

Washington, D.C.,
December 6, 1921.

Hon. Jose Tous Soto,
Ponce,
Porto Rico.

My dear Friend:

After I wrote you last Friday I had occasion for sending cablegram to The Times telling our friends of things that had just happened and came to my notice, and which are as follows:

On Thursday evening Mr. Iglesias met the Barcelo crowd in Childs Restaurant and had a little talk with them. Mr. Cordova told Iglesias that he was surprised to see him together with Hartzell and Mr. Todd defending the Governor, he who had shown himself to be of such independent character; that he should break away from our crowd and come over with them. Iglesias did not give any direct answer, but kept up the conversation with his accustomed smile, and then Mr. Barcelo took the lead in the conversation and told Iglesias that he might have committed some political mistakes in his life and he would go so far as to recognize that he had been somewhat harsh with him on certain occasions, but that Iglesias would have to admit that he was always inspired by good patriotic motives, that he was willing, in case Iglesias should abandon Governor Reily and come over to his side, to uphold and back any candidate that the American Federation of Labor should present for Governor, even including Mr. Iglesias himself. To this Iglesias could not keep quiet any longer and told Barcelo and his people what he thought of them and reminded them that he, Iglesias, was to-day defending and fighting the same principles as when he started defending the rights of the Labor people, that is to say, everything under the American flag. He told Barcelo that the independence propaganda had done more harm to the Island than one hundred cyclones, and that his only hope was to see Governor Reily endorsed and backed by the Administration, because that would mean the entire repudiation by the Government of the contention that our Island could ever be independent.

The other piece of news was to the effect that on Friday afternoon Mr. Gompers and eleven officials of the American Federation of Labor, including Iglesias, called on the President to talk about different matters affecting labor conditions, and naturally Porto Rico. When the subject came

to our local affairs, Gompers made a complete history of labor troubles in Porto Rico since the start of the American administration, and when he spoke of what Governor Reily had done, and still intended to do, he told the President that the American Federation of Labor would back and support Governor Reily in his policies both against the independence propaganda and putting down strikes wherever this was possible without harming labor. Gompers then turned to Iglesias and asked him to give his views on the subject and Iglesias did explain to the President what he thought of Reily's doings and how the labor people would uphold him as long as he continued in that same vein and then he handed the President a document which he had already prepared setting forth his views on the present situation in Porto Rico.

President Harding said he was delighted to hear that the Federation of Labor was in accord with Governor Reily and then went into an examination of the whole situation and concluded by saying that he would admit that perhaps the Governor had been undiplomatic, that where he should have used a "kid glove" he used a club instead, but that he knew him personally to be clean, honest, well meaning, and kind hearted and incapable of doing intentionally any harm to any one, that the independence propaganda was only taken up by a bunch of politician and that he understood that Reily had the whole situation under control, and that the Governor would be backed and sustained by him to the limit.

On Saturday afternoon I had a talk with General McIntyre, and I found him very pleasant and entirely disposed to back and sustain Governor Reily, evidently having received word from above. He told me that there was very little hope of any legislation for Porto Rico before the convening again of Congress after the Christmas recess and that he did not believe in having any bill introduced just now regarding the appointments made by the Governor because it would be used by Congress as a card against the Governor to-morrow when there should be any trouble in the local Senate on account of the confirmation of the Governor's appointees. As the General puts it, there might be Congressmen who might say that if the Governor knew before hand that there was going to be trouble on account of his appointments he should have been careful in his selections so as to avoid that trouble. On the other hand, the General said if this amendment is left for some time after February, when the Senate has met and has refused to confirm Reily's appointments, then Congress would be expected to act on something tangible.

