INTRODUCTION

THIS is May of 1946 and I have just come back to Puerto Rico from a journey to Washington, New York and Chicago, partly commemorative—the ceremony at which the Hyde Park estate was turned over by Mrs. Roosevelt to the Department of the Interior for administration as a national monument—and partly futurative—the final arrangements for my move to the University of Chicago when I give up the Governorship of Puerto Rico at the end of June.

Moving about the world after Hiroshima—this was my third considerable journey—has been somewhat as it might be to swim through the heavy water whose discovery was one of the incidents on the way to atomic fission. During this year everyone's understanding of the world and the society in which he lived had been wrenched into a kind of agonized attention to the transformation of mass into energy. It had not yet physically altered the environment, but the expectation that it would hung in the atmosphere. Old institutions were dissolving in people's minds; new ones had not yet taken shape. It was a time of pause rather than of action. There seemed to be a universal inertia which, for the moment, prevented progress, movement of any kind.

The demobilization of the armed forces was, of course, being accomplished in an incredibly short time; yet even that galvanic activity seemed part of a fantasy in which the actors were only half awake. It was like a clock running down, losing time, a mechanism without power. This strange sensation of moving through a thick hampering substance in a dream, of automatism, came partly, no doubt, from a reluctance to arrive anywhere or even to have time pass because of fear of what might be there or what might happen after arrival. The whole of mankind was psychopathic. We had, all of us, been translated to a world and to an era which we felt was too much for us. It had been bad enough to think of living with radar, pilotless planes, jet-propelled projectiles and all the other phenomena which had come upon us so rapidly during the war; but now to have to learn to live with atomic fire—it seemed too much!

Things had for a long time been getting worse in this sense. Until last century no invention had been succeeded by another in the same generation. This may not be strictly accurate; but it is true in the accommodative sense. For what is meant, of course, is only those inventions which have directly affected ways of living, man's prospect on his earth, the security of his relationship to other men and to forces and things. The airplane and the radio demanded a good deal of those who had hardly yet got used to automobiles and telephones; there were in my acquaintance several who were actually still afraid to fly and felt it to be somehow unnatural; and there were numerous people, of whom I was one, who could well remember a time when there were no telephones, no electric lights and no automobiles. And now we were required to accommodate ourselves to radar and the
prospect of enormous releases of a new motive force. This did not seem to most of us so much a great feat in the long struggle to control nature, as a letting loose of baneful forces from the outer spaces which were altogether beyond human understanding or control.

So we moved through the winter of 1945-46 with reluctance. A dead hand seemed to be laid on all the efforts to go back to the ways of peace after the disturbances and the intensities of war. There was much to be done. Everything but the necessities of war had fallen into neglect. A trip through the northern states in early spring would always reveal the unrepaid ravages of winter: the buildings needing paint; last year’s weeds in the fields and gardens; fallen fences; soggy patches of earth not yet covered with ragweed, burdocks or wire grass; dirty streets in the villages; a scattering of rusty cans and vagrant pieces of old lumber. This spring all these familiar revelations of the melting snows were horridly exaggerated. The peeling paint was not that of one season but of several; the piles of debris had the look of having been where they were forever; and there seemed no expectation anywhere of a return to tidiness and grace.

Millions of men were coming back from Europe, from the Pacific, from Alaska or the Caribbean. And there were only cramped places for them to live and an insufficiency of clothes for them to wear. They themselves had to make the inevitable adjustments after several years’ absence from families, from work, and especially, it seemed, from the necessity for self-discipline. Those who had been working at home were still tired from the long strain of speeded-up production, and quite unwilling to be paid less than they had been in the war plants which were now still and empty. Mr. Reuther, on their behalf, was demanding take-home pay which would maintain the national income at its war level—a not unreasonable policy, but one which infuriated employers who had looked forward to more amenable labor in time of peace. Everyone seemed to be, or about to be, on strike. Incredible citizens found that their telephones were paralyzed, that newspapers were not printed, that coal or electricity could not be had, that busses did not run, and even that there was question, after all these years, whether the railroads would operate. And while employer and employee quarreled, and everyone else watched, the world drifted, quite conscious that it was doing so, toward famine. In the United States there was plenty—on the black market, which was so far out of control that half or two thirds even of the food, in some communities, was bought by those who patronized it. But in Europe, and in Asia, displaced people, destroyed processing plants, devastated farms and shortages of seed had brought hundreds of millions of people to slow-starvation diets. Only now, in April, after a fall and winter of knowing all about it, were Americans beginning to respond to appeals which always before had aroused a quick and generous response.
With Charles Taussig and Abe Fortas, I motored out the West Side highways, across to the Sawmill River Parkway and out through Westchester and Putnam counties to Hyde Park. It was cold and overcast. Green was less conspicuous, in the woods along the parkways, than the reds and burnt browns of bursting bud sheaths. We talked sadly, as we went, of great days we had seen—of days, as we admitted, which seemed great now because of the Roosevelt effulgence which had lighted them. None of us had visited his burial place before, but Charles and I, at least, had been guests of a sort at Hyde Park in the past. We were not people with whom Roosevelt would ever have made contact if he had not been a public man and we in some way temporarily useful. Yet even this had given us a small portion of the intimacy he had shared with so many others for the same purpose. Perhaps a dozen times I had slept in the old house he loved, eaten with him in the traditional country-squire fashion, gone with him to the little Church of St. James, and ridden with him alone through the woodsly roads of the estate. This had not been in recent years. I had not been at Hyde Park since 1940 and had not, I suddenly realized, seen the library-museum, though I had seen some of his early sketches for it. These, I recalled, had been made on the same table around which we had discussed the bank holiday of 1933, the devaluation of the, dollar, governmental reorganization, problems of the railways and insurance companies, the re-recognition of Russia after long Republican chill, the rise of Hitler, transpacific airlines—a hundred such matters on which he himself liked to discourse and to hear the argument which followed. We talked of some of these and of the way they seemed to have come into his consciousness, for his education had been different from ours, more traditional, more what was thought right for gentlemen in his time. We talked also about how the weightier matters had been apt to be mixed with the trivial, even with gossip, speculation about the way the world was going, broad jokes, stories of wonder, and comments on the past brought out of that strange rich miscellany with which his mind was stocked. He had liked to be here where his roots gripped the familiar soil; so that when he spread himself at table with friends it was in the same confident way the elms and maples, safely braced in the earth, burgeoned and tossed their branches in the wind which blew down the Hudson or across it from the Catskills.

His critics said then, and they still say, that he was confident beyond his capacities. They held it against him that his laughter could often be heard from top to bottom of Krum

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1I may note here that Charles and I had only recently participated at St. Thomas in the Second Caribbean Conference. The Anglo-American Commission had been widened during the year to include the French and the Dutch; and at St. Thomas there had been West Indians from Guadeloupe and Martinique, from Curacao and Surinam, as well as from the seven British and two United States possessions. It had been a full-dress affair lasting three weeks, and I thought its significance considerable. We did not know, as yet, how Mr. Truman and Mr. Secretary Byrnes were going to view the Commission device. We knew it to be of the greatest possible use if it should be exploited, and we had asked, and had been joined in the asking by the Conference, that it be given a full Secretariat to be permanently in the region. We thought the other governments would agree if ours did. We hoped, in this way, to see the fruition of our considerable efforts during the past several years.
Elbow or the White House; to the more embittered this was evidence of such instability as to be useful in whispering campaigns. It had not seemed that way to me. A man can usually laugh in that hearty way if all his affairs are going well, if he has no secret personal troubles, if he is carrying on within a proved tradition. And Roosevelt was a man with fewer doubts than anyone I had ever known. Even the issues which faced him, and about which he was not able to find a policy, never kept him from feeling confident that solutions would turn up. He felt so much at one with history, so much the agent of benign progress, that even mistakes were not great worries. The average would be good. And I had heard him suggest more than once that mistakes might have their uses too.

It was not a vast crowd that day at Hyde Park, but it was large enough and official enough for simple ceremonial. And it was very simple. Mrs. Roosevelt told a little something of life there when her husband—and she—had been young, and managed to suggest the reasons why the home was being ceded to the public now instead of a century later, as had been the case with the homes of other statesmen. It had been his own arrangement. It came, again, from his sense of identification with history. This would be one of democracy’s honored places!

The acceptance speech was made by a new Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes was gone, now, from office several months since; and an ambitious new man was in his place. Probably it was the same speech Ickes would have made, bureaucracies being what they are; but anyway it was more than adequate. It was, in fact, one of the most fitting, even beautiful, addresses of occasion I had ever heard. The whole ceremony moved me deeply—more perhaps than it moved most of those who were there, because my memories and feelings were more complex, more memorial and reminiscent. Abe touched me kindly on the sleeve when he noticed that I was wiping my eyes. And then Mr. Truman made his short speech. We could do no better, he said, than pursue the Roosevelt line, and as for himself he intended, as he had averred before, to be wholly guided by it. The dry Missouri voice, it was sad to say, was a disastrous declination from the Roosevelt oratory which had familiarized Americans with a rich-ness they had come to take for granted and now realized had been a golden gift they had not sufficiently valued. It said what was right and true to be said. And I knew that it was honestly meant, as other of his speeches had been.

A gleam of rather watery sunlight filtered through the rudimentary leafage as the President spoke, as though to bless the full piety of the afternoon. As the ceremony ended and the crowd dispersed, we went to walk in the old rose garden, surrounded by the high evergreen hedge, where the marble tomb held the wasted body which had been put there a year ago, and then to drive back to the city along the parkways now somber in the dusk. President Truman went back to the task he had inherited, thankless if there ever was one. He had to do his best—and was doing it—with the equipment he possessed in a nation bewildered and disorganized, as nations always are, in the aftermath of war, but more
beset, it seemed, than at any other time in the life of our people. In addition to the domestic turmoil of strikes, inflation, black markets, and a reactionary majority (a coalition of Democrats and Republicans) in the Congress which refused all the measures he suggested and had none of its own, there were troubles abroad which seemed almost insoluble. It was when they contemplated these that the people most regretted the Roosevelt whom Mr. Truman had bound himself to emulate.

For the Roosevelt prestige had not fallen on his successor’s shoulders, and, since he was a different kind of man, he had to persuade the world’s people that it was a kind which could be trusted. For this he needed more time than he had yet had, more time, perhaps, than he would have if he kept on choosing the kind of assistants he had so far chosen. The problems would not wait; for even the peace had not yet been made. Its outlines could be seen; but there were deep differences still unreconciled, and some issues about which he appeared not to have even the beginnings of a policy. The most serious of the differences, of course, was the conflict between Russia and the British which hesitated just this side of active war throughout the Middle East, where Russian aggression thrust into the visceral spheres of British influence. This, it could be seen, was the long-awaited opportunity for the establishment of Muscovy on the warm seas to her south. The Czars had failed; but the Soviets had inherited the traditional urge. Britain’s weakness seemed a providential opening, coinciding, as it did, with Russia’s greatest all-time strength. Roosevelt’s death and our consequent faltering, together with our precipitate demobilization, had fatally reduced our participation in negotiations looking to compromise. Things had gone pretty far in a year. As we grieved for Roosevelt we could grieve for the world which had lost him. It was not easy for the British to accommodate themselves to lost prestige and power; while they were doing it, we were exposed to the consequences of any incident which the brutish Russians might make too hard for them to accept. For our affairs and those of the British were still "mixed up together" so inextricably that even the most obstreperous isolationists had begun to turn to advocacy of discipline for our allies rather than withdrawal from the issues they had brought into the mixing-up.

One unfortunate consequence—or perhaps, accompaniment —of this was the hostility to Russia which was growing more and more open, so that the former isolationist press was now actually beating its dangerous tom-toms for war. This inexpressible folly was the theme of Mr. Vincent Sheean’s book This House against This House which I had finished reading the night before the Hyde Park journey. The disjunction, said Mr. Sheean, which was coming upon us from the Anglo-American opposition to Russia was a rearing of "this house against this house," which would "the wofullest division prove that ever fell upon this cursed earth." But there were those who would "prevent it, resist it, let it not be so." They had not too many allies, however, for the anti-Russianism of our convinced capitalists had scarcely been in abeyance long enough for winning the war and had quickly risen again.
in flames of hatred which seemed as hot as though we had never admired the heroic spectacle of Stalingrad or watched thankfully the slow, incredible destruction of the Wehrmacht in the mud and snow of the steppes.

Then there was the spectacle of industrial and highly integrated Germany divided into four senseless zones administered quite separately by the great victors. Aside from the inefficiencies inherent in this, military men being what they were, denazification took place only haltingly in the French, British and American districts; perhaps it would never take place if military administration should become identified in German minds with democracy. The Russians in their area were trying to turn all the Social Democrats into Communists. But the policy, on the whole, served only to prolong the sufferings and demoralization of the defeated; it did nothing toward rehabilitating the democratic forces in Germany so that her people might once again be accepted into the world community. Our own responsibility in this was considerable. We had consented to the separate zones; we had been amateurish and inept in administration; we had let our army go completely to pieces. This last was perhaps our worst dereliction. There may have been political reasons for the zoning, though it was hard to imagine what they could have been to outweigh the need of overcoming the devastation of war; punishing the Germans, if that was the motive, would hardly justify the wholesale starvation of their children. Certainly it was a political mistake. With a joint central administration we should have been forced to work with the Russians and they with us; and consequently some acquaintanceship would have resulted and some mutual understanding. The division had the effect of adding eastern Germany to the Russian Empire. It was at once made an uncrossable frontier. The consequent irritations contributed no little to the anti-Russian prejudice which was rising like a tide in the Anglo-Saxon world.²

The demoralization of the American soldier as soon as the fighting was over was a measure of the demoralization of American life. He had never known clearly what he was fighting about and he had been given no moral reserves to be drawn on when the wine of war had ceased to stimulate. The fruits of a long propaganda for economic laissez faire, financed from the generous profit margins of a fat economy, made more generous to secure production for the war, were not ripe. The schools' the churches —the institutions of their elders—had taught these boys that governments were at best a nuisance and at worst

²Cf. Mr. Elmer Davis' "No World if Necessary" in the Saturday Review of Literature, 30 March 1946. This was a critical review of One World or ' None: A Report on the Full Meaning of the Atomic Bomb. (Edited by Dexter Masters and Katherine Way, Whittlesey House, 1946.) Mr. Davis' thesis was that it is all very well to talk about the necessity of world unity, but the fact is that the rest of us will never be able to unify with the Russians. The Russian police state would be hard to fit into a world federation, but add to that its threatening dynamism and its religious fanaticism and it becomes clear that such a world state can only be a Russian state. That is not acceptable. Has it occurred to the atomic scientists, Mr. Davis asked, in their innocence about politics, and their eagerness to escape the consequences of their own thoughtless activity, that "if their one world turned out to be totalitarian and obscurantist, we might better have no world at all?"
wicked because they interfered with business. The only occupation worthwhile was making money. The chief pleasure in life—as well as the basic drive of the economy—was getting the best of others. This travesty of moral leading was what they had for equipment in the reformation of Nazidom. The truth was that most of them could not see anything wrong about it now that the thick-necked burghers' manners had changed and the militarists had stopped pushing people around. They wondered what they were there for now that the fighting was over. Their drunkenness, their boorish assumption of superiority, their disrespect for the decencies became so notorious in all Europe that the nation was shamed. The disgrace, of course, was not theirs; it belonged of right to the elders whose democracy had been a sham and whose similar lack of decency was covered by no more than the thinnest cloak of hypocrisy.³

