

Washington, D. C.
January 5th, 1925.

Honorable Robert H. Todd,
San Juan, Porto Rico.

Dear Mr. Todd:-

I hope there is no truth to the report that you may resign the position as Mayor of San Juan, wh
which office you was elected by the people. I believe
that this would be a mistake, whether you can get people to
cooperate with you or not. The people elected you and want
you and this is the only saving feature of the Porto Rico
election. You owe it to the people and to yourself to
take the office and carry on as best you can. The darkest
hour is just before the dawn and it may be that the skies
will clear and that seems the darkest hour may be the first
rays of light in the dawning of a new day for Porto Rico.
I would say to you stick, by all means stick, and if you
cannot find those who will stay with you and help guide the
ship off the rocks, that you stick to the helm anyhow and
get the best men you can and if they do not come up to the
scratch, fire them and get others and keep it up until you
do get men who will have the interests of Jan Juan and
Porto Rico at heart. You cannot afford to quit Mr. Todd,
and it is not treating those right who voted for you. They
wanted you and elected you and I would fight it out to the
last drop of my blood before I would turn it over to others
who will not protect the interests of the people. You
have been called to this great work, the people trust in
you, and you must carry it thru, even tho the heavens may
fall. They say "God and one are a majority" and I believe
it, and unseen forces will come to your aid and the road will
be made clear and you cannot afford to give up the ship,
in its most dire need. It is the opportunity of a life
time for you to serve the people you have worked for so
long, and even tho you fight single handed, you must
fight and continue to fight. You will never again have
another opportunity to serve your people as you have now,
and the fact that others will not do their duty and stand
and fight is no reason that you should not, and I know
that when you consider it that you will see it this way.
Dont give up the ship" should be your watchword. Duty
has called you and you cannot close your ears to it and
you cannot lose this opportunity for service. Service
is the greatest word in the English language and you must
not and I am sure will not forsake your people in this
time of need.

I beg your pardon for writing to you this way, but my feeling is strong and I know I am right. This is the time of need in Porto Rico and you are the Moses which most lead them out of sea of debt and mis-government.

I am satisfied that a new day is dawning for Porto Rico, that the old order of things will be done away with. The fight is worth while. It means the future of Porto Rico. I love Porto Rico and it means much to me, and I love her people and only wish that I was there to help, but can probably be of more help right where I am now. I have put in some good licks and I believe that they have counted and I will keep hammering away. I will be glad when you come to Washington. Coll y Cuchi is doing fine and doing all he can and is getting the ground ready, but it will remain for you to do the real work. It will remain for you to mold it into shape and get action.

I do not believe there is anything whatever to the Albert S. Osborne business. I took the matter up with the Bureau of Investigations of the Department of Justice and they have no record of it but are causing a search to be made of the records of the courts in New York and if they should bevelope anything will advise you immediately. I did not think any more of his testimony in Porto Rico than you did, but we must give the devil his dues and not charge him with deeds he has not committed. He has enough to answer for without this.

With best regards and wishes and hoping to see you soon, I remain,

Very Truly Yours,

Ja. H. Wheeler

January 21st., 1925.

Hon. Ira K. Wells,
Assistant Attorney General,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Major:-

Just a few lines to acknowledge receipt with many thanks, to your beautiful letter of recent date, which gave me inspiration when I was undecided as to what I should do.

I believe that I have taken the right course, notwithstanding the big task before me to pun in order this entangled Administration. The whole Administration is in an awful condition, with not one cent in the Treasury and with an accumulation of debts that is appalling. It seems that a ciloná passed upon San Juan and swept everything away. Inefficiency, disregard for civic duty, and with the sole purpose of graft, has been the word of the previous administration during the last four years. The credit of the City is gone and the taxpayers will be the ultimate sufferers.

In June, 1923, the City was bonded for \$3,350,000 for public works and the only thing that was done was the erection of a few school buildings and the purchase of iron pipes for the new acueduct, which were contracted in Belgium after asking the American people to buy the bonds. There is no money to bury the pipes and we now will have to go before the People and ask authority for a new loan to finish the work. Fortunately, as it seems, the Insular Government, with a full knowledge of the disaster, has offered its help. I am figuring on a general retrenchment in expenses, so as to not only reduce the personnel and its salaries, but also to have some money with which to make repairs and attend to other public works.

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Under these circumstances, I can not see how I can cut loose from this important work, to think of going North and even if I can do it, I don't believe that I can reach Washington in time to do anything near this Congress.

Your new Attorney General was a very good selection made by the President. I know him personally having worked with him in 1920 in the National Committee when we met in Chicago, two weeks before the Convention to take up the contests. He showed then what he was as a worker, and his services at that time was very valuable to the Committee. / If you have occasion for it, please convey to him my best wishes for his success.

