

Washington, D. C.
January 5th, 1922.

Honorable Jose Tous Soto,
Ponce, Porto Rico.

My dear friend:-

I got back from New York night before last and the first man I found coming down in the elevator that night was Mr. Barcelo, who, with Mr. Guerra, is stopping at Congress Hall. Of course, our salutation was of the frigid kind and after that I met him once or twice, and we have not noticed each other. I don't blame him for feeling that way against me, and the worst of it is that I still have to do something more which he will not like.

Yesterday morning I found out that Barcelo is pushing hard for Benedicto, Rivera Zayas, Rodriguez Serra to fill the vacancy in the Supreme Court. This was told to me by McIntyre himself, who, by the way, I found in a very healthy disposition when he referred to Governor Reily. Although McIntyre told me that nothing would be done in the matter of filling the vacancy until the Senate has confirmed the appointment of Toro, I have decided to do everything possible to get Judge Franco appointed, and I have made an engagement to see Secretary Weeks on Saturday at noon, and have prepared a memorandum to hand to him showing why neither of the three candidates presented by Barcelo should be appointed, and I intend, of course, to supplement some talk about other reasons why the Unionists should not be recognized.

Governor Reily is still away, but I expect him in at any moment, to decide upon his trip back to Porto Rico. There is a transport leaving the 12th of this month and I have asked McIntyre to get accommodations for the Governor and his party and have telegraphed Reily accordingly, but McIntyre told me he doubted very much if Reily could get away by that date. In any event, I have also engaged passage for the whole party on the steamship Tanamo to sail on the 19th, in case we can't go on the 12th, either on the Transport or on the Sagua. I want you to keep these sailings to yourself, as Reily don't care to have them made public, but I will cable to Porto Rico the same day we are leaving.

Jan. 5, 1922.

We should not expect any legislation about Porto Rico at this period. Iglesias told me yesterday that his people in the Federation of Labor are more than ready and willing to do their share in getting a good, working public opinion raised in favor of legislation making Porto Rico an incorporated territory. Mr. Nolan of the House, who was to introduce the bill, has been sick, but Iglesias has been talking to Judge Towner, who has put a great many objections in the way, claiming that the best thing to do is to try and push the resolution which he (Towner) introduced some time ago regarding the admittance of territories beyond the seas. Gompers and his friends are getting tired of Judge Towner's attitude and Iglesias told me that if he could remain here for a few months more, he was sure of pushing matters in such a way as to bring pressure to bear on Judge Towner in favor of the territorial bill. Iglesias ^{thinks} and I agree with him, that after this matter has been brought up with such a powerful body as the Federation of Labor and the Senators and Representatives belonging to that organization backing the movement it is a pity that no one should be here with sufficient interest in the subject to keep it pressing until it reaches the proper stage for adoption. Of course, I cannot stay any longer; in fact, I have over-stayed my leave of absence and I should of been on the job again if it were not for Reily, who spoke to the Secretary of Labor, and told him that he needed me here while he was absent to attend to public duties. My candid opinion is that if neither yourself, Feliu, or somebody else can come up with the idea of staying long enough to attend to this matter, which, as you will see, is of the greatest importance, the best man would be Iglesias, although I hate to see a man outside of our organization doing this for us.

Iglesias claims that he cannot stay here any longer for the account of the Federation of Labor, and, of course, we would have to provide sufficient funds for him to remain if we should decide that that is the proper thing to do. This is for you to decide and let me know by cable. In the meantime, when Reily arrives, I will bring the subject before him for his decision, although I don't see how he can keep Iglesias here at the Island's expense.

Jan. 6, 1922.

After giving the Iglesias matter some thought, I had another talk with him last evening and he told me that if he can get Mr. Gompers to agree to pay him his salary while he is in Washington, then he would be willing to stay here until June, if necessary, if we would pay him the sum of \$150 per month to help with his expenses. I promised him to write you about the matter and request an answer by cable, so that he will know what he must depend upon. Of course, he has not spoken to Mr. Gompers yet, as he told me that he would have to make up a statement in writing showing the reasons why it is convenient for him and the labor interests in Porto Rico to have him stay here for a few months more. In any event, your cablegram will resolve what should be done in the matter. The attitude of Gompers and his organization, including the members in Congress, is so friendly to the legislation proposed that it would be indeed a pity that some one should not be here to push the matter to a final determination, and you know very well that in these matters there must be some one sufficiently interested to "lobby" a bill of this sort. The indifference of Towner, as well as of Senator New, can only be fought with some effective propaganda, and I believe that in the absence of either yourself, Felio or some one else here, Iglesias would be the man.

Marshall Bennett came back yesterday from Tennessee and he was in my room for a good while last night. He told me of a long conversation he had yesterday with General McIntyre about different subjects. The one most important was the vacancy in the Supreme Court. McIntyre told him of the same names which he gave me the day before, and of which I have spoken above, and also included that of Frank Martinez, and requested Bennett to give him his opinion as to the best man to recommend. Bennett asked him point blank if he thought that a Republican would be appointed and McIntyre told him that he did not think so and that he believed that the Unionists were entitled to the vacancy and that it would help in pacifying them. Of course, this is just like McIntyre, who has never been our friend, and we must not forget that he was talking to a brother Democrat. He told Bennett some other things which I don't care to set down in a letter.

Iglesias has agreed with me to sign a letter to the President, as labor leader in Porto Rico, recommending Judge Franco for the vacancy and he has also, at my request, promised to get Gompers' signature to another letter which I am to write to the President endorsing Franco by the American Federation of Labor. I believe this will help.

I received a letter this morning from Reilly stating that he could not possibly leave on the 12th and that I should make arrangements for the sailing on the 19th. Please keep this confidential.

I am nursing a bad cold and I am going home,

Believe me to remain,

Your friend,