Was the sword tarnished, its once-bright blade scarred with the rust of futility, even of dishonor? The civilian soldier had been trained to fight superbly; he had not been taught to become an exemplary mentor. It was as important to nurse Germany out of the Nazi hang-over as it had been to defeat her mad drunken-ness. But no pains had been taken to convince the occupying army that this was so. Those among the soldiers who had wanted merely to get it over and get home again were completely without guiding purpose. Those who had found a tempering strength in war now lacked its supporting motivation. If the service men, when they should come home, exhibited the same qualities as they were now reported to be exhibiting in occupied Europe, no more could be expected of them than had been collectively contributed by their fathers after 1918—and that was nothing which counted for civic good. Perhaps the facts were badly re-reported; they might very possibly be distorted; perhaps the behavior of a few was taken to be the characteristic conduct of all. But there was reason for the gravest doubt whether, actually, we were not now reaping strictly what had been sowed in the hearts of the young. There was reason to question whether their minds had completed the transforming chemistry which had seemed to be induced by the experience of battle. I had felt, in the soldiers I had known, a sensibility beyond that of their superficial mentors. I thought they had gone beyond their elders to

³Cf. General Joseph McNarney’s order for the restoration of discipline, 26 April 1946. Cf. also the description in Time, 6 May 1946. Said Time, about the American soldier, quoting a home-coming chaplain: "There he stands in his bulging clothes, fat, overfed, lonely, a bit wistful, seeing little, understanding less—the Conqueror, with a chocolate bar in one pocket and a package of cigarettes in the other . . . about all that he, the Conqueror, has to give the conquered…." But what lay behind the disgrace, the chaplain seemed not to understand: "The army did little to control the conduct of its soldiers…. But the individual soldier must bear most of the blame. He lacked the character and pride to make a good showing for himself, his army and his country. . . ."

Yet in the same issue of Time, he who ran could read a back-home story which illumined the background of the army’s failure. The black market was “out of hand—and off the American conscience. . . . It had moved out of the alley and into the regular avenues of trade. The pattern was uniformly ugly: the public not only tacitly approved of price cheating and shady dealings; it connived in them. . . . All over the nation there was now little hesitancy—from sellers and buyers alike—in flouting the laws.” The boys in Germany—and in Japan—were only behaving in the pattern of the folks back home.
penetrate the inner nature of the crisis in which they were called to act, perhaps to die. I had thought they had passed through skepticism to faith, inarticulate, unformulated, but sustaining. These postwar days were not ones in which one could be sure; but their characteristic was unhappy. No one could be very optimistic.

Against a background of national lethargy and moral delinquency the President, with his helpers, and the representatives of other nations, was trying to make the United Nations organization work. What had been begun at Dumbarton Oaks⁴ and finished at San Francisco⁵ was at least operating: its first meeting had been held at London⁶ and, after deciding that its permanent home would have to be close to the new world metropolis and after picking Westchester County, just north of the new world metropolis, as its permanent seat, it was now meeting temporarily at Hunter College in the Bronx.⁷

Like many others I had followed the making of the United Nations and its first functionings with hopes which I knew, in reflective moods, to be hollow. What comforting faith I had persuaded myself to hold had disappeared in the flames of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Perhaps fortunately I had not even the remotest relation to its formation so that the undertaking in which I was, with a number of others, now engaged, could be entered on with good conscience. We had formed a Committee to Frame a World Constitution so that some preparation might have been made when the inevitable failure of the United Nations became so clear as to be insupportable.⁸ For time had divided on 6 August 1945; and the United Nations, no more than a few months old, already belonged to the obsolescent past.

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⁴July 1944.
⁵May 1945.
⁶October 1945.
⁷It would soon move to Long Island, much to the disgust of Borough President Lyons, where an abandoned war plant would offer a kind of refuge. The site of the Assembly, meanwhile, would be the New York State building on the old fairgrounds at Flushing. The question of the permanent seat would soon be again in question. The United Nations were given to understand by the property owners of Westchester and Long Island that they were not wanted. They thought, it was rumored, of moving to the environs of the next greatest metropolis, or even to San Francisco, where a welcome seemed available.
⁸The reason for saying that the United Nations organization is already obsolete and must inevitably be replaced is, of course, that it is not a government of the world’s peoples at all but only a conference of sovereign nations. And this, though it might have sufficed before Hiroshima—and I had thought it feasible as a point of departure—was, after that, obviously insufficient. It was even dangerous for seeming to be a world government when it was no more than a conference of wholly separate States. Even the Assembly (Chapter IV) which, from its name, might be thought to be representative, is simply a larger national group (Article 9: The General Assembly shall consist of all the Members of the United Nations. Each Member shall have not more than five representatives in the General Assembly) than the Security Council (Chapter V). The Assembly can only discuss any question relating to security . . . and make recommendations . . . (Article 11). But that is not government. And the Security Council itself consists of eleven representatives of nations of whom five are the victorious great powers (Article 23). That, under the compulsion of atomic fire, there must be a world government, seems to me obvious both because the technical perfecting of the applications of this new force will so reduce time and space as to make the physical separation of nations ridiculous and their competition as economic entities equally ridiculous,
I had gone to New York for a meeting of this group, and, after Hyde Park, had gone on to Chicago for another. We had been meeting two days in each month for some time past and had made some progress toward mutual satisfaction. Going back and forth from Puerto Rico, I sometimes wondered whether we were doing more than exculpating ourselves from the general guilt felt by all intellectuals. Certainly no constitution framed by a group of scholars had ever become a governing charter. All I could learn of had been worked out in controversy's heat amongst the pull and haul of interests already vested or hoping to become so. Yet, now that the commercial airlines were beginning to obtain their first postwar equipment, and we were flying to Miami in five hours and to New York in five more, there was less time on such journeys to ponder doubts. There was, also, in this shortening of time and contraction of space, a compression of urgencies which made it seem necessary and natural to think seriously of entirely new forms of government, and would have made it seem so even without the thousandfold intensification caused by the bomb.

At any rate I had no difficulty, nor, apparently, did the others, in devoting time and effort to what under normal circumstances would hardly have commended itself to the practical sense. Just now it seemed essential and, indeed, we soon found that many other individuals and groups had been seized by the same impulse though only ours was making a constitution.

To go on my last journey I had left to Mr. Manuel Pérez, Commissioner of Labor, as Acting Governor, much of the work which annually falls to the Executive in Puerto Rico in the thirty days allotted to him by the Organic Act for the signing of bills after the legislature adjourns, work he got through with an efficiency which strengthened my resolve to retire at the end of June. As a matter of fact it had been finally arranged in conversations with the new Secretary, Mr. J. A. Krug. But this was after a year of delay.

Shortly after President Roosevelt's death, Mr. Robert M. Hutchins, Chancellor of the University of Chicago, had asked me whether I did not now consider that it was time to get back to academic life and whether Chicago might not be an appropriate place. I thought seriously about it and decided that the suggestion was opportune. What I could do for Puerto Rico in Washington was now very little. My unpopularity with the reactionaries in the Congress had until now been more or less counterbalanced by my influence in the executive branch. But that was gone now, or rapidly going. And Mr. Muñoz Marín—the majority leader in Puerto Rico about whom readers of this book will hear a good deal—was obviously ready for a change. He would not oppose my staying, for we had been allies. But

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9Within a few more months we should fly direct to New York and Washington in six hours.
he would not oppose my going, either, because my usefulness was obviously diminished; any reasonably selected successor, especially if he carried political weight with the new crowd in Washington, would please him a good deal better.

After my talk with Mr. Hutchins I went to see the President. My journal indicates what took place:

23 August 1945. Washington. The President, when I saw him yesterday, was open and cordial. I had the impression of a man who carried his sixty years lightly, who was in good health, lively and well informed. He spoke first of the burden which had fallen on him and of his reluctance to accept it. He embarrassed me a little by suggesting that perhaps he felt less at home in the White House than I. My familiarity with the White House, I told him, was a little old now: his own relations with President Roosevelt must, in late years, have had something of the same nature as my own earlier ones. He spoke then, at some length, and with feeling, of the way in which, after it became apparent to President Roosevelt that they thought alike, he had been turned to for confidences in the most important matters. There was much more of this, he said, than anyone knew; and he was very grateful for it now, since it had given him a start in a job which otherwise might have overwhelmed him.

He went on to say that his administration had to be thought of as no more than an extension of the Roosevelt regime, and that he hoped only to carry out what had been so well begun. I said that could be true only in a limited and temporary sense, that I had been a participant in White House activities long enough to recognize that policies had to be reshaped almost continually: I knew that he was doing many new things; I thought moreover that it was generally good and generally approved. I spoke of the wise handling of the Japanese collapse, just recently, and, earlier, of the giving up of "unconditional surrender" as a war aim—which had always been a mistake. I said that no one could agree to everything and that I found myself in serious doubt as to the wisdom of abandoning wartime controls so rapidly. I thought there might be regret about that. But on the whole he had nothing whatever to be overmodest about. He seemed pleased and said that actually he took it more easily than he had expected to; he could sleep; he found that he could make decisions, even weighty ones, and then forget them; and on the whole he was keeping up with what came to him to do.

At a pause I said that I had come to tell him that since it was one of a President’s least privileges to have around him, and acting for him, people of his own choosing, I was quite willing to be replaced. He interrupted to reject the suggestion, saying that he would prefer that there should be no discussion of such a thing. He thought there might be prospect of action looking toward self-government for Puerto Rico and that I must see it through until I could hand over to a newly constituted government.
I was taken by surprise and no doubt showed it. He went on to say that he felt fairly well informed and was convinced that I ought to finish up what seemed to him a good work. I said that I had not expected such a reaction, knowing what some of those who had talked to him recently must have said about my regime. I had even thought that he might be embarrassed by my association with his administration. He laughed and asked, "Did you know—I suppose you didn't—that practically all the newspapers were against me in all my campaigns —and that it never made any difference? Don't worry about your enemies. Everyone who is any good has them. And yours, besides, are all reactionaries." He went on to say that the sources of the opposition to me were well enough known, that it caused him no concern, and that it should cause me none. I said to this that I did not want to be insistent but that I now had other work to go to and that for personal reasons I felt that I ought to do it. Of course, no one ought to refuse a duty when asked by the President. I never had done that and never would. I only wanted to be certain that it was being put to me as a matter of duty and not as a favor. He brushed that aside and went on to say some extremely kind things about my attitudes and my work which I should not have thought he would have known about at all. I was becoming embarrassed now to have a President taking this trouble over what was after all a minor matter among all those with which he had to deal. He offered to speak to the Chancellor if necessary. I then said further that I felt he was over-optimistic about the prospect of any action on Puerto Rican status—I thought there would be none, and for this reason it was a little unreasonable to ask for an extension from the University on those grounds. Getting legislation through and a new government constituted looked to me like a long job. "Nevertheless," the President said, "I must insist and you must yield." He went on to say that he was prepared to push legislation and that it would be done, he would predict, in six months. And then I could be released. We then went on to discuss the form legislation should take. I described at some length all we had been through in recent years, not sparing the congressional committees for their alternating neglect and harshness. I described to him the way in which we had arrived at the idea of getting from the Congress a moral commitment to any one among several alternatives from which Puerto Ricans might choose in a plebiscite. He readily grasped the point that a plebiscite held in any other way would certainly be rigged in favor of independence because its advocates would surround it with favorable conditions to which the Congress would never agree. He was very clear in being against independence. "But," I said, "I suppose you feel as I do that if there is the prospect of a plebiscite, neither of us should say so in such a way as to influence Puerto Ricans' choice." He answered that he thought they should certainly have the right to make even a disastrous choice if they wanted to. I then proposed that I redraft the lengthy Tydings-Piñero measure as a simple resolution stating briefly the alternatives: statehood, independence and a status somewhere between—which, for the present, we should call "association." He thought this
good and asked me to do it and to draft a covering memorandum so that all of it could be completed before I went back to Puerto Rico.

As I was leaving, I mentioned the work of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission and asked if it had occurred to him that such a device might be useful in the Pacific and possibly in the Mediterranean or elsewhere. He was very much interested in the idea and began what seemed to me so long a discussion that I suggested the preparation of a memorandum and discussion when I came back with the Puerto Rican resolution.

28 August. Washington. This morning I had another, very businesslike, talk with the President. I took him the draft of a resolution setting up, quite simply, a plebiscite in which Puerto Ricans would be authorized to choose a preferred status. The Congress would then be inferred to be committed to its implementation. He thought it good and turned it over to Sam Rosenman to see through. I had to tell him, however, that on the Pacific matter I had been unable to complete a memorandum. He suggested that I work on it some more and then talk it over with Jimmie Byrnes. What I had told him was not altogether frank. I had finished a memorandum which I felt to be adequate but, for one thing, Charles Taussig had not altogether liked it; and, for another, Abe Fortas had been unaccountably disturbed. He had complained to Ickes and Ickes, in effect, had told me to keep out. I had no direct interest in the Pacific, of course, and perhaps they were justified. But I thought it somewhat shortsighted. I called Mr. Byrnes several times, but I was unable to see him, and the memorandum has now been put away in my files. If the Commission idea was applicable to the Pacific, and if it never is applied, governmental stiffness can, I suppose, be blamed.

31 August. Jájome. I'm back in Puerto Rico after an all-night, all-day trip to Miami and then to San Juan. After a long day at my desk, I have come up to Jájome. The hills have their usual effect: serenity returns.

As expected, there were mixed feelings about the news that I should not soon be leaving the Governorship. The embarrassment of El Mundo, after a month of premature jubilation, was comic.

MacArthur landed in Tokyo yesterday to take the Japanese surrender.

I'm feeling a little lost without the book to work on.