I also took up with the General the matter of the proposed filling of the position of Chief Justice and told him the Governor's attitude and what our attitude would be, and that I was instructed by my party to go to the limit in defending our candidate even if this required my seeing the President direct. The General told me that that was an unfortunate matter and he regretted very much that the Governor had undertaken to recommend Justice Wolf from the very start of his administration without taking the necessary time for the study of the situation, and that this recommendation was very pleasing to the President because Simon Wolf, who is considered here as the leader of the Jewish Colony and the spokesman for the Jews before the Administration, is a good friend of the President's and he would like to please him; at the same time, McIntyre believes that the President, if well informed on the subject, as well as the desires of the Porto Rican people, would be willing to do in this matter the same as he did for the Philippines where he turned down Justice Finlay, an American and the senior justice, and appointed a Philippine Chief Justice so as to follow the precedent established since the American flag has waved over those islands. The General told me that Secretary Weeks is well informed of the situation and that I should talk to him freely because the President will not make his final decision until he has had the ultimate recommendation from the Secretary of War. I have, therefore, made an engagement to see Mr. Weeks to-morrow afternoon exclusively on this subject, and I intend to have a heart to heart talk with Governor Reily before I have that meeting with Weeks, so as to tell him before hand what I am about.

Yesterday morning Mr. Hartzell had a talk with Secretary Weeks about Governor Reily and his administration and the Secretary told him that he considered the fight as over because the Administration was going to stand by Reily and the latter would go back to Porto Rico with the entire endorsement of the President; that he had read the complaints against Reily published in the newspapers and had not found any one of them deserving any consideration, and that he had told that to Mr. Cordova who had preceded Mr. Hartzell in his interview with the Secretary. Mr. Weeks added that he had told our commissioner that if he and his friends had any other complaints to present against Reily that they would have to make them in writing and support them by proper affidavits, and then he would take them up in due time and consider them. Mr. Weeks told Hartzell that he understood that Mr. Barcelo and his friends were trying to dig up something out of the life of Reily previous to his going down to Porto Rico, that he considered that as unfortunate as it would prove that there was nothing tangible against Reily's

administration, but at the same time it would be a reflection upon the President for not being careful in his selection of the man he sent to Porto Rico as Governor. This, of course, with the understanding that there was something to dig up in Reilly's past.

Yesterday afternoon about half-past four I called to see Judge Towner and I found that Mr. Barcelo and his crowd were in consultation with the Judge and previous to them Reilly had been in with Hartzell. I expect to see the Judge sometime to-day.

Thursday, December 8, 1921.

Yesterday morning the Governor and his party accompanied Iglesias to the Shipping Board to support a petition which Iglesias was presenting asking for a raise in wages for the longshoremen in Porto Rico, and the Shipping Board promised that they would take up the matter with the different steamship companies in New York and urge that the said raise be made. Of course, Mr. Hartzell was not with us on this occasion.

After this we went to see General Pershing as Mr. Tore wanted to see him in regard to his sister, Major Parra's widow. The Governor then had alone about an hour's talk with the General and spoke with him about the independence propoganda which had crept into the army in Porto Rico, and it was suggested to the General that a change of the entire regiment with its officers, sending a new regiment down in exchange for the one down there, would be a good thing, and he promised that he would do so. The Governor also obtained from the General the promise of getting him an aid who could talk Spanish to take the place of the Captain Lopez. It is well to say right here that the Governor has received positive information that Dr. Lopez of New York, a brother of his aid, is one of his worst enemies up here, and also that another brother is here in Washington with the Barcelo crowd helping them in their pursuits against the Governor.

Another of the doings yesterday was a long talk with the people of the Farm Loan Bank and inducing them to promise the immediate extension of the benefits of said system in Porto Rico. I sent a cablegram to The Times telling them of all these happenings.

Senator Iglesias had been absent for a few days and only came to town yesterday and found out that Mr. Cordova had published in last Sunday's papers the

statement that Iglesias did not represent and consequently could not speak in the name of the laboring classes of Porto Rico, because he had declared himself to be a Bolshevik. Iglesias prepared last night a statement for the press in which he answers the attack, saying that he has represented the American Federation of Labor in the Island for the last twenty-four years, that he comes up every year to the annual conventions representing the laboring classes, and that he has been during the last two terms a senator at large and was elected last year by fifteen thousand votes more than Boss Barcelo. That as to the accusation of being a Bolshevik, Mr. Cordova cannot mean it seriously inasmuch as he had offered him the governorship of Porto Rico, in the presence of witnesses, if he would break away from Reilly and go over to Mr. Barcelo's side. As soon as this is published I will send you copies of the papers.

