

Washington, D. C.,
December 10th, 1921.

Hon. Jose Tous Soto,
Ponce, Porto Rico.

My dear friend:

I had a very good talk yesterday with Judge Towner, and both Senator Coats and Judge Franco were present. The Judge is not in favor at all of having any legislation for Porto Rico at this time. He says that if anything should come up just now before the Committees, that there would suddenly be some hearings and Mr. Barcelo and his crowd would want to appear, and although they could not expect to accomplish much, the question would be taken up in the newspapers and the Porto Rican friends in Washington believe that Porto Rico has had enough publicity just now. He is rather inclined to counsel that we wait until the Senate meets in Porto Rico and the matter of confirmations come up, and then will be the time to come to Congress for relief.

He told me that he had advised Mr. Barcelo that the best he could do was to go back to Porto Rico and try to get along as best he could with Governor Reilly. He added that he had told Barcelo that none of these troubles would have happened if he had followed the good advices he had given him long ago; and, inconclusion, he told him that the Administration and the friends of Porto Rico in Washington would uphold Governor Reilly in his administration in the Island.

I saw Secretary Weeks this morning, and spoke to him very freely about the vacancy in the office of Chief Justice, and explained to him the whole situation; and I must say that when I left, I was very much encouraged in the belief that Justice del Toro will get the promotion. When I tried to explain to him the negative qualities of Wolf for the position, he stopped me and said that he knew him personally and that he considered him a weakling and a sort of dyspeptic. Of course this is confidential.

I gave the Secretary a memorandum which I had with me of the life and activities of Justice del Toro; he asked me how old he was, and then told me that he had received a good letter from Judge Odlin explaining the whole situation; that he would talk with the President and explain to him the whole matter.

The Secretary then switched the conversation to the troubles that Reilly has been having in Porto Rico, and told me that he had been receiving letters from friends in the Island

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about the situation, and that he had just received one from a friend of his in New York who had just returned from the Island, and all these reports agreed in saying that there was no trouble in the doings of Reilly, but that his failings were too much talk and letter writing. The Secretary then asked me the straight question whether or not that was true, and I could not help telling him that the information was correct. He then told me that the Administration was going to back the Governor and he, the Secretary, would counsel him to be careful in what he said and to quit writing letters so that there should be no more trouble in the Island on that account.

I failed to mention the fact that in my conversation with Judge Towner yesterday I brought to his attention the matter of filling the vacancy in the office of Chief Justice, and went at length into the whole situation. He agreed with me and asked me to write him a letter explaining the whole thing, and promised that he would see the President and try to have him see the situation in its true light. I am herewith enclosing a copy of the letter which I wrote Judge Towner.

This morning I also saw Senator Wadsworth of New York, together with Senator Coats, who is an intimate friend of his. The Senator, who went to Porto Rico as a private in the Spanish-American War, has shown a good deal of interest in our matters, and wants me to write him a letter embodying the data which I received this morning by cable from Feliu, regarding the number of employees, giving those who are Continental Americans. He wants this data so as to be able to answer Senator King when his resolution comes up for discussion. He also promised to bring the matter of the office of Chief Justice to the attention of the President as soon as he gets a chance to talk to him.

Washington, D. C.,
December 14th, 1921.

I sent to the Times some cablegrams explaining about a purported interview had by Mr. Barcelo and his friends with the President. It seems that the New York Times of Saturday, the 10th, gave out as news that such an interview had taken place. Riley went on Monday to the White House and found out that it was not true, as both Mr. Christian and the doorkeeper told him that they had not seen the President and this was confirmed by some of the newspaper men. Riley called up the correspondent of the New York Times and explained to him what had happened and the correction was made the next day, which led me to send the information to the Times. It now happens, from certain information which I have received and of which Riley does not

know yet, that they did see the President and were taken in by Secretary Weeks, after they had filed with the Secretary the charges which they had against Riley. Mr. Barcelo spoke briefly to the President, telling him that he was returning home in the hope that as a result of the charges that Riley would be removed. I know now that Barcelo has returned to New York last night, but Jones is still in town, telling everybody what he expects to accomplish as a result of the charges.