Mr. Hutchins consenting, even without Presidential intervention, I had stayed on. But now that we were far into another year it was obviously best that I should go and begin my new work. Nothing had come of any effort to start the Congress toward a change of status; it was clear that nothing would come of any effort with this Congress. Its members were too busy with their private affairs, too divided, too harassed by pressures they could not resist, and too wholly hostile to the President. The situation in Washington, also, in spite of the
President’s genuine protestations, was no longer a comfortable one for me. With Harold Ickes gone I no longer felt at home in the Department with which most of my business must be done; and, actually, I could no longer be effective in the old way. In spite of my pro-test, a vacancy in our Supreme Court had been filled by the appointment of a Republicano; and a vacancy in the Commissionership of Education was nearly a year old, my recommendations having been ignored. When the Maritime Commission moved to impose outrageous freight-rate increases, I found there was little I could do in spite of devoted assistance by the law firm which now represented us in Washington.\(^{10}\)

It was the same with our effort to have the Civil Aeronautics Board give us better plane service; with the attempt to get larger allocations of fertilizer, building materials and rice; with the licensing of our Communications Authority’s radio station, and in a dozen other issues of importance to Puerto Rico. The Federal judge in Puerto Rico, who could hardly do so without the agreement of the Department of Justice, had enjoined two of our Authorities from actions authorized by the legislature. What the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico was evidently unwilling to do was now being done by a Federal judge. All Washington seemed to resent the undoubted success of our "socialistic" program. There were no more favors to be had. There was hostility everywhere. I presumed that a good deal of this would disappear with my going. It had happened before—for instance, when I had left Washington in 1937, and New York in 1941. It became an immediate issue when Mr. Thomas A. Fennell, who needed a minor Department of Agriculture regulation changed, reported to me that the Committee considering it had put him through a two-hour inquisition concerning the Tugwellian socialism of which his Agricultural Development Company was part and had rejected his proposal with contempt. The hostility, he told me, was open, bitter and vindictive.

Seeing Muñoz’ coolness, and realizing that my ineffectiveness in Washington would be a progressive weakness which Puerto Rico could ill afford, I resolved not to delay my going beyond summer. During a visit of Mr. Louis Brownlow, who came to take part in a conference we were having on public administration, and to give us advice on the further development of our program, I decided, after talking with him, to make the decision definite. I wrote to Mr. Colwell, President of the University, that my appointment could be made effective as of July.

My new work might have been made to order for me—education at the graduate level for planners and the direction of research into more effective forms and uses of planning technique. It is seldom that so logical an opportunity is offered to anyone in this haphazard society and especially, perhaps, in the academic world. This, besides, involved doing

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\(^{10}\)Arnold and Fortas. Mr. Abe Fortas had left the Department even before Mr. Ickes; Thurman Arnold had resigned his judgeship. With them was associated Mr. Walton Hamilton.
violence to precedent, and turning aside from accustomed ways. For planning had not been developed in faculties of Political Science; and I had not concealed the necessity for crossing traditional departmental lines. If we were to make a formidable effort we should have to invade a half dozen or more departments other than that in which I should formally hold a professorship.

Mr. Brownlow thought and said that the proposal must have originated in the Chancellor's sense of academic fitness. Every-one knew the central part the University had had in the success of the Manhattan project; and everyone knew that the Institute of Nuclear Physics was the most formidable aggregation of talent ever assembled in that field. Members of academic groups knew also, he said, even if others did not, that the social sciences had been under cultivated at Chicago as well, indeed, as everywhere else. Mankind was caught now with a destructive force which had no containing framework. This the social sciences might have supplied if their pursuit had been pushed with anything like the intense effort devoted to nuclear physics. And planning, with its intent to appraise and to furnish the knowledge for control, was especially appropriate to center on if this situation was to be remedied. At least a University which made something of planning could not be accused of having failed to meet its responsibilities.

Whether or not Mr. Brownlow's guess was correct, Mr. Hutchins' act was obviously the acceptance of an obligation which no other University had as yet got around to. His view that planning was important enough to warrant support comparable to that being given the physical sciences was something of a surprise to me. His interests—except, of course, that he was an experienced public administrator—had been in the humanities. He had developed the original study of great books as a major academic enterprise, and, of course, had been himself trained in the law. Planning was not generally understood by those who had such interests. It was usually, in fact, regarded by the uninformed as so closely identified with totalitarianism as to be suspect. One of the centers of this suspicious withdrawal was supposed to be the University of Chicago where, just recently, Mr. Friedrich A. Hayek, the Austrian refugee (now professor at the London School of Economics) had given lectures and published his attack on planning.\(^1\)

Mr. Hayek had been lionized at the University, and his views had certainly been agreeable to the more prominent members of the Department of Economics. But changes were being made. Not long after my decision to go to Chicago, it happened that two stalwarts resigned to go elsewhere and Mr. Herman Finer, who had written the ablest answer to Mr. Hayek,\(^2\) became a member of the faculty. It was evident that Chicago was not going to be known as the exclusive home of reaction; but rather was going to be hospitable to all serious approaches to the political and economic dilemma in which modern man finds himself.

\(^{1}\)The Road to Serfdom, University of Chicago Press, 1944.
\(^{2}\)The Road to Reaction, Little, Brown & Co., 1945.
My own view of planning was instrumental. I thought of it as a governmental process, available, when we were ready to give up the crudeness and whimsy of backwoods politics for modus operandi more appropriate to complex modern life, for the solution of many problems we were unable to solve with our essentially static system of legislative-executive-judicial checks and balances. It was a way of bringing the foreseen and agreed future into daily influence on action, thus displacing the powerful competing economic groups whose intention was to exploit the public—through government—for their own benefit. Our present governmental arrangements offered too many opportunities for this; and many of them would be circumvented by planning. This explains the opposition to it, of course, and the elaborate misrepresentation of its nature and effects. Evidently Mr. Hutchins had not been taken in either by Mr. Hayek or by other opponents of rationality in economic and political life. One who knows something of all this will understand my special feeling of gratitude for an exceptional opportunity to be of service.

Now I was back in Puerto Rico for my last few months. In our island there was almost feverish prosperity. We had planned well and were surmounting our readjustment smoothly. But for all Americans the victory had a taste of corruption-flavored dust; and Puerto Rico was no exception to this. We lived apart, yet not apart; we were better off than at any time in Puerto Rican history and were planning large increases, which could now be afforded, in budgets for health, for education, for housing and the like; yet we too shared the world’s malaise and wondered fearfully what might happen next. For the rest of the world, Latin America alone, perhaps, excepted, the peace was proving only less disastrous than war itself. The food ration had been contracted steadily as the months had passed until what had been malnutrition had passed into slow starvation made worse by the ugliness of illegal trading which defeated all organized efforts at equalization. It was a nadir rather than an apogee of civilization.

The atomic bomb had been a technical triumph, but no one, least of all its creators, felt it to be a moral gain. In fact, the atomic scientists had organized a league to do what they could toward repairing the damage they had done—not the damage to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but the damage to man’s prospects on this earth, made insecure, paradoxically, through progress. The sense of guilt lay heavily upon them; its expiation became a preoccupation which absorbed their days and nights. They be-sieged the Congress; they lectured to civic groups; they worked as sleeplessly as they ever had on the Manhattan project. It was, in contrast to their professional work, amateurish and awkward. It succeeded only in

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13 A summary of happenings immediately after Hiroshima was edited for the Woodrow Wilson Foundation by Mr. Sydnor H. Walker. This compilation of opinion upon the political and international implications of the atomic bomb expresses the almost universal mood of horror which dominated the thought of all mankind. This and other literature, such as Dr. Harold C. Urey’s I’m a Frightened Man, was distributed wholesale by the National Committee on Atomic Information. The scientists themselves had formed a national organization for co-operative political work.
making certain that the legislation being shaped in the McMahon Committee, even though Mr. McKellar, as President of the Senate, had packed that group with reaction-aries, should not result in military management. This, they felt, would ease the threat which was tormenting Russia and would preclude the insane restrictions being demanded by the Army and the jingo press. We might easily, they said, be so exclusive that we should wake up someday and find the Russians far ahead of us. Because when it came to exclusiveness, that was a Russian specialty. And their science was not so far behind our own as to be counted ineffective. Meanwhile we should not have done anything to exploit the benign potentialities which were a more obvious and direct result of atomic fission than the destructiveness which had been produced by the tour de force of the Manhattan project.\(^{14}\)

The conviction of guilt which weighed so heavily on the scientists poisoned the minds of people everywhere. The events of the past decade had been a denial of every profession decent men had made throughout the recorded existence of the race. It was, of course, a quite logical result of the extramural forces to which they had lent themselves even when they professed whatever name was given to the decency all of them knew to be the sine qua non of communal life. It was a curious paradox that the forces which had created a closer and closer physical community had been allowed to operate in such ways that social relationships were attenuated rather than strengthened. Nationalism and capitalism had become more and more effective as nationalists and capitalists perfected the techniques of their professions. They sought, not always consciously, often, in fact, professing altruism, to exploit outsiders as nationalists and each other as capitalists. Exploitation, militantly pursued, loses its enlightenment. Businesses forget to keep their customers alive; nationalists forget that the essence of superior patriotism is having someone to be superior to and something to be patriotic about.

I dwell here on what to me is an old theme—the organizing principle of all the public work I have ever done—which I have developed again and again, shouted about as loudly as I dared,\(^{15}\) tried to organize in my work for planning: that peace and security are the products of co-operation, not of competition; that warfare is merely an extension, and not a very far one, of the principle on which we have allowed our economic life to be organized; that this has brought out of the recesses of human nature the wrong traits, ugly and destructive ones, neglecting the rich stores of those which are generous and helpful. I felt, consequently, that no one who had not worked in this great cause up to now had any considerable claim to be heard in organizing things differently. I felt, in fact, that if the conviction of sin did not go to the realization of its sources, no good could come of whatever missionary impulses might have appeared overnight. Of those who quaked in

\(^{14}\)Cf. One World or None, referred to above.
fear, of those who felt guilt, very few, it seemed to me, were in the least aware of what they had to abandon and what they had to adopt if they were to escape or to achieve catharsis.

There was a silver lining to the cloud whose shadow lay so heavily across human prospects in the late spring of 1946. Reactions to the sudden magnification of force which might fall into the hands of brutes were not all despairing. There were others which seemed to bloom like flowers in the desert, as though, indeed, the explosion over the Alamogordo wastes had been preliminary not only to the despair of Hiroshima, but also to the hope of Utopia. There sprung up, not only groups of scholars devoted to the perfecting of forms for a world government, but also numerous associations of citizens pledged to work for its establishment.

There were certain publicists too who rose above the occasion to show where duty lay. Among these, first and most determined, was perhaps Mr. E. B. White, who wrote with open anonymity, along with other colleagues, in the columns of the New Yorker, week after week, paragraphs which were fragments of an inspired new world literature. The New Yorker’s was a sensitive conscience; but so was that of Mr. Norman Cousins, whose little book not only put convincingly the argument against inaction, against resting on the United Nations, because its name sounds like world government, but FOR immediate grasping of the opportunity:

This is the propitious moment, the grand moment ... to take the moral leadership in bringing the atomic solvent into play. But that propitious moment is slipping, too—back into the old systems of power politics and spheres of influence — the ovaries of war ... Not another conference but a Constitutional Convention of the United Nations is needed—not only to undertake a general inventory of the revolutionary changes in the world since the San Francisco meeting in the long-ago spring of 1945, but to design the form and fabric of real government [pp. 43-44].

And Mr. Raymond Gram Swing, whose immense radio following gave him an influence matched by few other publicists at any time, followed his patient and lucid expositions to his audience with a small book. He put the matter quite clearly. The choice now, he said, is between world government and world suicide:

Future wars will be wholly lost by both sides. Furthermore future wars will not be waged soldier against soldier, but scientist and engineer versus civilian. Indeed military wars appear to be over. All wars are to be against man, woman and child in their homes or their places of work.

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17In the Name of Sanity, Harper & Brothers, 1946.
All these approaches, in contrast to that of Mr. Elmer Davis, could be said to be optimistic. They did not appear to be shaped in the belief, as did his, that Russians could not be lived with. That liberty is the essence of democracy and that democracy is essential to lasting government, and therefore to elemental human security, seemed to Mr. Davis, apparently, to preclude any progress until after another war between the Western powers and Russia. And there were many others who shared this conviction.

My own judgment about this, the most momentous issue of the postwar world—whether, as after the war of 1914-18, there was to be no more than an uneasy truce until hostilities were renewed—rested rather more on what seemed to me geophysical realities than on what were undoubtedly psychological and ideological difficulties. Since both remaining first-rate power nuclei, Washington and Moscow, were the center of areas which were self-sufficient, there was no need for the kind of trouble between them which might lead to war. The problem here was that of getting each to recognize its own limits and to withdraw within them. It was on the borders that clashes were taking place. The difficulties here were mostly our own. It was logical for Russia to control the Middle East, and she would never rest until she did. But this involved a readjustment in two historic empires—the British and the French—which would be carried out only with the greatest reluctance. Incidents in this inevitable adjustment would go on for a long time. If we could get through the first of them without war, we might gradually come to permanent arrangements for peace.

The unknown factor in this I should admit to be a considerable one. I was one of those who misjudged the missionary drive of believers in nazi magic; I might be misjudging the communists in the same way. It seemed so clear that Hitler, up to the invasion of Poland, had been pursuing reality, and that, had he rested at that logical stopping place, he might still be directing the government of a powerful state dominating Europe, that everything

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18 I discount, perhaps too easily though I do not think so, the possibility that Germany may rise again, as happened before, and challenge the world. Mr. Saul Padover thought it not unlikely in view of our ineptness in military government. But perhaps he saw that factor of the situation too exclusively. (Experiment in Germany, Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1946.) It was his business to report on it. But his larger fear rested on the fact that Germans once more do not feel their philosophy to have been the cause of defeat. There is a sense—it was expressed in Anne Lindbergh's Wave of the Future—in which the organization of technology by the Germans was the only alternative to communism possible in this world. That it was perverted by naziism, I suppose Mrs. Lindbergh would be the first to admit. But that there was something there, we should not forget. We cannot oppose the efficiency of communism merely by large talk about a liberty which lacks any economic reality.

19 Note, for instance, the furious attack by Mr. Winston Churchill on the proposal to withdraw troops from Egypt in Parliamentary debate at the beginning of May. Said Mr. Churchill: "Things are built up with great labor and are cast away with great shame and folly." And said Time the following week, "True to his promise, Churchill was not presiding over it, but the slow process of voluntary liquidation of Britain's Empire had begun." It really looked as though Britain was making the greatest of all contributions to world peace and security, worthy in every way of her people's tradition of recognition of reality as opposed to her Tories' die-hard romanticism.
which happened after that was quite out of focus for me. I could not—and still cannot—understand it. Perhaps the communists—as Mr. Davis, and many others, would insist—have the same irrational and quite inexplicable intention. If so, our problem is a different one. Are we required to be missionary too? No one, I take it, will be listened to if he should propose that we use our atomic bomb to destroy Russia. Some of the isolationist press was stopping barely short of such a proposal in the late spring, but without being taken seriously. Nevertheless, the attempt, not yet being made, to come to an adjustment between our own economic and political ideas as against theirs was the only logical alternative. They would have an atomic bomb of their own, it was generally said, within five years. Why, then, if they were bent on war from proselyting impulses, were we not either destroying or converting them? Perhaps something of either one kind or the other was about to happen. If it was, on the evidence apparent, it was more likely to be war, since we seemed to be doing nothing toward converting them to our ideas.

