

February 1, 1923.

Hon. Jose Tous Soto,
Ponce, P. R.

My dear friend:-

I am commencing to write this letter today because I am planning to go tomorrow, Friday, to New York and anything that I may add will be in the early morning.

I sent yesterday a cablegram to Geigel, telling him that Governor Reily was returning next Saturday, with the full endorsement of the President, and that I had promised him a rousing reception on his arrival on the Island. This cable was sent at Reily's request, and I knew that you would require something of this sort from me for publication, but the real truth is very different indeed.

On Monday, January 29th, Reily had a long interview with Secretary Weeks and when he left the Secretary's office his attitude was entirely changed. He looked as if he had lost his last and only friend, but it was impossible to get anything out of him, except to say that the Secretary was not his friend, and to complain more than ever before of his physical inability to continue the fight in Porto Rico as Governor. That same day he had a two-hours' talk with the President, but he told me afterwards that most of the talk had been on Missouri matters. He said that the President asked him when he was returning to Porto Rico, and he replied that he was going back next Saturday, and then the President looked up a newspaper to find out whether or not there was a boat sailing earlier. This was the first talk with him about his conversation with the President, but afterward, and little by little, and as pulling teeth, I have gotten the painful impression that his return to Porto Rico is only temporary, and that he is broken entirely and quite a different man from the one who came up in December. He has said frankly that if the Porto Rico Senate should not confirm his appointees, he would immediately resign; or if the Unionists should continue the fight against him, he would immediately

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come back to the United States. To this, I answered him that it was better for him not to go back to the Island and present his resignation, thus giving the President a chance to pick another man, and to his friends now in Washington the opportunity of getting in touch with his successor.

Although the Governor has repeatedly, in our presence, refused to talk to newspaper reporters, the papers late last night and this morning have given out the news that Reily has stated that if his health should not improve, that he would have to resign his post, and that he was depending on the advice of Dr. Sawyer, the President's physician, as to whether he should or should not go back to the Island. It is true that he told me this morning that he could not conceive how that was published in the papers, because he had not spoken to any newspaper on the subject, but the matter is absolutely in line with what he has been telling us since he saw the Secretary of War and the President.

Reily told me, after his talk with the President, that he was stronger today with Harding than he ever was before, and that he was entrusted by the President to do some political work for him regarding Missouri politics, which meant a lot to both the President and himself, and adding that to himself it meant more than the Governorship of Porto Rico. Sure enough, Reily's attitude toward his Porto Rican friends here in Washington has entirely changed, and we scarcely see him at all. He will go out in the morning and get mixed up with Missouri politicians and Congressmen, and some days, as yesterday, for instance, he did not put in his appearance until after midnight, when he came to retire. For this reason, when I met him this morning at breakfast and he told me that his Republican friends in Porto Rico should not worry, that whether he stayed one day or one year in Porto Rico, he would still have something to say in the White House as to who his successor should be, and that he could assure me that it would neither be Towner nor Campbell. I told him that I could not see what interest he would have in the future in Porto Rican matters when he ceases to be Governor, and that I was getting tired of hearing the Secretary of War, Judge Towner, General MyIntyre, and many others expressing their views as to who should be Governor of Porto Rico, without taking into consideration the views of the Republican leaders themselves in Porto Rico, whom I believe had something to say in the matter. Reily saw the point, and told me

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that whatever he did in the premises would be after due consultation with us, but I told him that now that he was losing interest in Porto Rico, was the time when he should get together with both Iglesias and myself and see if he could not give us some help as to putting over a candidate of ours. He said that he was sorry he could not do anything today, because he was off to attend to a very important matter pertaining to Missouri.

I am writing all this so that you will see for yourself that we not only have lost Reilly, but even his mind is not on his Porto Rican duties, but that he is preparing his nest so that when he falls, he will do so in a soft spot.

My interview with the Secretary of War, which was fixed for last Monday, had to be postponed and I was to see him yesterday, but his Secretary asked me to postpone it again until this afternoon. I hope that I shall be able to add something to this letter regarding that interview, at which time I will bring up the subject of the intended amendment or reorganization of the Supreme Court, of which Geigel cabled me. Of course, you know that this interview with Weeks is for the purpose of explaining to him more fully our proposed amendment to the Organic Act in the matter of allowing a citizen to be candidate for one office on more than one ticket.