To a cable received from Feliu enquiring when we will sail and if I will accompany the Governor, I have answered that we will sail some time in January and that we will go together. For obvious reasons, the Governor don't care to let anybody know the exact date of his sailing, but you will hear from us by aerogram. Riley expects to go west some time this week, but will return to Washington to finish up his business the first part of January, and we will meet again here and then get prepared to go back to Porto Rico.

I am sending for the Times a few clippings, amongst them some from Kansas City papers, which give very favorable stories about Riley. He wants them published both in English and Spanish, in the same issue, if possible, as they are important, coming from a newspaper of his own city. Amongst the clippings there is one which is a cable from Manila giving the principal planks in the platform of a new independence party headed by Quezon, and you will notice that it is a bold platform, but a dignified position to take when a party seeks independence, and it compares very unfavorably with our independence fellows in Porto Rico.

I visited the Post Office Department yesterday with Riley Hartzell to attend to certain appointments pending and Riley endorsed all the recommendations that I made. And, by the way, we had to laugh at a certain expression made by Riley when he explained to the First Assistant Postmaster General, to-wit: "I am going to carry out the ideas I gave in my inaugural address, that is, that I'm going to be Governor of all the people and not of any particular party, but the fellows who are fighting me will have to get the jobs from some one else."

Another of my cables to the Times was in answer to one I received from Feliu inquiring whether or not it was true that a compromise was in the air between the Administration, Riley, and Barcelo. I answered that it was all a lie, and that Riley had refused to see his enemies and that he was stronger today with the Administration than ever before. Riley, himself, told me that Mr. Davila and Mr. Barcelo had sent feelers to him suggesting an interview with the object of a compromise, but that he had refused point blank to have anything to do with them, and that he would continue in the same attitude.

I am sending to the Times a copy of a Bill which was prepared by the Labor Conference, which I cabled about last Monday, to make Porto Rico and incorporated territory. The Bill will be introduced by Representative Nolan, who is a member of the Insular Committee, and it seems now that the matter will have very favorable consideration. I called Iglesias' attention to the fact that in Section 4 of the Bill they had left out to provide for the custom revenues now collected in Porto Rico, and he promised that he would see Noland to have it included before he introduces the Bill. This measure will cover all our situation and what we have been asking for and when the time comes we must be prepared to appear before the Committee in its support.

I had a cable this morning from the Times asking me whether or not it was true that there had been a compromise between the Unionists' Commission and Reily to the effect that the latter would resign immediately after returning to the Island. This cable is simply a reproduction of the one I received before from Feliu and I am answering the times today denying any such agreement and any knowledge of Reily's intention of resigning or any suggestion of anybody in the Administration to that effect. On the contrary, Reily is stronger today than ever with the Administration and the fact that his enemies have dropped all charges against him about his administrative duties and that they have gone outside of his jurisdiction to rake up his past activities, shows conclusively the weakness of their position and it would be folly to think that Reily, in such a strong situation, would think of compromising with the same men who have been doing so much to harm him both with the Administration and the general public. Reily will go back to Porto Rico with flying colors and we must sustain him and see that his administration is a complete success.

The Governor intends to leave for Kansas City some time tomorrow night and between today and then he will try to see the President, having already seen this morning the Secretary of War, and yesterday Gen. McIntyre regarding the charges presented by Jones about his activities in Kansas City. He will then come back to Washington sometime around the 5th of next month when we will meet with Hartzell, Bennett, Bonner, and Iglesias and myself to finish up our business and be prepared to return to the Island some day, as we will not tell any one on what steamer we will leave. I believe that after Reily goes west, I will go to New York and spend a few days and then return here, but you may continue addressing me at the same place, where I am sure to get my letters, or they will be forwarded to me in New York.

of having the Colonel again with us, and this will relieve the Governor of an embarrassing position as there are conflicting elements who desire to be favored with the appointment.