Into the thick gloom there had come in March, in the unlikely form of a committee report, a sudden lightening. As one commentator said, he felt, after reading it, that he could breathe again. And, indeed, it did bring a new glow of life to what had seemed like the corpse of hope. The Committee was one appointed by the Secretary of State; but the work had been done by a group of consultants of whom Mr. David E. Lilienthal had been chairman. The object was, of course, to formulate a policy with respect to the control of atomic energy which should guide the American representative on the United Nations atomic energy commission.

There were several new facts—to laymen—which helped to begin with, such, for instance, as that fissionable material was quite limited in quantity and that it could be denatured. But what carried most weight was the intelligence of the approach and the honesty of the conclusion. As the introduction said:

> It is worth contrasting the sense of hope and confidence which all of us share today with the feeling we had at the outset. The vast difficulties of the problem were oppressive and we early concluded that ... we could ... make no conclusions. But as we steeped ourselves in the facts and caught a feel of the nature of the problem, we became more hopeful.

This was one time, everyone felt, as he read this masterpiece of cerebration, when intellectuals had been strictly logical, when no consideration of interests to be affected—other than that of the public, no thought of being politic, no thought of appearing the powerful or the orthodox—had been allowed to limit or affect the conclusion. That

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20 Its members were Dean Acheson, Chairman, Vannevar Bush, James B. Conant, Leslie R. Groves and John J. McGlo.
21 Other consultants were: Chester S. Bernard, J. R. Oppenheimer, Charles A. Thomas and Harry A. Winne.
conclusion was that all sources of fissionable material and all processes of its development must be publicly owned and operated. An international Atomic Development Authority was recommended, but, said the report, what was submitted was not a final plan, "but a place to begin, a foundation on which to build."

So the spring closed less hopelessly than it had begun, thanks to Mr. Lilienthal and his colleagues. And as people’s thoughts rose a little above sheer means for survival, constructive speculation seemed to take a fresh start. If atomic power was really to be used, what became of the absurd premises of capitalism that production must be "private" and motivated by profits; that scarcity was normal and only to be reduced at a great price; that competition was the life of trade—and so on? Many a mind extended into a region it had never before been free to invade. Were the old aims of man being brought suddenly so close? Were rich assortments of goods to be brought within the reach of all? Was labor to be all but abolished, and poverty eradicated? It could be! It was not yet, but it could be!

As I looked at the world from Puerto Rico in 1946 certain matters seemed to have a terrible clear certainty: between moral and physical starvation there was no longer any distinction; the one had led to the other and would lead to one crisis after another, no matter what redistributions—against theory and logic—were carried out; they would always prove to be temporary. And between moral and physical destruction, there was no longer any distinction; the one had led to the other, and all superficial efforts at control would fail no matter how earnestly they were pursued. There was now no alternative to the reformation of society, to the establishment of new institutions. The logic of competition had ended with complete finality at Hiroshima. We had to begin again or perish.

This was known to many. Thoughtful Christians had always known it—that was why they were Christians. They had not always practiced it, for men are weak and subject to the persuasion that logic is not the inevitable thing it seems to be in moments of prayer and meditation. But not only Christians knew it: the community of men, the utility of neighborliness, the necessity for brotherhood was not the monopoly of any ethical or religious teacher. Thoughtful men of all races and in all times had seen it. But it had not been allowed to dominate the organization of any powerful modern people; and even when it had seemed to be adopted, perversion had crept in. Yet in the whole world, capitalism remained pristine only in the United States. Everywhere else, recognition of its innate destructiveness, without the denaturant of social control, had become a firm conviction.

I might be forgiven, I thought, if I regarded my work in Puerto Rico,22 as in New York with the Planning Commission, and in Washington with the Resettlement Administration, as

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22The official documents which I prepared during the years of my governorship—those which are referred to in this book, as well as others—have been gathered together in one volume and may be had from the Office of Information of Puerto Rico under the title, The Puerto Rican Public Papers of R. G. Tugwell.
oriented against destruction. It had never succeeded. It had always been overwhelmed by those who represented a temporarily successful *laissez faire*. But it had been true enough. And Chicago, I hoped, was to be its extension.
MR. HAROLD ICKES AND I were trusted friends, perhaps I can say old friends, if nearly a decade counts as "old" in such a relationship. It had begun, at least, in the earliest days of the New Deal. I had been just outside the room in the house on Sixty-fifth Street in New York when the President-elect had asked him, to his amazement, if he would be Secretary of the Interior, he having been invited on some pretext so that Mr. Roosevelt could have at least a glance at him before making an announcement. I think I may have been the first—certainly the second or third, because not more than two or three of us were there when their short talk was over—to wish him well. I had known as little of him then as had the President-elect. It is not a matter of actual knowledge on my part that Mr. Roosevelt scarcely knew him. It is possible that he may have followed the career of the earnest but relatively local Chicago progressive and just never have spoken of him when I was around. But I was around a good deal when the Cabinet was being chosen and I heard discussion of all the others. I really think, as Mr. Ickes appears to do, that it was a blind choice made on the recommendation of Senators Hiram Johnson and Bronson Cutting, after both had themselves refused the post. It was Mr. Roosevelt’s acknowledgment—one of them, Mr. Henry A. Wallace being the other—that Republican progressives were now on our side and we on theirs.

Even Mr. Farley acknowledged our debt to the progressives and, I think, was entirely agreeable to the choice of Mr. Ickes. He had occasion to be sorry, perhaps, from his own point of view, because Mr. Ickes carried on his midwestern feuds from Washington with undiminished vigor. The regime of Messrs. Kelly and Nash never seemed to him suitable as Chicago representation for the New Deal. And, although there would come a time when these gentlemen would choose the President against Mr. Farley in a showdown of loyalties, thereby leaving Mr. Ickes out on a political limb, at this time (the spring of 1933) things were different. The President actually had paused on his way to the convention hall, after his flight across New York and up the Great Lakes to receive the nomination, and had blessed Mr. Horner, the Illinois candidate for Governor, in a little speech in the park. On that drive through the Chicago streets Mr. Kelly’s henchmen had shouted curses at him more than once. They were then a disappointed lot, having been for Smith rather than Roosevelt and having imagined, evidently, that a national convention could be influenced by a gallery of local thugs. Mr. Farley and Louis Howe had had that to contend with throughout the trying all-night sessions preceding the dramatic McAdoo conversion. The Kelly-Nash machine being, after all, a professional political organization, quickly made peace with Mr. Farley. Mr. Ickes had good reason, however, seeing what went on at the convention in his home town, for thinking that the administration of Mr. Roosevelt would be progressive. And he had not been backward about trying to get into it, although, as he
has admitted in his *Autobiography of a Curmudgeon*\(^1\) he had not set his hopes higher than the Commissionership of Indian Affairs.

It does not appear that Mr. Ickes had any interest in the affairs of the Territories and Possessions, or that he had any ideas about colonial policy, or even concern as to whether there should be a policy. His interests hitherto had been altogether continental, even mostly provincial. At that time, moreover, the Bureau of Insular Affairs which had charge of these matters was in the War Department and so came under the management of George H. Dern, former Governor of Utah. Mr. Ickes and his first wife had long been interested in Indian affairs; they were indeed persistent agitators for Indian justice. And this might have furnished a forecast of sympathy if the situation of Puerto Rico ever had come to his notice or within his field of influence. This sympathy was probably more important than knowledge, for many who know Puerto Rico well enough are not interested in her welfare but only in exploiting her for their own profit. Such a forecast would have been justified. For the island never gained a truer friend among outsiders than this future Secretary. But in the early days there can have seemed to be no reason for such an anticipation.

True, some of us before the inauguration in 1933 were put to work at outlining a Federal reorganization if one ever became possible. There must have been a whole year in which my briefcase contained charts for the redistribution of governmental agencies. It was discussed with the President many times. I should rather say that he talked to me about it; for he was merely using me, as he used others, for round-table purposes. He liked to do that, opening out the most important subjects casually and saying finally that he wished you would work on it some more. It didn’t mean what a new recipient of his confidence, was apt to think it did. He was only working something out in his mind; he was not trusting his *vis-a-vis* with a responsibility. And in all the discussions of reorganization there was never any question about Territories and Possessions. It was obvious to him as to me that it ought not to be in the War Department; and the State Department, some of whose functionaries felt it should be there, was as obviously not suitable. Puerto Ricans, for instance, were already citizens; they were not to be entrusted to a bureaucracy which dealt exclusively with foreigners. We did not know then what I found out later—that Puerto Ricans had an instinct about that. The one governmental department which every Puerto Rican distrusted and feared was State. The reason was obvious: State Department officials were always needing to favor Puerto Rico’s neighbors and competitors in government counsels.\(^2\) They managed to do it, the islanders felt, however, with entirely unnecessary energy. At any rate, the residual choice was obviously Interior. So to Interior the transfer was made in 1934. And Mr. Ickes became the nearest thing we had to a Colonial Secretary.

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\(^1\)Reynal and Hitchcock, New York, 1943, p. 263

\(^2\)For instance, in the matter of sugar quotas, Puerto Ricans felt Cuba had been favored at their expense. But such issues were always turning up to cause irritation with the Department of State.
That being settled, it was hoped by everyone interested that we should begin to develop objectives and to build up the home office which would carry them out. It would be necessary, also, it was thought, to revise the Organic Acts of the Possessions so that some order and conformity might be achieved; furthermore a genuine career service would have to be established for appointive posts. All the efforts to bring about these results, so far as Puerto Rico was concerned, were quite futile. The Congress could never be got to approve even the most modest plans for improving the Division; by 1941, when I became a Governor, only the Virgin Islands Act had been revised, and a career service was still not established. On the contrary practically all the jobs were disposed of as patronage. This must have been a disappointment to Mr. Ickes, who had been ambitious to make his Department of real use to the people of the Possessions. How much of the failure was his it is impossible to say; my own belief is that no one could have succeeded because of the lack of sympathy in Congress. Reform of this sort just did not seem to be of any political importance. There were relatively few jobs involved, but politicians do not like to lose even a few. And if anything were to be done, it was becoming clear, it would be better political judgment to turn all such tenuously attached people loose. We were approaching an era of surpluses in which sugar was as overproduced as other crops. There were to be quotas and it went against the grain to give quotas to offshore areas. On the whole Puerto Ricans, as has been pointed out, were regarded as "foreigners" for whom we were always being asked to do something without any return. And when their welfare came into direct opposition to that of powerful home interests well equipped with lobbyists—notably those of the farmers’ organizations—they were bound to suffer.

Considering the prevalent indifference and the occasional opposition to doing anything at all, what had been accomplished was considerable—the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration, for instance, had functioned for several years. What happened to that scheme, however, was illustrative of a good deal else. It was set up in 1935, following the Chardón report and other investigations, by executive order rather than by legislation. It represented a desire on the part of the Secretary and of the President to carry out a whole program of reform and rehabilitation. But when the Congress was asked to continue the really excellent work which was being done the refusal was prompt and complete. And the whole support died. This failure to carry through a good program well begun was not the only reason Mr. Ickes had for wishing he had resisted that part of the governmental reorganization which transferred insular affairs from the War Department to the

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3Largely through the strenuous efforts of Governor L. R. Cramer, a new Organic Act for the Virgin Islands would become law in 1935, not a very practical measure, after many Congressional amendments, having far too much machinery for the government of twenty-five thousand people.

4The same Puerto Ricans who would head the opposition to the reforms following the elections of 1940 influenced this Congressional injustice. Congressmen always have a mistaken tendency to think the lobbyists for this small group representative of Puerto Rican business opinion. And when a local group opposes relief appropriations, any Congressman must say, "Who am I to force it on them?" Those who would receive relief have no lobby.
Department of the Interior. He had troubles with personnel and with internal quarrels in
the various possessions. This was particularly true in Puerto Rico where politics, apart
from any deep issues there might be, was a perennial profession among a large group of
ardent practitioners. General Winship, Governor from 1934 to 1938, had finally become so
unpopular with the expanding Popular group\(^5\) for his unswerving loyalty to the "better
element" that his resignation had had to be forced. Admiral Leahy, who had served only
briefly before being sent to Vichy, was, by the time he left, hardly better off, except that his
opposition came from another source.\(^6\) Mr. Ernest Gruening, who had been mostly
responsible for the administration of the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration as
Director of the Division, had not only failed to get Congressional support but had edged
himself in toward the center of the political cyclone which had blown away General
Winship. His progressivism which, until this experience, had been largely literary, and so
untested, melted quickly in the heat of tropical politics. He turned to the repressive and
illiberal policies reactionaries have always employed under similar circumstances. And Mr.
Ickes was involved too, as he must have been unpleasantly surprised to find. Ultimately it
led to his support of measures and men of the kind he had hitherto spent his whole life in
fighting. But this would not be entirely clear until Mr. Gruening had departed; and it would
not lead to any affection between Mr. Ickes and Mr. Luis Muñoz Marín, leader of the
growing progressive group in the island.

The Secretary cannot be blamed too much if, after all his nasty experiences with Puerto
Rico, he regarded the whole island as a barrel of snakes for which no one could do much,
and from which no one could get anything in return for honest effort but recrimination,
political bluster and personal attack. His efforts in Puerto Rico’s behalf were bound to
continue in an official way; but the enthusiasm with which they would be carried on was to
be notably less than had been true in the beginning. He had learned caution—even
excessive caution—from the poisonous repulses which his most innocent and well-meant
actions had elicited. It was this caution, perhaps, which motivated his call to me on 24
December 1940, asking whether I would undertake an investigation of "the 500-acre law"
in Puerto Rico and advise him how to proceed.

There was some reason to believe that the problem of land tenure, whose solution had
tormented one government after another in the past few years, might, after long delay, find
some kind of answer in Puerto Rico. Most of the island’s best land was operated as large-
scale corporate enterprise, partly owned and partly leased by the operating companies. The
situation was complicated also by absentee ownership, for about half the land had come, in

\(^5\)It did not acquire this name until it began the campaign of 1940. It was an offshoot of the Liberales.
\(^6\)Admiral Leahy’s secretary when he was governor tells an amusing story of his relations with a prominent
Socialista leader. After listening to this politico’s demands on one occasion with apparent patience, the
Admiral, pacing his office and stamping a little as he paced, burst into profanity and said, "I wish I had that so-
and-so on a ship!" It was a sincere wish. I had the same one a little later.
one way or another—by sale, by lease or by other arrangement—into the possession of corporations closely allied with big continental banks and consequently was almost wholly controlled outside the island. This process of accumulating large holdings was a natural accompaniment of generally developing large-scale industry. It was done, not with the objective of dispossessing small holders, but merely because more profit was made from large operations; those who conducted them could progressively buy out their small neighbors. It was done not only by the absentee corporations but by others as well—Puerto Rican companies or individuals. The corporation was, of course, more an American than a Spanish device, so that most of the corporate holdings were naturally American and most of the family partnerships, the individual proprietorships, and so on, were Spanish or Puerto Rican.