I have to close wishing you the very best that there is in store for all the good friends of Porto Rico and kindly remind me to Mrs. Wells.

Sincerely yours,

ADDRESS REPLY TO
"THE ATTORNEY GENERAL"
AND REFER TO
INITIALS AND NUMBER

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 30, 1925

Hon. Robert H. Todd,
San Juan, Porto Rico.

Dear Mr. Todd:

Your letter of January 21st received and I am glad that you concluded to qualify as Mayor of San Juan. I know the deplorable condition in which you find things and believe that this is the beginning of a new regime in Porto Rico as such methods can not continue. I hope that you will find good men to assist you and I believe you will as there are always plenty of men who would rather do right than wrong, and with the backing and encouragement that you will give them I am sure that your administration will be a success. I do not think the people of San Juan or of Porto Rico will ever again submit to the methods of government practiced by the last administration.

I do not hear much about Porto Rican matters here but I do not think that the Governor and his delegation are getting much encouragement, and I feel sure that the bill for the election of Governor of Porto Rico will not pass. I understand that the whole committee is figuring on returning to Porto Rico on February 5th. I will write you as to anything new and interesting, and I am always glad to hear from you and I am at your service at any time.

With best regards and wishes, I remain,

Very truly yours,

J. H. Wells

February 11, 1925.

Hon. Ira K. Wells,
Assistant Attorney General,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Major:-

I am pleased to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of Jan. 31, 1925, in favor of Mr. Frank E. Adams, as a candidate for the position as Postmaster of San Juan, and I want to say to you that I am very glad that you have the high opinion of Mr. Adams that I have enjoyed for a good many years. I have known Mr. Adams for a long time, ever since he came to Porto Rico during the Spanish American War and I want to say that I have never found anyone who can bit him in honesty, patriotism and all the other good qualities to go to make up a good citizen. But I am wondering whether you know that the appointments for postoffices are no longer made by my recommendation. Ever since Towner, Barcelo and Tous Soto made up their combination in the first part of last year, I am no longer called upon to recommend anyone and appointments are made through the Civil Service Commission in Washington. Applicants are required to fill out a blank form containing a good many questions and after the blank is filled out and sworn to, the Chairman of the local Civil Service Commission together with the Postoffice Inspector here take up all the applications, they go through them interviewing the applicants and their references and then then make out their report direct to the Commission in Washington. The Commission then picks the man whom they think is the highest in quealifications and the President ultimately makes the appointment. This is the procedure for all postoffices from the 4th to the 1st. class, and that of San Juan has just been advertised and applicants are required to follow suit.

Of course, Mr. Adams can give my name as reference and I will be pleased to answer any question that is put to me about his integrity, qualifications, etc., and I will tell him that I am writing you today to this effect.

Hon. Ira K. Wells,
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After a month in this office, I am commencing to see the light, but I am not commencing to see any money yet, on the contrary, every day presents new complications in the matter of moneys, so much so that after the report from our Auditor as well as that of our City Engineer, I must say to you that if ~~it~~ could not count with the aid of the Insular Government and the Legislature, it would be a case of throwing up the sponge and withdrawing.

It is not only a case of no money in the Treasury, too many debts, etc., but the case is made worse on account of a provision in the Municipal law which has been disregarded entirely by both the Insular and the Municipal Governments, limiting the assessment of taxation in San Juan to 2% and the rate of taxation today is that of 2.09%.

In a talk which I had with the Governor the day of his arrival, I spoke to him plainly about this, and he promised that if I should send him a memorandum, he would address the Legislature suggesting a change in the law. The truth is that .39% of 1% out of the 2.09% belong to Insular taxation. If we can have an amendment to the effect that the 2% mentioned should be only for municipal purposes, we would be saved, because we only need an addition of .25% of 1% in order to raise sufficient money for the continuation and finishing of several public works now on hand as well as of the paying of the current debts, etc.

I am inclosing herewith a copy of the letter which I wrote today to the Governor, which is self explanatory on this subject.

Now there is another matter which I would like to write you about, and of which I have been hesitating, not knowing whether or not the new Attorney General had already taken charge of his new office.

It is the subject of the re-appointment of Judge Odling to his present position. His term of office, I believe, expires some time the first part of April and I know that he has made a good Judge and is very well liked by

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everybody and particularly by the poorest element and the jibaros in the hills. I would like to say a good word in behalf of Judge Odlin's re-appointment, and I am wondering whether you can do anything in this respect. Kindly let me know whether or not you think I should write the Attorney General direct, and if he has already taken charge of his new office.

There is nothing new that I can add today, and with my very best regards for both yourself and Mrs. Wells, believe me to remain, sincerely

Your friend,

Washington, D. C.
February 17th, 1925.

Honorable Robert H. Todd,
San Juan, Porto Rico.