There is nothing more to add, and wishing you a Merry Christmas, I beg to remain

Your friend,

P.S. We have had a conference of more than three-quarters of an hour with the President. Iglesias, Cape, and myself accompanied the Governor. We went through all the situation in Porto Rico, as well as the charges filed by Jones and I am glad to say that the President has given Reily his most hearty approval and endorsement and concluded by telling him that he wanted him to go back to the Island as soon as possible and continue to carry out his policies already commenced; that he had no criticism to make and that he didn't give a rap for the charges presented by Jones.

The endorsement given by the President was so unqualified that it took us all by surprise and it is useless to say that the Governor feels very much elated and happy and Cape, who is new in this game but who is entirely on our side, could hardly believe his ears and couldn't help embracing Reily when we got into the Private Secretary's room.

Iglesias made a beautiful presentation of what the work of Reily meant for the future of Porto Rico, doing away with the old policies inherited from olden days and which have so much to do with the old system of Spanish-American policies and he added that as long as Reily continued carrying out such policies, which meant so much for the laboring classes, that he would give him his entire support.

For my part, I told the President that if he remembered my talk with him last April I had explained the situation in Porto Rico as the aftermath of eight years of the Yager administration and the entire surrender into the hands of the independence crowd. I told him that Governor Reily was exactly the kind of man who was needed at the time to tell the Unionists where they would have to stop in their propaganda of independence and naturally that was the reason of all this fight against Reily's administration.

Yesterday Iglesias saw McIntyre and told him of the cable which I had received from the Times telling about an agreement reached between the Administration, Barcelo and Reily. McIntyre said he did not know anything about it, and that he didn't believe that anything of the kind had happened. In view of this information I sent a cable to the Times and told of the charges presented by Jones, but this morning the Governor sent a cable to his secretary asking that my cable be not published, as he did not want to worry his family with the news of these charges. The fact is that there are no charges pending against the Governor, and the only thing is those presented by Jones against Reily as a private citizen.

The Governor was notified last night by telephone that the President would see him today at three o'clock and he has asked Iglesias and myself to go with him, as we are the only ones left of his commission. I have told him that I believed that the President would like to see him alone for an explanation of these charges, but he has insisted and I will go with him and if there is time left I will add a few lines to this letter, giving the result of the conference with the President.

In one of my cables to Felio I said that he should cable me just "Todd", care of French Cable Company, and I have noticed that he still insists on spending more money putting my address in these cables, when I have already paid for the registry of my name on any telegrams sent me that they will reach me.

I have noticed the local papers in San Juan stating that Mr. Guerra was coming to help Barcelo in his political activities. I happen to know different. Guerra's franchise for the dock was here pending the signature of the President, and it seems that Reily was advised that there was some defect in the franchise, and he called up the White House and asked that the franchise be returned to Porto Rico without the approval of the President, and it was so done. Maybe Mr. Guerra will be able to convince the President otherwise.

Colonel Townshend was in to see me yesterday and I introduced him to the Governor with whom he had a long chat regarding his life in Porto Rico. The matter of the vacancy in the office of Adjutant General was mentioned, and the Governor offered the position to the Colonel, who did not give a definite answer, but when he left I had a short talk with him and he told me that he would leave that matter in my hands and authorize me to tell the Governor he would accept it if it were formally offered to him. I spoke to the Governor this morning about this subject, and I believe that we may still have the pleasure

When Reily explained to the President about Senator King's resolution touching upon the Continental Americans whom he had appointed to office in Porto Rico and went into details about how many of these Americans had been displaced to appoint natives, the President told him to immediately write him a letter explaining all this and he would have a Senator read it in the Senate so that it would appear in the record much before the Secretary of War will have sent in his report on the resolution.

I cannot go into more details of this conference, as the time is late and I want to mail this letter, but I may send a cablegram to the Times today, giving a synopsis of the conversation.

Resuming, I believe the situation has been entirely clarified and that Reily is stronger today than ever, but I have gained the impression that Weeks has told the President that he should urge Reily to go down to his post as soon as possible and not stay any longer up here, and the President even suggested that if he could go back to Porto Rico in time for Christmas it would be better. Of course, this was crowding Reily too much and he explained it would take him a week to finish up his business in Kansas City, to which the President said, "Well, immediately thereafter you must go back and continue the good work already commenced."

R. H. T.