No people ever had a collective fondness for carpetbaggers, and aside from any matter of merit or deserts, it would be quite natural for a kind of uncomplicated and unreasonable resentment to color all the attitudes of islanders toward outsiders who had acquired control of much good land. In consequence of the rapid growth of a landless population and of the low standard of living imposed by failure to make industrial advances, there had come to be a dangerous proletarian psychology, which was separate from—yet related to—absentee ownership. The materials for a class war were all present. But if there were going to be a liquidation it was evident that first attention would be given to the "foreigners" rather than to equally exploitative native capitalists and landlords.

All this I knew; I also knew that Mr. Luis Muñoz Marín—with whom I had been casually acquainted in the days when the Chardón plan was gestating—had formed a new political group to represent the agrarian discontent produced by landlessness and poverty, and had won an election in 1940, much to Mr. Gruening’s disgust. He had called his party the Populares and had taken for his slogan "Pan, Tierra y Libertad". These words, which called out the deepest physical and spiritual responses of man,, were obviously reminiscent of the Bolshevik slogan—"Peace and the Land"—and that which guided the Mexican revolution—"Land and Liberty."

No one had expected him to win. He had not himself expected it. But he was nevertheless now in power, however tenuously; he had a clear majority of one vote in the Senate of Puerto Rico, but he could carry measures in the lower house only by arrangement with one of the minor parties. He was, however, going to manage the passage of a new land law if he never did anything else: that everyone knew. The "better element" was close to panic. Its individuals were appealing pathetically to Mr. Ickes for protection; and the absentee owners were fundamentally just as frightened. They were farther from the scene and colder about it, since they had only monetary rather than physical fears. But wealth has

7Bread, Land and Liberty. The party symbol was the "pava" the jíbaro hat with upturned edge.
never been backward in asking protection, even—or perhaps especially—from the consequences of its own follies, and the present case followed the rule. Coiling serpentwise through the lobbies and bureaucracies of Washington, their demand for protection against "communists" reached even the ears of the incorrigible progressive who was Secretary of the Interior. But his was a suspicious nature, and he had never known socially beneficial suggestions to come from the sources which were creating the slow and powerful agitations which had disturbed some of his colleagues, even some of his subordinates. He must have thought they were being fooled; possibly he thought some of them, as bureaucracies do, reflected too faithfully resentment at disturbance of the status quo. And he had already, he thought, found out Mr. Gruening.

Anyway, he turned to me. And I, being entirely disengaged emotionally, and having a preliminary sympathy, as he very well knew, agreed to look into the matter. But when he first called me I had not the faintest idea what he meant by "the 500-acre law." Although I had followed Puerto Rican affairs for a decade it had not been closely enough so that I had become aware that the Organic Act had always prohibited the owning of more than 500 acres of land by a corporation. This ignorance of mine in itself indicates what the problem was. There had always been this prohibition; but no one had paid it the slightest attention. The corporations—on advice of counsel—had gone on, in response to the fact that more and more profit was to be made from larger and larger operations, accumulating land until some aggregations had reached the amazing totals of twenty to sixty thousand acres. A more flagrant and irresponsible disregard of law—and a Federal law at that—would be hard to find in all our history. Still, as Mr. Ickes pointed out, it was, even if outrageous and fantastic, a fact. And a fact has to be dealt with as a fact, not as an outrage. Indignation was obviously not called for, but rather some judgment of what was best to be done for all concerned.

Mr. Ickes was not indignant. I would not go so far as to say that his capacity for indignation at the unrestrained antics of Puerto Rican politicians had been exhausted. The last thing he would like to have said of himself, ever, would be that; and so long as he draws breath it will never be true. But he was probably as near to numbness as his nature would permit. It was not that he did not care what happened to Puerto Ricans; he knew that, uneducated and exploited as the masses were, they could hardly be held responsible. But he had about given up the struggle to do something for them. They were screened away from him by machinating políticos. And all parties seemed alike in their incapacity to look beyond party advantage or to exercise any restraint in their selection of tactics. The impasse into which General Winship and Mr. Gruening had led him was fresh in his mind; and hardly older was the quarrel between Mr. Gruening and Muñoz which had driven the Administration to accept the support of the conservative Coalition. In that quarrel it had seemed to him that Muñoz, then a liberal Senator, had taken a rule-or-ruin position which could not be
This emerging leader of the discontented was not yet wholly accepted; he would only become that after his unexpected victory in 1940; but he wanted to carry on like one. Mr. Ickes had had no advance information that his strength was formidable; indeed his subordinates had given him to understand the contrary, meanwhile doing what they could to see that their assertions were made good. Their representations were that Muñoz was an inconsequential son of a notable father, lamentably lacking in any quality of application, persistence or ability: an incorrigible bohemian, living his life in cafes, talking largely with a miscellaneous and impermanent crowd of acquaintances: he had literary leanings, fancied himself as a poet—*El Vate*, his detractors called him—but he never worked hard enough to accomplish anything even at this amateur occupation: it was true that he sometimes talked largely about schemes for bettering the condition of Puerto Ricans, but he was offensively apt, in doing so, to confuse his nebulous ideas with the fundamental aims of the people. What he said they wanted must be what they did want; he offered no other evidence. He had been a legislator and had tangled obstreperously with Mr. Gruening. But beyond these casual items there was not much.

I am not sure that this was Mr. Ickes’ summary of Muñoz; he did not, in fact, tell me so; he merely asked me earnestly to undertake a job of work which would inform him how to proceed administratively in spite of Muñoz. Such, however, was the in-formation conveyed to me by those who would naturally have been the Secretary’s informants, not on one occasion, but in numerous informal talks. I myself had not seen Muñoz for years and only recalled him vaguely as a sad-eyed, companionable, heavy-mustached man. I had liked him in the way one does like a casual acquaintance with whom views about the world are exchanged in a like-minded way. He was obviously a Spaniard by blood; dark and heavily built; and it was an added attraction that he spoke a full, flexible, meaty English without indication of origin, except, perhaps, a trace of New Yorkese in expression, though his tongue was altogether without accent. I remembered saying a word of appreciation for that once and having him tell me humorously that his English was better than his Spanish. What was true, as he admitted, was that he was one of the few people who felt in two languages. He was the living proof that bilingualism is possible. But it may be that the proof was only that it was possible to men of great intelligence. I never knew anyone, even his detractors, who spoke of him at any length and did not in the course of their remarks deplore the waste of his abilities. This, in itself, indicated his intelligence. Even those who described

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8 Luis Muñoz Rivera, poet, journalist and statesman, led the progressive group which in 1897 became affiliated with the Spanish Liberal party. When that party came to power in Spain later that year, autonomy was granted Puerto Rico. Muñoz Rivera was appointed Secretary of Grace, Justice and Government in the Cabinet of the new government which continued to serve after the change of sovereignty in 1898. The following year he resigned his post, and from that time until his death in 1916 he worked tirelessly on the island and in Washington, both in and out of political office, for improved relationships between Puerto Rico and the continental Government. His last term as Resident Commissioner saw the passage of the Jones Bill, the present Organic Act of Puerto Rico.

9 Which means poet or bard. Many friends called him that too.
him as a bad imitation of his father admitted that there were abilities even if inflated with the more heady intoxications of discourse without responsibility. When Muñoz had tried to force Mr. Gruening to shape P.R.R.A. into the pattern he had conceived for agrarian reform, he probably had been annoying; being, besides an earnest reformer, a politician who identified his own success with reform. He would have tried to dictate appointments and then to have directed the activities of the appointees. This, with infinite variation, is the boss’s method of controlling without actually taking responsibility. But there can be no question of the boss’s power if it is to be accepted and to succeed. Mr. Gruening seems, strangely enough, to have thought he could become a political manipulator. He did not, therefore, confine himself to managing the millions of the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration as they were poured out in the effort at rehabilitation, but also—feeling forced to do it—undertook to influence political affairs in other ways. From such a beginning, and little by little, the two of them had gone to war.

The final result, it seems now, was inevitable. Mr. Gruening, having lost out, in the Congress, in the attempt to establish P.R.R.A. legislatively, lost out in Puerto Rico too. Muñoz was able to make even the disintegration of P.R.R.A. a political asset. He won his election and established his leadership. The cafe poet, as he seemed to Washington, had become the dominant political power in the island and he had to be dealt with. He had an agrarian program, the foundation of which was the enforcement of the 500-acre clause in the old Organic Act. The Secretary did not know whether this insistence on enforcement was merely a political trick to make an essentially fantastic program appear legitimate, or whether enforcement was really administratively desirable. And beyond that, what ought the positive phase to be? Suppose all the big corporations were prosecuted and forced to reduce their holdings of land—what was to become of the land? And what effect would various methods of disposal have on the Puerto Rican economy?

Muñoz had a program—but I get ahead of my story. I closed my mind to everything for the moment but the necessity for shaping a practical policy. Several trips to Washington were required before the machinery of investigation was ready. I was face to face with two of man’s oldest difficulties: colonialism and land tenure. So far as the 500-acre limitation was concerned the colonial aspect of the question was whether the Puerto Ricans should be allowed their own judgment—even if it seemed an unwise one. This carried directly into the question of tenure: even if Puerto Ricans were not to be told what they had to do, they might be brought to see what it was wise to do. As to the first question, I thought Justice Frankfurter’s decision in the Rubert Hermanos case (Puerto Rico v. Rubert Co., 309 U.S. 543, 1939) stated the principle to be followed:

Surely nothing more immediately touches the local concern of Puerto Rico than legislation giving effect to the Congressional restriction on corporate landholdings. This policy was born of the special needs of a congested
population largely dependent upon the land for its livelihood. It was enunciated as soon as Congress became responsible for the welfare of the island’s people, was retained against vigorous attempts to modify it, and was reaffirmed when Congress enlarged Puerto Rico’s powers of self-government. Surely Congress meant its action to have significance beyond mere empty words. To treat the absence of a specific remedy for violation of the restriction as an implied bar against local enforcement measures is to impute to Congress a dog-in-the-manger attitude bordering on disingenuousness. We refuse to believe that Congress was bent on the elaborate futility of a brutum fulmen.

This admirable general statement did not do more, however, than open up the difficulty. It was all very well to talk grandly about the right of a people to settle such matters for themselves, but it was obvious that it could not be done without extensive Federal assistance. In most matters Puerto Rico had relations with Federal departments which were very much like similar ones with the states—that is to say the bureaus and agencies whose powers and benefits had been extended to Puerto Rico functioned quite separately, responsible to a Washington or to a regional office (perhaps in Atlanta, as in the Forest Service, or in Baltimore, as in the Farm Credit Administration, or in Boston, as in the Federal courts). There was no agent of the United States in Puerto Rico; there were merely many agents of the various Bureaus. This was how it was, actually, although the Organic Act had meant it to be otherwise. That document indicated that the Governor (appointed by the President) was to be responsible for the execution of the laws of the United States in Puerto Rico.\textsuperscript{10} But it was characteristic of the confusion of mind evident in the Act that the Governor, thus given large responsibilities, would never be able to assume them. For his salary and the expense of his establishment were not only to be met out of insular funds, but the size of his staff and their pay were to be fixed by the insular legislature. The result was what might be expected: the Governor had no staff to speak of; there was, in his office, no statistical or investigation work, no budget officer, no co-ordination or follow-up—none of the apparatus that any modern executive must depend on if he is to be at all effective. Puerto Rican legislatures had taken care of that. There had been constant attrition on the executive. The legislators, being on the job all the time, being politically minded, knowing their own people as outsiders never could, and fundamentally disliking, as carpetbaggers, all appointed officials, including the Governor, had left him in the end with a good deal of show (that is, he lived in a palace, and so on) but with little real power and no means for gaining any. Usually the modern executive has devices which enable him to compete at least on even terms with the legislative. He can keep better informed; he is more flexible and can use his position as representative of all the people, rather than just of a district, to

\textsuperscript{10}Section 12, Organic Act: "He [the Governor] shall be responsible for the faithful execution of the laws of Porto Rico and of the United States applicable in Porto Rico . . ."
attract support. And he is one against many who can be divided. But an appointed Governor could have none of these advantages—and he had the fatal disadvantage of not speaking the language of the people.

It looked as though the long, implacable, even if understandable, process of undermining the Governor’s powers might result, in this time of crisis, in an impasse. For Governors might not have any remaining positive powers to speak of, but they had negative ones, the most protested being the veto. Muñoz in his election campaign had cited Justice Frankfurter; but, without consulting anyone in the Federal establishment, had, I was told, framed a land law and campaigned on it in specific terms: the legislature was now pledged to enact it. It was bound to be, to mention a first difficulty, far beyond the financial capacity of the insular Government; but to mention the second, and perhaps greater one, its terms called for extensive expropriation of lands which belonged, even if through corporations, to continental American citizens. Five-hundred-acre limitation or no five-hundred-acre limitation, it was going to be difficult for an American Governor to sign an act effectuating a policy of that kind. Muñoz, well as he should have known the United States, since he had grown up in New York and Washington, had fallen into the error of all insular politicians—he had forgot that political victory in Puerto Rico was a matter of no interest to Continentals. Their view of his land law was not apt to be softened because he had won an election with it as the chief issue. On the contrary, because more frightened, they would be harsher. Even Mr. Ickes, sympathetic as his nature was, could not feel that this made any but a disagreeable difference. He had a new complication to meet. Obviously my first task was going to be a diplomatic one: to persuade Muñoz that he had made a mistake which had better be rectified at once, and to win from the Secretary a pretty large tolerance for what he obviously regarded as a serious slight. Thus colonialism, in this instance, might be softened.

Then there were the more practical questions of tenure and of the fiscal arrangements necessary to any shift in land ownership. The Insular Land Authority Act was evidently intended to establish small proprietors; but some access of reasonableness had caused the addition of a scheme\(^\text{11}\) to preserve something of large-scale operations—how much would be determined in actual administration and was not to be fixed in the law. This much I had from Muñoz and others by a correspondence which I at once began. But however the management problems were to be solved—and that I had to postpone, lacking full information, until I could get to Puerto Rico—it seemed obvious that there would have to be Federal financing. And here Muñoz’ failure to consult Federal officials made the most difficulties. For all the Federal farm credit agencies had their own standards and patterns. They dealt with farmers directly, too, not through intervening governments; and it was no

\(^{11}\)An interesting one, as I should discover on close examination, because of its attempt to make use of the profit motive without establishing private monopolies which shut out the workers from their benefits.
part of Muñoz’ intention, after his experience with Mr. Gruening, to admit any Federal official or agency to the councils where policies were determined or to the administration of the organizations necessary to carrying them out. He was going to write the ticket. But I could see that such an unbiased ticket would not be good for passage to any destination. It would only be honored when it was marked "approved" and "valid for payment." He could not pay, I thought; and no Federal agency would pay if, in order to do it, nation-wide policies had to be changed just to suit an insular vagary. It began to look as though my second effort too would have to be diplomatic.

Meanwhile I was finding out, by inquiring orally, as much as I could of what was known in Washington, and trying to assemble a group of qualified people to sit in hearing and to help me make a judgment. This had its own difficulties. Competent legal advice would be needed; and advice from an experienced agricultural economist. It seemed, also, that not much could be done without assistance from the Farm Security Administration, within whose administrative field most of the problem fell.