Senator King, Democrat of Utah, in the Senate yesterday introduced a resolution directing the Secretary of War to send to the Senate the number and names of Americans employed in the government service in Porto Rico and made the remarks that he had been told that lately a goodly number of Americans had been taken to the Island and given government jobs. This evidently comes from Mr. Barcelo and we must be glad that it has taken this shape, and through a Democratic senator, too, as it will be proven that the charge made against Reilly that he took over fifty men from Kansas City to Porto Rico and gave them government jobs is nothing but pure imagination. When this request is referred to the Governor for a report, he will be able to show that the auditor was appointed by the President, the assistant commissioner of education, is not from Missouri, and the only man from Kansas City is McClure. At the same time, it will be shown that the auditor replaced a continental American and the latter was taken care of in another job; the assistant commissioner of education also took the place of another continental American and McClure likewise. But it will be shown also that the most important position in the Government, that of commissioner of education, was given to a Porto Rican and he replaced a continental American. The appointments of Lippett and Wilson cannot be attacked because they are bona fide residents of the Island for more than twenty years, and at the same time it will be shown that Pesquera, Besosa, and myself replaced three continental Americans. On the whole, it is unfortunate that this charge has been made, but at the same time it will show the spirit of these secessionists.

One thing good about the charge of appointments of continental Americans, to my mind, is that it will settle the chief justiceship. I don't believe in the face of the charge made in the Senate that the President can afford to turn down a Porto Rican and favor a continental American for the place. By the way, I must say that my engagement with the Secretary of War had to be postponed until Saturday morning because Mr. Weeks was called hurriedly to New York yesterday and will not be back until Friday night.

Friday, December 9, 1921.

There is very little to be added except to say that last night the Governor attended a dinner at the White House given by the President and Mrs. Harding to about twenty State Governors and other distinguished gentlemen, and Reilly says that it was a complete success for him as all the Governors were very much interested in what he had to say about Porto Rico, and they all told him that they stood by him in all his doings.

Judge Franco and Senator Coats of New York are in town, and I have introduced them to the Governor with whom they had a pleasant more-than-an-hour talk and they left the conference very well satisfied in all respects. We are to see Senator Wadsworth this afternoon and I am taking them to have a talk with General McIntyre.

I am sending you a cablegram to-day asking you to send by next mail the recommendation to the Governor for Justice Toro's appointment as well as that of Judge Franco. I believe that we ought to do this because everything I say is only talk and we want to go on record as having presented to the Governor the matter in writing, and it ought to come through you. This must be done right away in view of the fact that the Chief Justice has sent in his resignation and I hope that nothing will be done until the end of this month.

I believe I ought to explain, although it is not for publication, the reason why I was made to appear in the New York papers as making charges in regard to the fire on the steamship TANAMO.

The day after we arrived in New York I called on the Governor and found him in the midst of about ten reporters from different papers interviewing him about different matters as well as of the recent fire on the steamer. I was introduced to the newspaper men and they questioned me about several things, and in a little while when they were leaving the Governor said he had been talking to them but he did not believe he should be quoted as it would not look right that he should be talking about his business in Porto Rico before he saw the President. He asked me if I would mind it if the newspapers should quote me instead, and I answered that I was willing provided that nothing in the interview would make me appear as accusing anybody of anything or blackening the records of any of the fellows on the other side, and I was assured that there was nothing of the kind in the whole conversation. When the papers were published the following day, and I noticed what had appeared, of course, I was disgusted, but you know how impossible it is to correct any misinformation after it has been printed in these papers. Ever since I have avoided appearing in any newspaper story, and I have refused to be quoted on certain subjects which my friend Reilly wanted me to give out to the papers.

I have found out that Barcelo and his crowd have engaged the services of a prominent attorney to push their case against Reilly here in Washington and to get up his record; that they have agreed to pay the attorney a retainer of Five Thousand Dollars, of which they have already paid him Two Thousand Five Hundred, plus Two Hundred Dollars a day for expenses in getting up the papers, taking affidavits, etc. I don't know what they are going to accomplish with this, for Reilly does not seem to be worrying any after I told him about this.

There is nothing more to add and until next mail I will have to communicate by wire anything that might come up.

With best regards, I beg to remain

Very truly yours,