This morning I saw Secretary Christian and tried to arrange with him for an interview with the President some time next week. Christian told me that the President had been seeing many people lately on Porto Rico matters, but that I should see him again Tuesday morning and he would try to arrange for Iglesias and myself to see him. The health of the President today is not very good, and Secretary Christian would not fix the date of the interview.

Yesterday I had another talk with Judge Towner, and he was very much worked up when I told him that the Governor was returning to Porto Rico with the full confidence of the President. He said it was a pity and that if that was the case, he could not see how he could hold back Cordova Davila any longer from introducing his resolution requesting an investigation of Reilly's affairs, adding that Davila had heretofore behaved very decently in this matter. I told him that we had been scared so long and so many times by the said resolution, that I believed that the quicker Cordova Davila introduced it, the better it would be for every one concerned, as there were so many lies and unjust charges made in the said resolution, that it would

be more difficult for the Unionists to prove them than for Reily to defend himself of the just ones, and that in many of them the Republicans were ready to help Reily clear himself. Towner did not like this answer of mine, and said that, of course, I had to take into consideration the embarrassment that the introduction of that resolution would cause the administration here. But I replied to this that I had no control whatever. To tell the honest truth, Iglesias and I had been talking the night before, after we noticed the change in Reily's attitude, that it would be a good thing if Devila should introduce his resolution, as then the President could not help retaining Reily at his post and give him a chance of clearing himself entirely.

I saw McIntyre again and when I told him about the Governor returning to Porto Rico, he inquired whether I believed that the Unionists would be capable of doing something rash to him, meaning a demonstration against him on his arrival. I answered McIntyre that I did not believe such a thing would happen, but that I would be glad if such thing should happen, so as to show what kind of people the Unionists are,

Both Towner and McIntyre have been made to believe by the Unionists that Reily is at the bottom of our election contest case, and that he promised Souffront to pardon him if he would testify in our favor, and they have pointed out the fact, as damaging to Reily, that Souffront withdrew his appeal from the Supreme Court. I tried to explain to both gentlemen all that I knew on the subject, but I could see they were not convinced by my talk, and will have to depend on whatever Documentary evidence we can get to prove that, in the first place, Souffront's attorney was Senator Iriarte, that his bondsmen on appeal in the Supreme Court, giving their names, were both Unionists and that they withdrew the bond as soon as Souffront "squealed" on them, and for that reason, and in the absence of other bondsmen, Souffront withdrew his appeal. Inasmuch as Travieso has denied the fact that the city ever paid Souffront a weekly salary during all the time he had been in the penitentiary, it will be necessary to get this data from the auditor's office, where the matter was investigated at the instance of Governor Reily.

I am expecting an answer to a letter which I wrote last Monday, the 29th, to Mr. Courtney, the handwriting expert at Detroit, Mich. I explained to him all that is involved in our election contest case, telling him that I had Osborn's testimony, as well as the photographs taken by him of the ballot, which I would mail to him if from the reading of my letter he was interested in studying the matter with an object of going to Porto Rico, to testify in our favor

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incase we got a reversal in the Supreme Court. As I expect to send you a cable next week, in case I should see the President, I will add whatever information I got regarding Courtney.

Regarding Iglesias' resolution, introduced in both the Senate and the House, we had a long talk with Senator New, the Chairman of our Committee, to whom the matter was referred, and the Governor was present. We had seen Senator Brookhart before that and he wanted us to talk to Chairman New regarding the action to be taken by the Committee, and I told Senator New that although I could not prove many of the things that were contained in the resolution, that I knew they were true and Iglesias would prove them in case there was a hearing on the resolution. Senator New said that he had no objection to the resolution, and he believed that he could speak for the majority of his Committee, if it only contained authority for an investigation of affairs in Porto Rico, but that both himself and his Committee would never recommend the adoption of a resolution in which it was said positively that certain actions had been committed in Porto Rico, because if those things had happened, there was no necessity of ordering an investigation, at least, not making the Senate commit itself to such a statement.