Mr. Monroe Oppenheimer was General Counsel to the Farm Security Administration. He had been my own appointee before I left the Government in 1935; and I asked him to serve. But here it must be admitted that I had more in mind than legal advice. For it seemed incredible that the land problem in Puerto Rico could be solved without Federal help and the Farm Security Administration was fitted to do precisely what was needed—make loans to individuals or co-operatives and supervise the management which would make repayment of these loans likely. In this supervision, ostensibly in the interest of loan repayment, those who borrowed were educated in farming and in home keeping. Not only were relief funds economized but the families who were given help were put in the way of becoming independent. There was a long history of success in this procedure; hundreds of thousands of families had been rehabilitated by now and had repaid their debts; and many co-operative enterprises had been helped until they could proceed alone.

This organization, which alone had the knowledge needed, together with the available funds, had not extended its operations to Puerto Rico—had no office there. Its help would be indispensable; but, in the effort to get it, there was need to deal with a delicate situation: the old quarrel between the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, known to every Washingtonian, was apt to break out almost anywhere. Back in the days when the P.R.R.A. had been well supplied with funds, loans to farmers had been made without advice from Agriculture; and it was quite possible that, since Interior was the home office for Puerto Rico, hints that no help was needed had been given. Farm Security might have been told by Mr. Burlew to stay out. When P.R.R.A. had fallen on evil days, its funds largely exhausted, its program disapproved by Congress, there had been nothing to substitute for it among the poorer rural folk. Only an administrative decision was needed, however, to bring in Farm Security to take P.R.R.A.’s place, since the Act under which it operated was applicable in the
Possessions. I appealed to its Administrator, Mr. G. B. Baldwin—"Beany" to all Washington. "Lend me Monroe Oppenheimer," I demanded. And he did better. He assigned not only Mr. Oppenheimer but Mr. George S. Mitchell too. Mr. Mitchell was Assistant Administrator and had been with us from the earliest Resettlement days.

So I had two close friends who would act for Farm Security and help to soothe any interdepartmental irritations which might still exist. I asked, further, for Mr. Raymond G. Smith, from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, but Mr. Howard Tolley, Chief of the Bureau, refused me his services. Instead Mr. Appleby, then Under Secretary, asked me to take Mr. Ivy Duggan, Director of the Southern Division of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. I objected. But he said it would dispose the Department to co-operation. So Mr. Duggan was associated, somewhat uncomfortably, with a crowd he obviously regarded as unsanitary company. I was more fortunate in getting Mr. Carl Robbins,¹² then President of the Commodity Credit Corporation, and Mr. Russell Lord, most sympathetic of agricultural writers, just then launching *Friends of the Land*, but able to give us part of his time and the whole of his good will, a not inconsiderable contribution.

All in all that spring was pleasant with work and profitable with results. Mayor La Guardia gave me permission to spend such time as was needed on the study: he seemed to see its importance at once. My wife and I moved to Washington; and, although I still spent several days a week in New York, commuting by plane was not arduous. My wife set herself to find out, if she could, how the 500-acre limitation had got itself into the Organic Act; and why, when it had, there were no prescribed penalties, so that violation could go on for forty years without check. She also undertook to study the Friar Lands experience in the Philippines—a case not so different from that of Puerto Rico. There the Church had owned large estates which had been made illegal in an Organic Act: but there had been the difference that an energetic Governor—William Howard Taft, in fact—had made a direct deal with the Vatican. The lands had been distributed as homesteads; and we were interested to know how the homesteaders had succeeded, whether they had paid their obligations, and so on.

While she worked at this I undertook diplomacy—the quick exchange of new arrangements for old. The most determined carrier, in Interior, of the old quarrel with Agriculture was Mr. E. K. Burlew, then the First Assistant Secretary, and generally described in Washington as "the hatchet man for Ickes." His services in the Department reached back into the old days when the struggle for the public domain had been really unrestrained and when, the Forest Service claimed, Interior had been the friend of fraudulent claimants to free lands, of predatory cattlemen, in general of all the enemies of conservation and public management. The Forest Service still nursed the old bogeys, pointing, when challenged, to the retention,

¹² Later President of the Axton-Fisher Company, then Executive Vice-president of Young and Rubicam. Mr. Robbins would also serve on the American Advisory Committee for the Caribbean.
in a confidential capacity, of Mr. Burlew. "How can it be said," they asked, "that Interior has changed, that Ickes is a true conservationist, so long as Burlew is there?" And, if you would listen, the tale would be endlessly documented. The first time I saw Mr. Burlew—he was then merely the Secretary's assistant, inherited from a Republican predecessor—I was somewhat surprised to see a mild clerkish-looking man, so undistinguished in appearance that he might easily have passed as quite average in any American crowd. But that appearance was deceptive. He was ruthless in the Secretary's service and did many a job it was better for the Secretary not to know of. He was acquainted with every clerk in the big Department, had an infinite capacity for work, and had lost most of his indignation over extravagant requests for concessions in return for appropriation bills—in short carried on efficiently, and without specific orders, the kind of management imposed on the executive departments by our system of Congressional interference in the details of administration. Like the Deity, if he had not existed he would have had to be invented, for Interior was a department in which a majority of the members of the Senate felt they had special claims to favor.

I had, however, the advantage in dealing with Mr. Burlew that Mr. Ickes himself wanted me to have my way, whatever it was, in Puerto Rico. And I had had an understanding with the First Assistant, beside Mr. Ickes' desk, that this involved peace with Agriculture and help from several of its agencies, especially Farm Security. My next activity was to spend several days getting clearances—from the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Wickard, from Mr. Harold Smith, Director of the Budget, and so on. Then I called a first meeting. And it was so successful that my friends in Agriculture came out completely mystified; for Mr. Burlew had been altogether conciliatory and we had achieved an initialed memorandum of understanding which opened the way for interdepartmental co-operation. I could now proceed to Puerto Rico and hold hearings, suspending research work for the time, to be picked up again when we returned. On 28 February we left for Miami. For three days there we worked on a plan of procedure. And on the fourth flew out over the Caribbean toward Puerto Rico.
JUST BEFORE TAKING OFF for Puerto Rico I had spent a few hours with Dr. David Fairchild, who has devoted a great portion of his life to seeking out the flora from all the warm areas of the earth and bringing it back to the Plant Introduction Gardens in that tiny spot in Florida which the Gulf Stream, in turning the corner, has transformed into the only genuine subtropics within the United States. While we had walked from one specimen to another in his gardens I had told him something of the reason for our presence in Florida and finally, as he fondled a cycad, telling my wife that it had no business to be there, that it was a living fossil and ought long ago to have been turned into petroleum or oil, he had turned to me and said:

"You know, I counted two hundred and eighty-some articles of daily diet that the Javanese, for instance, raise for themselves. All through the West Indies, food is imported—imported! Imagine! They've lost the tropic arts. No one under such a sun with moderately good soil and with forty inches of rainfall need go hungry. I suppose you will say that cash-crop estate owners kept them from raising food and made them eat rice, beans and codfish both because they were cheap and because they were a convenient return cargo. That may be so. I don't know how it happened. Others say it's part of Spanish nature not to cultivate the land. I tell you, anyway, that the answer you are looking for lies in native food crops. Bad habits may be generations old, and clung to like all get-out, but they're bad habits still. The Dutch learned that people will eat the right things and will produce them too, with leadership and supervision. The West Indian problem might be easier to answer if you'd really study Dutch administration."

Dr. Fairchild's suggestion for Puerto Rico was nothing mysterious or even profound. It was, however, as I felt then, fundamental, in the sense of centering on an assured indigenous food supply as the most important item of policy. What I did not realize in the enthusiasm of the moment was the distance the insular economy had gone in another direction. Nor did I ask myself, then, as I did many times later on, whether any two million people in the Western Hemisphere could be abstracted from the stream of civilization and committed to Java-like self-sufficiency—and poverty. That the rigorous exclusion of imported food involved in the Dutch system would be inappropriate in the Caribbean became clearer during the weeks which followed. I came after a little to the conclusion that not even the superior colonial administration they seemed to furnish would have sufficed to establish it in Puerto Rico. The soil and the climate would not bear the burden of feeding two million people. The people themselves had outrun their food supply if not their other resources.

As I thought about the Fairchild advice and made some notes on it, my plane was approaching an interesting illustration of what happens to a people who go in for homestead holdings in a small, relatively isolated country without really rich soil or any
extensive scientific resources. Haiti, about a hundred years ago, when the French landlords and slave-owners had been driven out in a series of revolts, had, with the simplicity typical in revolutions, divided up the land and had presented it in fee simple ownership to its occupiers. And because the Haitians were more gifted in the household arts than in commercial agriculture, and because the techniques associated with power, machines and paper work did not penetrate their island, they maintained the homestead system and further divided the land, as population increased, into smaller and smaller farms. Before the revolts, Haiti had exported large amounts of sugar, molasses, coffee and rum and had received in exchange the products of manufacturing economies elsewhere in the world. That exchange had gradually dwindled until in the thirties of this century exports and imports had been reduced to a balance at seven or eight million dollars, possibly one tenth what it once had been. This indicates an amazing lack of commerce with the outside. Put in terms of goods, it meant that Haitians probably ate well of whatever food they grew, but that diet as a whole was deficient in proteins. It meant that their houses lacked plumbing, refrigeration or protection from vermin, that their transportation was limited to donkey-back carriage over the rudest trails, and that they were exposed helplessly to all the diseases of the tropics of which the most prevalent and dangerous are those which are water-borne or insect-carried, the result largely of insanitation.

This did not occur to me all at once, though I felt qualms as I looked down at the little Haitian allotments from the airplane on that same day. Recollection played some part. Friends who had worked in Haiti had passed on some information, not too well organized, and this had been supplemented by reading and by a brief visit some years before. Now, as this central problem forced itself on me, I began to study Haitian history and to wonder actively whether there was not an excellent example—a sufficient warning, in fact—in the history of this small Republic.

On this subject, as time went on, I came to feel deeply and became something of a missionary. The Populares in Puerto Rico appeared to be following the easy path down which so many other reform movements had gone. They were holding out to their followers "a piece of land," at once the most attractive and most betraying of promises a leader can make to an underprivileged people. It had always sufficed to get a group into power. But when put into practice it had always made the economy weaker by lowering total income. So that, although the incubus of exploiting landlords was thrown off, what had been taken in profits was seen to be a good deal less than what had been gained by superior management under their regime.

This did not mean that nothing should be done. It meant that the problem was complex. Setting up some kind of collective agriculture would succeed, perhaps, among a people who were disciplined, who were relatively advanced in the arts of farming and who had faith in each other and in their leaders. How far Puerto Rico was from possessing any of these
The requisites I came to understand more clearly month after month—and consequently to wonder what way lay open. This matter of rural organization came to seem a kind of dilemma. The more I thought of it, the less I felt that any solution I had ever heard of, or could conceive myself, was sound—and if sound, was at all possible to accomplish even with determined and farseeing political leadership. What kind of compromises were worked out we shall see. But they would be, after all, compromises.

The attempt to solve this problem was an old one. It did not begin in my generation and it was not uniquely Puerto Rican. It happened, just now, to be my assignment. How and why, I shall have to explain by looking backward about a decade.

When the New Deal was really new and when all the New Dealers were not so tired, so disillusioned or so jealous of one another as they soon became, it had seemed to me that a solution might be worked into national policy. And for an instrument I had invented the Resettlement Administration and had persuaded the President to support it. As its name indicates it was meant to take poor people off poor land and resettle them where good land, ‘good organization and good advice’ might rehabilitate them and give their children a chance for improvement. The theory was simply that worn-out or infertile land made poverty, but that the folk-stock was unimpaired and needed only to be given a new environment. The Resettlement Administration passed into history in 1937 when my successor as Administrator changed its name and, forced by Congressional opposition, changed its policy. The organization had been hated and feared from the first by the Farm Bureau Federation which had its clientele among the "400-acre-farmers." The Farm Bureau in 1933, when the Roosevelt administration began, had been about as far gone in decline as the Bankers’ Association. The agricultural depression which had gradually spread to the rest of the economy and then turned back upon agriculture, making the farmers’ situation worse than ever, had emasculated the Farm Bureau and lent strength to more progressive organizations such as the Farmers’ Union. It had lost members, its leadership had been uncertain and its hold on Congress—earlier so strong—had weakened. It had been nothing to fear—then.

Dr. Robert Morss Lovett once remarked to me, after an experience with the stubbornness of State Department officials, that he doubted if they knew our enemies and he was certain that they did not know our friends. This was true of Mr. Henry Wallace who became Secretary of Agriculture in 1933. He did not estimate his friends very highly and frequently did not recognize his enemies. Perhaps it was characteristic of the whole New Deal that its own confusion of aims, and especially its fright at any show of teeth from dissenters, should serve so often to defeat its purposes and to restrengthen its opponents for its own defeat.

The aims were not confused in general, of course, only in particular. Mr. Roosevelt meant to better the lot of common men; he meant to make them secure from want and fear; he
meant to give them liberty. American leaders had always said they meant to do that; but Mr. Roosevelt had come to the Presidency at a moment when the ruin of the whole social structure was almost complete and action was possible, even required. If, as we look back, what was done seems inadequate, qualified everywhere, incomplete and halfhearted; if, furthermore, its administration seems often to have been entrusted to its enemies—all that was because, although our national house was in ruins, we were not yet ready for a new one. The patches in the old walls and roofs were extensive and unsightly; we were nevertheless not yet ready to strengthen the foundations. Patching was all the New Dealers knew how to do—or, at any rate, all their enemies, as they regained their strength, would let them do.

Mr. Henry Wallace in the Department of Agriculture was in those days exhibiting these faults in what seems now exaggerated form. The whole farm relief program was calculated, as Mr. George Peek said in a characteristic statement, to "get the farmer back into the profit system." Just the fact that Mr. Peek made such a declaration reveals something of what was going on. The efforts of some of us to see that a share in the benefits being poured out so generously went to the sharecropper and the small uncommercial farmer were represented as attacks on the system of private enterprise and blown up, moreover, to monstrous proportions. It is true that private enterprise had gone on the rocks under its own power and with a captain and crew of its own choice. But no enterprise had got so poor that it had to get rid of its high-pressure advertisers and salesmen or its Washington lobbyists. They regarded themselves, these latter, as the rightful inhabitants of Washington and the New Dealers as upstarts. They had a professional as well as an economic reason for making war on newcomers like myself. No one of us had any thought of "doing away with the profit system" as an emergency measure. But it served a purpose to say we did.

