of the Island.

I was a little surprised at your attitude in the matter of the election of Ramirez to the presidency by the Central Committee. You say that we should be most grateful that a man like him should have assumed the thankless task of guiding the destinies of a minority. The very arguments that you use to show the great merit of Ramirez to my mind militate against his effectiveness as leader of a liberal group. You say that he is one of our outstanding lawyers with a magnificent clientele, including the largest bank in Puerto Rico. You might have added that he is also strongly allied to the sugar interests, and from his background and training, feels more than favorable inclined toward corporations.

In other words, you confirm from your arguments the very points that I have been making which are that he is not a Liberal, will ultimately disrupt the present magnificent strength of the Liberal Party, and has more affinity to men of the type of Valdes, Iriarte, Garcia Mendez and Winship than he possibly could have for the ideology of the much lamented Don Antonio.

The Liberal Party, adhering to the glorious traditions of the Unionist Party, has always fought the battles of the masses. In support of this statement, one merely has to look back on the legislation which was passed by the Unionist Party, and all the laws favoring labor which antedate by many years the liberal legislation now being enacted and considered by the Congress of the United States, such as the Minimum Wage Law, Workmen's Compensation, etc., etc.

You are perfectly correct in saying that what I desire above all else is the success of the Liberal Party. Not because such a success would spell a personal triumph, but because I have become convinced through my many years of campaigning as a simple private in the rear ranks of the Liberal Army, that only the success of the Liberal Party can spell ultimate peace and happiness for our unhappy Island. But you are in error when you believe that I have anything personal against Ramirez.

Regarding the explanation which he gave you as to a statement that he had personally paid the expenses of Don Antonio's funeral, he misinformed you when he told you that it was a misunderstanding on the part of some

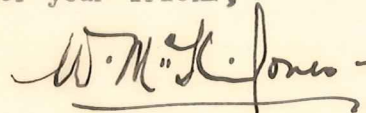
American reporter. The statement was made, not to an American reporter, but to young Rodriguez, reporter of "La Prensa", and who is, as you know, a son of that sterling Puerto Rican, Rodriguez Vera.

In your final paragraph, you ask my pardon for the entire frankness with which you write me, and I can only say that I am grateful to you for being so frank with me, and I think you will agree that I am equally frank with you.

There will be a convention of the Party on January 21st, and there seems to be a hope on the part of a few that the election of Ramirez will be overturned at that time. I have no such hope, as, in spite of his inexperience as a politician, he was forehanded enough to have bespoken the various committees in his own favor while travelling around the Island with Don Antonio, and in a sense representing that grand old man. And even in death Don Antonio's influence must be reckoned with. What I fear is that after January 21st there will be no Liberal Party; merely a group consisting of men like Lastra and others who will seek to exploit the name for their own purposes.

Let me take advantage of this letter to wish you and yours a most happy Christmas, and may the New Year bring you the good things you so deserve.

As ever your friend,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "W. McK. Jones". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name below it.

Walter McK. Jones.

WMcKJ:mcc