By prearrangement Iglesias and Gompers had a conference with Secretary Weeks on this resolution, and General McIntyre was present. This was immediately after Reily had spoken to the Secretary of War. The Secretary went over the situation and said that he had to admit that he had been negligent in regard to affairs in Porto Rico, but that he was willing to have an investigation made of affairs by a Committee appointed by the President, and he added that he supposed that both Gompers and Iglesias were more interested in the economic and industrial features than in other matters contained in the resolution. Neither Gompers nor Iglesias committed themselves on the subject, but simply asked the Secretary for some time to consider what was the best thing to do, saying that they naturally had to consult the wishes of those introducing the resolution in Congress. It seems that the administration would rather have the resolution stopped, but no matter what may happen, the attention has already been called to the many abuses occurring in the Island during the last administration of Yager, and if an investigation is made at all, it will cover at least a period of ten years back, including, of course, the Reily administration.

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Iglesias told me that in the office of the Federation of Labor they have already written out a bill covering our proposed amendment to the Organic Act regarding allowing of candidates to be on more than one ticket for one office, and it will be ready for introduction soon after we can confer with the Secretary of War and the President about the said amendment.

Dr. Herrero told me today that Reily had sent a cable to Acting Governor Huyke, stating that he was sailing next Saturday, and asking for protection on his landing. I want to say also that in one of my last talks with the Governor, he has again changed his mind regarding Hartzell. He now claims that Hartzell did not betray him, as he found out after his last talk with the Secretary of War.

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I had a talk with the Secretary of War for more than an hour. He commenced by asking me to pardon me for putting me on and off the engagement so many days. Then he offered me a cigar, and in turn I asked him what he had done to poor Governor Reily that ever since his conversation with him (the Secretary) he looked as though he had lost his only friend. The Secretary smiled and said that he had only spoken plainly to Reily, telling him that if he, the Secretary, should have so many troubles and brought to the door of the President so many protests in his department, the President should ask him to resign, and if he didn't the President ought to remove him. He told Reily that the President had stood wonderfully for him and he was still standing for him and it was due to Reily to reciprocate in kind and help the President in the miserable situation brought about by so many blunders he had committed in Porto Rico. Reily tried to defend himself, but the Secretary told him that he was not complaining of his good intentions, but that in an administration what counted was results, and unfortunately, the results in Porto Rico had been all against Reily's administration. Weeks said that he spoke to the Governor in that vein for a long time and counseled him to consider whether or not he should give up his job and let some one else try it, thus relieving the situation and giving an opportunity to the President to make good in that one appointment.

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Weeks said that Reily spoke to him a good deal about Missouri politics, and that he had to laugh when Reily tried to make him believe that he was arranging to fix the Missouri delegation to the next National Convention for the nomination of Harding. He told Reily that he hoped that he would succeed, but the little he knew of politics induced him to believe that there was no man capable of fixing a delegation for a National convention two years hence, with the assurance that that delegation would stay put. He said that Reily told him he was going back to the Island and try his best to make good and that if he couldn't, then he would resign. That he understands that Reily afterward had a long talk with the President, and that as a result he has decided to sail for his post next Saturday.

Weeks then touched upon different subjects. He asked me if I knew Mr. Osborn, the handwriting expert who had been to see him on his return from Porto Rico and had given him a detailed account of the election contest case, showing him the photographs made by him of the ballots and explaining to him the differences in the photographs of the marks for the different candidates. I told him that I had seen the photographs and had heard Mr. Osborn's testimony, and that that was one of the reasons of my trip, namely, to try and get another expert who would testify in our behalf, if we get a reversal of the case on appeal. I then proceeded to explain to Weeks all the history of the elections of 1920 and how we were informed soon after the elections that the different split ballots had been stolen from us in three precincts where the Socialist party had clear majorities, and in which they had carried out a prearranged understanding that the said Socialists would vote our municipal ticket in the election, and how I had made the motion soon after the election in the Insular Board of Elections to have a recount and how the Unionist representative on the Board had opposed it, and how the Chairman had decided the motion in my favor and then changed his decision overnight. And also that, complying with the law, we commenced our suit within the 90 days prescribed by law and how the case had dragged on account of the change of Judges until November, 1922, but that we hoped that if we could get a new trial and an expert to go down and testify in our behalf, we would have the case decided in our favor, as all the other testimony was for us. Weeks then said that it was a common saying in this country that experts and liars belong to a class by themselves.