Mr. Peek, who was made head of the A.A.A., the collective invention of Mr. Beardsley Ruml, Mr. M. L. Wilson, Mr. Henry Wallace, Mr. Mordecai Ezekiel, and myself, along with some others, was a retired farm-machinery man. As such he was blood brother to the seedsmen, the fertilizer manufacturers and others who sold things and wanted farmers to be able to pay for them. That was a simple impulse and Mr. Peek was altogether a simple man. He believed that what was good for farm-machinery manufacturers was good for the farmers. He did not worry about the country; and to speak of "the economy" was to use a generalization which was beyond his range. It was no part of his intention, either, that government bounties should be divided with the sharecroppers, the tenants, or the hired hands. These were "help" in farm language—that is, dependents who worked for and with the real farmers and who ought to look to them for benefits. If they got to expecting government assistance there was no telling where it might end. That there were at least twice as many of them was also not a matter of any interest. It was a short leap, for a mind as simple as Mr. Peek’s, from the suggestion that government might assist the
underprivileged farm folk along with the well-to-do proprietors, all the way to Communism with a capital C. Not all Mr. Peek's fellow workers were so disingenuous. They might say this kind of thing, but they would not believe it. They were not so direct either, in consequence of which they were still around when Mr. Peek had disappeared. A good deal of what they did in the Propaganda line was done with tongue in cheek, and with a slick finish which indicated the professional touch. And, of course, it was not done openly or with accurate reference to motive.

All this began very quickly and right under Mr. Wallace's nose. The benefit checks went out, the Farm Bureau dues came in, farm machinery sold again for cash or good credit, and the lobbyists, who had begun to wonder a little in Mr. Hoover's last days about their own survival, got back all their former confidence. This made it hard for a Secretary of Agriculture who was ambitious to do good to all the farmers, and even beyond that to all the nation, who talked of a "balanced abundance" and a "reciprocal economy" with the warmth of one who has a mission. He compromised for a time in the hope of pleasing everyone, but when the choosing of sides could be postponed no longer he felt unable to oppose the lobbyists he, perhaps more than anyone else except the President, had nursed back to health when they were sick. And when they had recovered, the Farm Bureau first of all went after the Resettlement Administration.

This is not said in blame. Mr. Wallace, as Secretary of Agriculture, conceived that he had to be a statesman. If he had it to do over I feel certain he would stand out against Messrs. O'Neal, Smith, Taber, Holman, et al. and would think such a course statesmanlike. But having made the error, in the beginning, of resting on them for support, he could find no alternative; he had to go on with them. I took the other line. I say it without pride because I had no support among the professional fraternity anyway; perhaps they might have tolerated me if I had gone their way, but it would never have been with mutual trust. I thought they were a dangerous crew and that the country would suffer for having allowed them to dominate the Department of Agriculture and reshape a dangerous lobby. They would see to it that the processors who purchased the farmers' goods prospered; likewise Mr. Peek's friends who sold things to farmers—but of the farmers themselves only the large ones, perhaps 20 per cent, would come off well. After a year of the A.A.A. it was apparent that this was so. Sharecroppers in the South were being cheated; tenants everywhere were having a hard time sharing in benefit payments; farm wages were not rising with farmers' incomes.

Antagonisms and visible exploitations were not my only reason for asking the President to let me start something on my own which would reach directly to these poorer rural folk. There was the matter of the land itself. Perhaps before beginning the serious business of this book I may be permitted this further digression, since it, too, concerns public policy as well as personal history. One of the old bureaus of the Department was the Forest Service. I
had for years been an earnest, if relatively amateur, conservationist. High in my hierarchy of esteem were the names of Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, and similarly low those of Fall and Ballinger. Later information, contributed by Harold Ickes, among others, has served to modify my regard for all these gentlemen except Mr. Fall.¹ But not a little of my reason for leaving my professorship at Columbia and undertaking the Assistant Secretaryship was the prospect of working with and for the Forest Service. In this I knew I should have Mr. Roosevelt’s support. He, top, thought of himself as a conservationist. There was something more at the back of my mind, too; it had to do with a movement for soil-saving of which Mr. H. H. Bennett was the prophet, one who had been without much honor, hitherto, in his own Bureau, what with one jealousy and another, the tale of which is too long for this narrative.

For both these causes—or for this one cause, since in my mind, at least, they were one—there was ample opportunity for work. To both causes I should contribute something. As that work began I should keep running into accounts of the Puerto Rican situation. The island was already the most crowded spot under the American flag. And the conservationists were alarmed by the slaughter of its forests and the loss of its soil. It had threatened to furnish the living example of all we had called on ancient history, hitherto, to illustrate—a place where starvation ensued upon cruelty to the land. I heard of it so many times that it came to be a kind of intellectual sore thumb of which I was over often conscious. So that finally, after the Soil Conservation Service was set up, after the Civilian Conservation Corps was functioning, and the administration of both had been extended to the island, I made my first journey to the Caribbean. I came, fortunately, in the company of three friends, Ferdinand Silcox, my own choice for Chief Forester, Mr. John F. Carter, journalist better known to his public as Jay Franklin, and Mr. Frederic P. Bartlett, my assistant since his student days at Columbia.

This was before the invention of the Resettlement Administration but not before I had given up any hope that A.A.A. might be significant in the history of American agriculture. I had felt—still felt—that a government which committed billions of dollars to farmers’ rehabilitation was entitled to require something in the way of insurance against the repeated recurrence of need for more billions. So far A.A.A. had done no more than provide the answer to the lobbyists’ dream—give outright benefits for no more than a modified promise to join in not producing future surpluses. There was no requirement for better farming—and so no recognition of a national interest in the land. I had hoped for more than that and in the past had written a good deal about the possibility of getting it. Later on, part of the need would be met in Mr. Wallace’s double provision for an ever normal granary and the basing of benefit payments, nominally at least, on soil-saving practices. But this was

someone else’s job, done mostly after I left the Department. I can claim to have shared in it only in the vague way that preliminary discussion precedes program.

In working out the first A.A.A. draft, it had been possible to do for Puerto Rico what I had at first hoped might be done for the whole country—provide that the processing taxes imposed to raise farm prices toward parity should be used "for the benefit of agriculture" generally, rather than merely for the benefit of some large farmers. Programs were already being shaped for using the considerable sums provided in that way. This was not as yet so serious an undertaking as it would become when the so-called Chardón Plan was begun. But it was in my mind that possibilities for Puerto Rico were considerable, however great our disappointments over the shape taken for the country as a whole by A.A.A. I hasten to say that these possibilities did come about to a certain extent. True, next year when sugar was treated legislatively to a Congressional bill all its own, benefit payments were given direct to farmers as with any other crop, even though more than half these Puerto Rican "farmers" were New York and Boston banks or other "foreign" corporations. But one year's funds, at least, were segregated. These eventually were put together with a Presidential allocation and spent by the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration. The results from this are still to be seen in the island. Congress refused more appropriations, as Congress is so apt to do in the case of Puerto Rico, however, and its management was ultimately entrusted to those unsympathetic with its essential policies, so that now it has almost vanished as an institution. But it took years to die and meanwhile accomplished much good with some seventy million dollars which it had to spend.

We had, behind us, Mr. Jerome Frank\(^2\) and I, the small victory of generalizing Puerto Rico's benefit payments, then, and we determined on a journey to what had become for both of us a fabulous land for which we had already done something and hoped to do more. Only, unfortunately, Jerome at the last moment could not come. I felt like a boy on a holiday as we flew toward Miami in one of the noisy Stinson planes which were the standard Eastern Airlines equipment of that day. The Great Silver Fleet of Douglasses was still about two years in the future.

Next morning, on 6 March 1934, I had my first sight of one of the famous brood of Pan American clipper ships at Dinner Key airport. We set out toward the east on one of the first four-motored Sikorskys, not yet regular equipment on that run. There was a reason for this: it seemed that Mrs. Roosevelt was aboard. No one believed it afterward, but the fact that we had determined on a trip to the Caribbean possessions so closely to the same time that we traveled on a plane together was pure coincidence. She was not as famous then as she afterward became either as a lady with an interest in all unfortunate folk or as a persistent traveler. Since then I have encountered her a number of times on planes or at

\(^2\)Then the A.A.A.'s General Counsel, now a Federal judge, Third District, New York.
airports: but so have many other of her acquaintances. Soon no one would think anything anymore of suddenly realizing that the quiet woman beside him or across the way reading or knitting as the plane bore through cloud or sunshine, was the President’s wife. But it was not so ordinary an event in 1934 and, although I had come to know her well in Albany and Washington, and to admire her energy and her enormous good will, it was still exciting to travel in her company. With her were several newspaper women, including Miss Ruby Black and a lady of whom I saw a good deal in the following years when she worked as the eyes and ears of Mr. Harry Hopkins. This was Miss Lorena Hickock, known to her friends as "Hick."

Planes in those days did not make the jump to San Juan in one day. Mr. Norman Armour and his lovely Russian wife can hardly have been happy to learn that night in Port-au-Prince that simultaneously with the arrival of the wife of the President, an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture had dropped in, too; but his ambassadorial aplomb was unshaken. Dinner, if a little late, was still a success. I still remember the aroma of the Haitian coffee which, it seemed to me, had about the same relation to the ordinary coffee I’d been used to as wild strawberries from a Chautauqua County hillside have to those grown in a forcing bed. It was as though all the coffee in my former experience had been the merest intimation of what coffee ought to be—a kind of preparation for this exquisite flavor.

The highlight of the journey, as a journey, however, occurred in San Pedro de Macorís, where the clippers landed on a Santo Domingan river, a highlight just a little comic, but perhaps pathetic too. It was thoughtless of me to have started out on a journey which took me to two foreign countries and two territories without some advance planning and notice. My only excuse was ignorance of the elaborate difficulties involved for hosts to visiting officials, of which I have had ample experience of my own by now.

However, in San Pedro de Macorís the fact that an Assistant Secretary was passing through was completely overlooked in the excitement of glimpsing the President’s wife. My own lack of courtesy went unnoticed. Sr. Trujillo had an interest by now in standing well with the United States and this was a real effort. He only had perhaps forty-five minutes, but he put on a show which I think Mrs. Roosevelt will never forget. I am sure that Miss Hickock and I will always recall the solemnity of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was an immensely heavy man for his short height. He and the others of his entourage who escorted Mrs. Roosevelt up the wooden pier to a coconut-thatched pavilion on the riverbank were clothed in the thickest of formal tailcoat outfits, complete with gloves, spats and silk hats. And the temperature on that humid river, after the coolness aloft, although it seemed higher to us than perhaps it was, must have been at least 100 degrees. Mrs. Roosevelt had to meet Sr. Trujillo and his wife and receive about twenty bunches of cellophane-wrapped roses from the assembled ladies—the cellophane wrappers made all the roses look like wax and a faint funereal air permeated the reception atmosphere. Mrs. Roosevelt was
afterward somewhat severe with me for not helping out, at which suggestion I am quite honest in saying that I was startled. So difficult it is to make a participant of a lifelong non-participant observer. I apologized most humbly and was forgiven with an amusement which I suppose was altogether undiplomatic in newspaper company.

I came in this way to Puerto Rico for the first time, with no intimation of how much of my working life would be devoted to its people's causes or of the future fondnesses and hatreds involved in so innocent an approach. My recollections of that journey are somewhat mixed but all very vivid. I think any Northerner (and I came from the Great Lakes country, where for weeks at a stretch the sun does not shine in winter—or even sometimes in spring or fall) who comes for the first time into the subtropics always recalls that experience as one of the most striking of his life. It was that way with me. And it was the more true because my visit was to the Caribbean.

Anywhere on a Caribbean island the sea is close. It is usually within sight—a brighter, more optimistic blue than the gray-blue of northern waters. It is apt to be streaked near its shores with metallic greens and light-struck purples; it runs up toward coral-colored beaches in an endless succession of white combers. The great arc of the Antilles from Florida to the shoulder of South America below Trinidad is a long succession of mountaintops thrust above the sea. The ranges are mighty ones and what is visible above the surface is not much in proportion to the whole mass. The upper parts of mountains are usually steep and these are no exception. So that there are not many wide stretches of plain: with the exception of western Cuba and eastern Santo Domingo there are hardly any. What the traveler sees is that incomparable combination of sea and height which has moved men's literary emotions, at least, throughout written history.

Then there is the sunshine—and the wind. Mountain, sea, sun, wind—these four are physical presences everywhere. For this is South—from 20 to 10 degrees above the equator, Puerto Rico being 17 degrees; twice a year when the sun passes overhead it is felt with sword-stroke fierceness and even at the other seasons it has to be respected. Also it is always to be counted on. Not more than once or twice a year will there be week-long spells of gray weather. As a rule the showers come and go almost in moments, leaving the sun really to rule the character of the day. But showers are chased across the sky by the Caribbean friend—the trade wind. The wind out of the east, moving toward the continent with a southern slant in winter and a northern slant in summer, tempers and makes moderate nearly every day, dropping in the early morning hours but rising again with the sun. The hottest hours are apt to be these morning ones, the coolest those in the afternoon.

All this is strange to the newcomer and enchanting in a way which old inhabitants recognize without exactly understanding. I speak of it to convey something of what it meant to me—and I am sure it means to others—to come first to the Caribbean as an adult.
rather than to be born there or to come before knowledge has complicated direct apprehension. It struck me not only as exotic and lovely but also perhaps as having something of the quality that Haitian coffee had. All this vast setting out of intimate islands down the South Atlantic which enclose the Caribbean between themselves and the northern shelf of South America seemed to have been done especially to accommodate the kind of animal man is. Here, if anywhere at all, he ought to find fulfillment, even peace.

I feel quite certain that this is a usual feeling with Northerners who come to the Caribbean relatively late in life. With translation to the new environment there goes the conviction, not mental at all, because many of us who come this way are well enough read in the sad regional history of the islands, but rather sensational, as a result of the propitiousness of a Nature which comes to seem in the North so perpetually hostile, that the tropics can be kind to men. Good Lord, we may say to ourselves, if Nature can be so profligate there must be a way of fixing everything else! And many of us, a tragic number, really, devote ourselves to the task. This is only partly from love of the region, and only partly from the challenge of unnecessary ills, of course. It is partly because we come or are sent to do something fairly well defined as I was. But we often do bring a special good will. And sometimes we keep it in spite of everything.
GENERAL WINSHIP was Governor then. He met Mrs. Roosevelt, and incidentally me, at the plane. We had landed smoothly in San Juan Harbor as I have seen so many hundreds of clippers—and navy patrol planes land since then—Catalinas, Mariners, JRF's and the ugly ducks which would be so useful for the dirty jobs of war—coming in through the dramatic portal with El Morro on one side and Isla de Cabra on the other. El Morro was somewhat of a ruin in those days and La Cabra was just a sandy island with an old leper hospital. My eyes had clung to El Morro, as we had gone in toward the eastern turn for a landing. Someone had said, "There's La Fortaleza." I had glanced quickly at the old twin towers and the mass of the mansion rising behind them, and then had buckled my belt. There had been no sensation at all—certainly no intimations for the future: I had been more interested, as always, in the technique of the landing.