Dear Mr. Todd:-

Your letter is just at hand and I note what you say in regard to post master. In view of the many defalcations of postal employees over the Island it seems to me very important that they have a man of the type of Mr. Adams, as post master at San Juan. One thing you can say of Mr. Adams and that is that he has never compromised his Americanism, and that he has stood four sheets to the wind and fought for the things he knows is right and is not driven from his course by every shifting breeze.

I have read with much interest the copy of your letter to Governor Towner and hope that it will bring results, altho I am doubtful. It is certainly a disgraceful condition and all you can do is to make the best of it and do the best that you can under the circumstances.

I think that Porto Rican affairs will receive more attention hereafter in Washington than they have heretofore done. Colonel Ross is here and he has put in some good work and I think that the light has commenced to dawn. You noticed what happened in Alaska. The same thing may happen in Porto Rico. Right now is a very busy time here and the President has much to do and much to contend with and will have until after the 4th of March. I am very sorry that you could not come up, but Santiago Iglesia and Coll y Cuchi have done good work. I do not believe that the legislative committee sent up accomplished anything whatever and in fact I think that they helped the cause of truth along considerable.

I note what you say about Judge Odlin. The new attorney General has as yet not come in, in fact he has not yet been confirmed, altho I am satisfied that he will be, but he will probably not take up his duties until March 4th, which is only two weeks away. I know of no opposition to him, altho there are several who have been trying for the place as it was not thought that he would be a candidate for reappointment and has mentioned resigning many times, both from the bench and in the papers, and the other candidates I do not think were against him and were only candidates on the assumption that he was going to resign and would not serve his time out. However I think that if the Judge really wants to stay in Porto Rico that he will have no trouble.

I am to see Colonel Ross again this evening and go over matters with him again. Senator Iglressia and Coll y Cuchi have both made a good impression here, and they have the

facts behind them. Keep the home fires burning and keeo up your courage, and as Lincoln said; " have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it."

With best regards and wishes I remain,

Very Truly Yours,

J. H. Wells

ADDRESS REPLY TO
"THE ATTORNEY GENERAL"
AND REFER TO
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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 14th, 1925.

Honorable Robert H. Todd,
San Juan, Porto Rico.

Dear Friend Todd:-

Your letter just received and was glad to hear from you. I realize what you have been up against, but believe that everything will come out all right, if we watch and pray, but while we are watching and praying to keep working and fighting. "Truth is mighty and will prevail." Colonel Ross was in last week. He has been assigned as Chief of Staff of the 7th Corps Area at Omaha, Nebraska. Porto Rico has a good friend in him and he has accomplished much for good government there. I feel that I have been able to do more real good for Porto Rico since I have been here than I could in Porto Rico.

The past six weeks have brought many chances in the official life of the Capitol and there is an entire reorganization taking place, which is all for the better. President Coolidge is entitled to great credit. He has had so many things to contend with that he cannot attend to everything at once, and I feel sure that Porto Rico will receive his very best efforts and that everything will work out for the good.

The new Attorney General is a wonderful man. He is very simple in his habits and tastes, absolutely honest in every respect and has no other idea than to do his full duty. It is a pleasure to work under him.

I feel that the Government of San Juan is going to be an object lesson for the balance of Porto Rico and that it will all bear fruit in due time. You certainly have your hands full.

Washington is a very beautiful place in spring and we are enjoying every bit of it, but somehow we still think of Porto Rico and will always remember the two years and half in Porto Rico as the most enjoyable of life and we will always have a very warm spot in our hearts for Porto Rico and its people., and I will always be interested in its well fare and advancement. I have faith that Porto Rico will take its place as a part of the United States and that everything will iron itself out all right. It will take time and we must not be discouraged as it cannot all come at once, but there will be an advancement and we must not lose faith. I look upon things a little different since I have been here. While in Porto Rico I was often discouraged and it looked like things were going to the bad and that there was no hope, but since I have come here and

look at things from a different angle I am very sure that everything will come in time, and that your efforts, seemingly fruitless will bear good fruit in due season, altho the time be long delayed. Its growth will be like the growth of a tree. It will be buffeted by storms and tempests and sometimes it will look as if it is being torn up by the roots, nevertheless the storms and tempests strengthen it and its roots are spreading in good soil, and altho it may have been stunted in its growth yet some of these times it will take a start and develop into a beautiful tree, stronger and better for the winds that have swept over it. I have a firm faith in the future of Porto Rico and you must not lose hope as often when defeat stars us in the face we are nearest accomplishment. The life of a country is like that of an individual, it has its down settings and its up-risings but there is a steady growth, altho sometimes we can see it not. So have faith and work and I am very sure that all will be well.

I do not think that the Judgeship matter has been taken up yet but it undoubtedly will be soon. I have not been asked about it. With best regards and wishes I remain,

Very Truly Yours,

J. H. Weeks.