

STATEMENT ON THE DEMANDS OF THE PEOPLE OF PORTO RICO.

There are at present two political organizations in Porto Rico recognized by our Election Law: the Republican Party and La Union de Puerto Rico (The Unionist Party).

There are certain wished and demands upon which both these organizations are agreed, and they are as follows:

1.- That the present Organic Act should be amended so as to place the veto therein conferred to the Governor upon the same basis as it is possessed by the President of United States and, generally, by the governors of the several states.

At present the Legislature has no power to pass any legislation over the Governor's veto, inasmuch as under the law if the Legislature does so, the matter may be appealed to the President by the Governor and the National Chief Executive is vested with power to reverse the action of the Legislature. It is claimed and maintained by both parties that the power reserved to the Congress of repealing any legislation enacted by the lawful Legislature is a sufficient safe-guard against any possible abuse of the local legislative power.

2.- That the heads of the several departments/and the Auditor of the Insular Government as well as the Justices of the local Supreme Court shall be appointed by the Territorial Governor with the advise and consent of the Territorial Senate.

Under the local Organic Act, the Justices of said Court, the Auditor, the Commissioner of Education and the Attorney General are appointed by the President with the advise and consent of the National Senate.

3.- That the limit of the borrowing power of Porto Rico shall be increased to 12% of the total assessed valuation of the Real and Personal Property of the Island.

This limit is now set by the Organic Act at 7% of the said valuation, and ~~xxxxxxx~~ it is deemed that the increase demanded



will in nowise ~~injure~~ injure the soundness of the security.

4.- The Republican Party further demands that the Territory of Porto Rico should be at once incorporated into the Union and the Constitution extended to it, and that, the Island should be finally admitted into the sisterhood of states with all the prerogatives and duties inherent thereto.

Upon this proposition, the Unionist Party stands for a solution absolutely irreconcilable with the one just stated. They demand that the Island should be ultimately granted absolute severance from the Union and organized and recognized as an independent nation, and that, in the meantime, ~~and~~ an autonomous government fashioned after the Canadian form should be granted to the Territory.

The Republican Party rejects both of these latter remedies as entirely inconsistent and incompatible with the American Political Institutions, with american citizenship and with all political national precedents and traditions. We insist in that the United States should never create or approve of a form of government for its territories which is not purely and entirely republican in its form, and that will not make the people of this territory properly fit to assume the great responsibilities that will fall upon it when admitted into the Union.

5.- Both of the parties named are also agreed upon the demand that Congress should give to us financial assistance in the promotion and amplification of educational facilities.

It is estimated that the Territory could raise probably five million dollars annually, by means of taxation for this purpose, and for a reasonable period of time. It is suggested that if the Congress should allow us for an equal time a sum also equal to the one raised by the Insular Government, illiteracy could be forever eradicated in about ten years, and the english speaking native population greatly increased to a number far in excess of five hundred thousand.

6.- Both of said parties also join in a demand for the extension to Porto Rico of the so called Rural Credits Law, Vocatio-



nal Education Act, <sup>the</sup> National Banking System laws and those of the Federal Reserve, as well as that proper measures should be adopted to relieve the present scarcity and limitation in shipping facilities to and from the Continent.

A review of the data furnished in another statement which has been filed with the Sub-committee will make evident the propriety of meeting the foregoing demand.

7.- There is also in Porto Rico a so called Socialist Party with which are affiliated certain laborers. This organization has no legal standing under the present election laws owing to ~~its~~ ~~limited~~ ~~membership~~ its membership, of which many, if not all, are also members of the local branch of the American Federation of Labor (see following paragraph).

This organization has not committed itself in any reliable way upon the political issues above mentioned; but it has always given expression to a favorable sentiment in behalf of the extension to this Island of the measures enumerated in paragraphs 5 and 6.

8.- ~~Members~~ The labor organizations of the Island are two: the Free Federation of Labor, which is under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor and the Federación Puertorriqueña del Trabajo, which is an independent and purely local organization. The former is headed by Mr. Santiago Iglesias, who is also a leader of the said Socialist Party. There are members of both of these organizations who militate in either the Republican or the Unionist Party. Both federations ~~are~~ claim to be non-partisan, and they favor generally the extension to the Island of the federal economic legislation before enumerated.