Weeks spoke to me about the different problems of the Island and how he thought they could be solved and he said that he was going to try with the Shipping Board and see if they could not arrange the sending of steamers to Porto Rico, making tours to take down good people from the north who would become interested in investing and in developing the Island. We spoke of the problems of education, and he told me that that was one feature that should be fought for vigorously by the Porto Ricans, and he agreed with me that our Resident Commissioner should apply himself to the task of getting Congress to appropriate a fixed sum for a number of years in helping in education, especially in the English language. Weeks also spoke of the necessity of having special schools in Porto Rico to train women in domestic service, such as maids and servants, as this is one of the problems in this country, especially in Washington, where it is difficult to get white help. And he told me his troubles in that regard in his own household.

Weeks spoke to me about the investigation asked by Iglesias and said that although he did not agree with Compers in many things, he had had a very interesting conversation with him on this subject and he promised him to study the matter and see what could be done.

We then spoke about candidates to succeed Reilly. He told me that he had seen the name of General Edwards mentioned in the papers, although he had no knowledge that Edwards' name was considered at all by the President, but that he believed that Edwards, by reason of his long dealings with our affairs, would make an excellent Governor. I then told him that the President had said to me, before the selection of Reilly for Governor, that he would not consider any military man for the position, because he did not believe in military men governing civil communities. Weeks said that this was a theory in this country, but that in practice military men had given better results in governing certain communities than the politicians had given, and he mentioned General Wood, Governor Morrow of the Canal Zone, and the Chairman of the Commission in the District of Columbia, stating that in none of those instances was there any trouble whatever. He said that the trouble with Reilly had been that he had meddled too much in local, small political affairs, when the Governor of Porto Rico should undertake to be the Governor of the whole country, giving every party its dues, but not taking sides with any.

We then took up the matter of the amendment to the Organic Act to correct the amendment made to our election law, and we went over the whole situation, and he asked me to leave with him the papers which you had given me with the authorities, for him to study and take up with the President. I also spoke to him about the cable received from Geigel regarding the intended bill regarding the reorganization of the Supreme Court. I told him that the business of the Court was such that in my belief the five Judges were able to transact it and have a clean desk when the court takes its annual vacation, as I knew that many of the Judges never had any case pending and I didn't see the necessity of the extra expense of creating two new Judges for the Court. Weeks said that he thought that if nine Judges were sufficient for the supreme Bench in these big United States, five ought to be amply sufficient for small Porto Rico. He then asked me if the matter would have to come to the approval of the President, and when I explained to him it would have to come to the President if the Governor vetoed the bill and the legislature then should pass it over his veto, and he said that the President would take care of that matter if it ever came up.

I told the Secretary that I was having trouble in getting an appointment to see the President next week and that I wanted to talk with the President about different matters before I left for Porto Rico, and he told me that on my return next Tuesday from New York, I should telephone his office and he would arrange it with the President's Secretary, so that I should have no trouble in getting the interview.

I then touched upon the subject of the Attorney General, and Weeks told me that a change was now due, and that if Reilly happened to make good and stay in Porto Rico, he would get another Attorney General, but the trouble was to get a suitable man. I thought it expedient to bring up the conversation regarding our friend, Senator Coats, and told the Secretary all that I knew about the Senator and how our territorial committee had endorsed him for the position. Weeks asked me to tell him more about the Senator, and I did, stating that he was an intimate friend of both Senator Wadsworth and Assistant Secretary Wainwright, with whom he had been in the Legislature in Albany; also that he had the backing of the New York organization and that National Committeeman Hilles would endorse him when the time comes. I added, nevertheless, that Senator Coats would never dream of abandoning his office to accept a position as Attorney General that only pays \$5000 in a strange and far country, but that he was willing to make the sacrifice in the belief that he could make good and then be available to succeed the Governor when the place should become vacant. Weeks told me he was very much pleased with my recommendation and that he would take it under advisement and he urged me to bring up the subject to the President when I see him next week.

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On the whole, I believe that the conversation with Weeks was very interesting and I want to say that, if he told me the truth, I gained the impression that there was nobody at present who could claim that the President was considering him seriously to succeed Reilly. I also gained the impression that if the impossible should happen, that is, that Reilly should make good when he goes back to Porto Rico, that he would be retained at his post as Governor. There is nothing more I can write you about today.

Sincerely yours,