Even though he had to entertain a President's wife General Winship found room for me at La Fortaleza for a few days. I was interested to see the high country at either end of the island. Since Silcox was along we made that an important part of our business. But I also went on a trip into the island with the then Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Rafael Menéndez Ramos. This was my first look at the sugar economy. Cane was at that time in process of recovery from one of its periodic sinking spells. A few years before, a combination of mosaic and other diseases had reduced production enormously and there had been genuine fear that the crop might disappear altogether. Clever work by the plant breeders and pathologists had, however, produced new varieties not only resistant to disease but more productive as well. All the cane areas which sold their sugar in the United States market had had a similar experience at one time or another. By now the disease problems were so reduced everywhere that surpluses were accumulating.

With this problem of sugar I had had something to do already for the Department and would have more to do in the future. To reconcile the interests of the cane-and-beet-sugar producers of the continental United States with those of the Philippines, Hawaii and Puerto Rico—and especially Cuba—was a wholly impossible task which nevertheless had to be undertaken and brought to some result. Each area had its representatives in Washington who added to the collection of lobbyists. And even among selfish politico-economic groups these representing sugar were outstanding for single-minded concentration on their own interests to the exclusion of all else. They demanded to be dealt with. Their own private attempt to reconcile conflicting interests had completely broken down and they wanted the Government to intervene. What ensued would make a book in itself; and I do not propose even to refer to the story here except as it relates to Puerto Rico. It is only necessary to say that there resulted, after much conferring and much jockeying for position, a system of quotas for imports and production which was eventually embodied in law. No group would admit that it had been given treatment which even approached
fairness; and everyone continued to harbor an official grudge (no matter what the private belief) against the others and, of course, against the Government. But the sugar section of the A.A.A.—as it was then—was one of my departmental assignments and I was trying to acquire a better understanding of the industry.

A description of Puerto Rico which said that it consisted of a mountain range entirely surrounded by sugar cane would be fairly accurate. There is high country—steep, irregular, many-sloped hills and mountains, as high as 4,400 feet above sea level in the Toro Negro—running from east to west down the island’s center. Throughout the ages erosion and the action of the surrounding sea have created an alluvial plain several miles wide most of the way around; and this is covered with a smooth carpet of cane—or would be, according to the sugar men, if Puerto Rico’s quota in the American market were not so small. As it is that encircling plain is more than half devoted to cane. Most of the rest has no more intensive use than the pasturing of oxen. But that pasture is green too, under the generous tropical rain. It may seem strange to the uninitiated that oxen should be pastured on some of the most expensive land in the world—land with a market value of from $300 to $1,000 an acre—but that is how it is.

That is how it was, also, as I traveled with the Commissioner of Agriculture in 1934. He and the many agronomists and sugar men I met initiated me into Puerto Rican economics. The contradictions and paradoxes are perhaps no stranger than elsewhere. They are nevertheless notable, partly because they arise from a condition artificially created and maintained. This condition is the preference given to Puerto Rican sugar over that of Cuba— and, of course, other foreign countries. The fact that sugar from Puerto Rico enters the United States free and that sugar from Cuba has to pay duty is an overwhelming influence in the insular economy. The fear that this condition may sometime or somehow be changed is a phobia whose intensity comes from the consciousness that Cuba has better land and lower costs of production. I often attempted to discuss with Puerto Rican friends, even some who were economists, the position of a preferenceless island—which seemed to me in the long run likely. They almost always refused to accept the premise even for the sake of argument. This state of mind naturally grew worse in proportion to the individual’s degree of interest in the industry.

It seemed to me in 1934 that a good deal of inefficiency was being supported by that preference. A quick calculation, in the course of argument indicated that continental sugar consumers were paying, in preference alone, and not counting benefit payments, between fifteen and twenty millions a year more for sugar than they needed to pay if the source of supply had been the Philippines or Cuba. Was it justified by higher wages and better living conditions in Puerto Rico? I thought not as I looked around. For I was being shocked, as all new Northerners are, at the squalor in which the island’s workers live. And, I argued, look at the incidental results!
Puerto Rico had emerged from the economic melee, in which quotas were fixed, with cane acreage reduced about 20 per cent from the million tons produced in 1933. That that was rank injustice was shouted at me by all with whom I talked, some with good humor; some with shocking bitterness. But granting that, I said, consumers paid almost a cent a pound on the quota sugar, whatever amount that was, so that it might grow in Puerto Rico rather than in Cuba. And where in the life of the island were there any distinguishing results of that sacrifice? Wages were miserable, living costs high, housing as bad, surely, as any in the world, people half-starved on a diet inherited by tradition from the days of slavery, and sick with all the diseases to which malnourished and ill-housed people are subject in the tropics.

Puerto Ricans had thought about these matters long enough. Indeed they had lived with them and did not need an inexperienced outsider to enlarge on their seriousness. I was well enough aware of that and not intending more than to insist that something was necessary besides continued agitation for larger quotas. I had seen enough of the Congress to understand that there would always be a kind of latent hostility to offshore areas which might at any time result in quota or preference changes. The island had no voting representatives, and consequently no logrolling advantages. The Department of State was always going to favor Cuba in the interest of foreign relations. Western beet and Louisiana cane would be earnestly and effectively represented. No, I said, the Puerto Rican preference was a dangerous reed on which to lean. The discussions of Puerto Rican economics were long and earnest. I continued them at the University with Dr. Carlos Chardón, the Chancellor, and with Mr. Rafael Fernández García, who was a chemistry teacher with the future of the island very much on his mind. These two and Mr. Menéndez Ramos, Commissioner of Agriculture, as a result of our discussions, constituted a committee which later on produced the Chardón Plan. But this was after I had gone back to the Department convinced that some drastic change in the economy was needed, and certain that it meant less emphasis on sugar.

These were matters which I had again and again gone over with the President. He had had definite, even if limited, notions of what ought to be done. Before I had visited the Caribbean I naturally had deferred to his experience, for his knowledge of the area was extensive. After my visit I felt it was more generally based on the Caribbean than on specific Puerto Rican conditions, however, and on other occasions, after I returned, we had gone into it again. It was sound enough to insist on the growing of more food, particularly on the good non-quota lands belonging to the big operators. But his idea was not exactly that. It seemed to me dangerously like the Haitian homestead pattern of small growers in a closed economy. But that always had been a weakness of his. There had been a time not long before when he had felt that a good part of the problem of relief could be met by providing homesteads for the urban unemployed. I discounted this, therefore; but I did get from him
some really valuable ideas. He was aware, for instance, of the easier production in the subtropics of starchy vegetables, which, together with the vast consumption in Puerto Rico of imported rice, made a badly balanced diet. He thought more could be done with protein-high legumes. He talked about other resources which he thought strangely unexploited. There were hardwoods and bamboos, insecticides, spices and essential oils, for instance, with which nothing much had been done. He seemed also to favor more local industries of a sort. But he was vague on this and I felt the need to think it out in relation to the whole of our colonial policy, which was gradually coming into my consciousness, built up from the parts with which I was familiar or about which I had to do something in my official capacity.

There was one other matter on which the President was clear: the frightening increase of the population had to be stopped, He was inclined in this matter to follow the prevalent line of thought among social workers and others who came into close contact with poor people: there were too many of them and it was better to stop them at the source, than to connive at the high death rate which is nature’s way of keeping a workable balance between numbers and resources. It is a simple theory to which I could never quite assent that there is a quantitative ratio between the food supply and the numbers there are to use it. The President believed, it will be seen, that something might be done both to increase the food supply and to reduce the number of people—or at least to modify their future increase. Perhaps most people look at the matter in this way. I have always been a little concerned with the dysgenic probabilities in such a public policy. It seems almost certain that controls will be effected in proportion to the intelligence and other good qualities of the users and that the worst human stock, for example, will not be touched by it at all and will go on breeding while the better stock reduces its contribution to the future population. I have also been more optimistic than most of those with whom I have discussed the matter concerning the possibilities of modern techniques for the increase of goods. Perhaps I have been too much impressed by war experience; nevertheless the vast flow of goods under such stimulus, which I have seen twice in my life, has led me to feel—or perhaps hope would be a better word—that humanity would find ways to achieve the same releases in some industrial and political reorganization—in which case there would certainly be enough of everything for everybody. If I have been a consistent enemy of certain features of our system of private enterprise it is for this reason: that they lead to the withholding of production rather than to its release.

At any rate, because I have felt this way, I have been cold to birth control as a serious means for improving the human lot. The President thought it ought to be tried and so did others. During General Winship’s time the legislature was to act in the matter, legitimizing the dissemination of contraceptive information. Puerto Rico being predominantly Catholic, this would require a good deal of courage on everyone's part. Somehow or other General
Winship would be absent when it came time to sign or veto the bill; and Mr. Menéndez Ramos, as Acting Governor, would sign it. In my time as Governor the rather surprising results—negative—would begin to be apparent as data accumulated. The futility of the measure, taken by itself, would be quite apparent.

This was still a year or two in the future, although I discussed it thoroughly with everyone concerned. But the other end of the equation? How did my informants think the food supply might be increased and local industries encouraged, or other measures undertaken to increase income and provide more employment? There began, I think, in the discussions we had about these matters, the germination of policies which matured much later—some of them not until my governorship. But as I recall, there were no new or particularly startling suggestions. The situation was too obvious. There must be a widening of the economic base if that were at all consistent with keeping costs of production down to competitive levels or near them. To give new industries a start, assistance from the Government would be needed. I remember that we speculated as to what these new industries might be and thought there might be such new crops as the President was interested in to enlarge the agricultural opportunities, but that also many manufacturing possibilities existed. These were mostly of two sorts, it seemed: the making of certain consumers’ goods such as clothing, matches, soap, food products and the like; and the further development of agricultural by-product industries such as the processing of citrus fruits and pineapples, the manufacture of paper and paperboard from bagasse, the making of chemicals and feeds from molasses and so on.

There would be difficulties. This would be a challenge to the whole tacit colonial policy which had been developing undefended but nevertheless with monstrously jealous beneficiaries ever since the American occupation. What was said in these discussions led me then and later into serious consideration of this colonialism. I may as well put down here, more or less at the outset, what I came to consider, at this time and later, its characteristics and consequences.

I was, to begin with, taken by surprise to find that Puerto Ricans felt themselves badly treated by the United States. This was true of nearly all of them whether they had reasons or merely feelings about it. And all alike spoke often and bitterly of our policy. Sometimes I heard of Yankee imperialism in such terms of hatred as could only originate in a penetrating fear. Sometimes I recognized its essential insincerity when it was merely political; but, even so, politicians do not go on carrying a torch for dead issues. They desert them for live ones. Anyone could tell that this issue was alive and, perhaps, growing.

I sometimes felt like looking over my shoulder when I was talked to in this way to see whether someone else was not being addressed. I didn’t know any imperialists. Even American businessmen with export businesses didn’t seem to me to fit the descriptions I
heard. Was it the financiers? Or the absentee landlords? I could recognize something there well worth looking into. These were favorite devils in Washington as well as in San Juan. When a Puerto Rican left-wing politician spoke sourly of absentee corporations he was on safe political ground. Few besides those paid to do it would defend big business of any sort in those days. The preliminary campaigns of the struggle to end abuses in Wall Street, and establish the Securities Exchange Commission were just then being fought. But also, absentee capitalism is never popular; and half a dozen of these enterprises controlled by New York and Boston banks among them owned or leased about half the island's really productive land—and the mills which processed its crop. They therefore had a dominant position in insular life. Their employees ran into scores of thousands even if only those directly employed were counted; they paid large fees to many technicians and professional people; they leased much land besides what they owned, and so controlled its owners; they bought the larger farmers' cane and so determined the policies of the farmers' associations (here again was my old friend, the Farm Bureau, acting as stooge for the absentee corporations); they supported research at the University and furnished the only extensive market for its graduates and so had the expected influence on University policy.

It was in these ways, indirectly, with an easy hand when that was possible, but without restraint and with force when necessary, that the island was run by what was called by its own members the "better element." Of course, the better element would necessarily include many others, some of whom did not know they were being used, or, if they did, for what purpose; and the rest naturally believed in a system which did so well by them. These would include those middle-class people who were not employed by the corporations—merchants and other businessmen, professional people and so on, but more importantly the Puerto Ricans who themselves owned or operated sugar properties.

In any colonial situation the emotions of the governed toward the government are mixed. The Spanish and Puerto Rican landlords wanted the conservatism and order which came from the kind of outside rule they were getting; but all the same they had enough local feeling to resent interference. They exhibited the most amazing inconsistencies. They seemed, at times, when their pride was involved, to be at one with the most radical independentistas. Puerto Ricans could take care of their own problems; they did not need any outsiders to tell them what to do, and so on. At the same time many of them advocated statehood, or belonged to the political party which advocated it; and they were sending their sons, and even some of their daughters, to American institutions for education. This last seemed to me a significant change. Few of the young people were going to Spain anymore; the influence of Seville and Madrid was cultural, almost purely precious, and declining in importance. A few reactionaries—in this cultural sense—hung about the University, centering largely in the department of Spanish studies. But there were not many.
I found General Winship, as Governor, not having had an opportunity to observe colonial governors before, an interesting study. What were the mental processes which led Mr. Roosevelt to the selection, I could not for the life of me imagine. I could understand the choice of Mr. Gore, who had preceded him and who in many ways had been far less suited for the office. That had been a political appointment pure and simple. Years afterward Mr. Edward Flynn would describe to me how, exactly, it was done—not a pretty story, if one thinks American responsibilities in Puerto Rico are greater than political responsibilities at home. But still it was understandable. People are rewarded for political services every day, in a democracy, by being given jobs they cannot begin to fill satisfactorily. But General Winship had been a free choice, the President’s own, and wholly outside the political field, because of the recent sad experience with Mr. Gore. Administratively, the President, however, always felt a confidence in elderly naval and military gentlemen not shared by his liberal friends. After General Winship, the governorship would be entrusted to Admiral Leahy. And there are numerous other instances. Perhaps, also, in Winship’s case, long service in the Philippines, in Liberia and elsewhere, had seemed to furnish an adequate background. Nevertheless, as one Puerto Rican described it to me, he regarded the island as an extensive Southern plantation with the sugar men as his foremen and the people as good or bad folk as they did their work and accepted their livings without or with complaint.

The first time I saw him he told me he was "busy as a bird dog" with "his legislature," which, it seemed, was not behaving well at the moment in spite of the fact that its majority was properly manned and led by sugar dependents. I do not know what issue was in controversy; perhaps it had to do with his own special program for Puerto Rican salvation—the development of turismo with subsidiary phases such as roadside planting and bettering of hotel accommodations. He discussed these panaceas with everyone—including Mrs. Roosevelt and, of course, me—at great length. I am perhaps being unfair to a predecessor in office, in whose term, after all, the Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration came into being. I am told, however, that he did not help in that development, though he was always dutifully interested in all the Federal funds he could get, but, on the other hand, made many difficulties. My resentment comes probably from the feeling that if, during his time, the New Deal had been represented in Puerto Rico rather than a wholly reactionary conception of government, there would not have remained so much to do in my time or so many difficulties to overcome in the doing of it.

It was not on General Winship’s account that Puerto Ricans of the "better element" felt themselves badly treated. Mr. Menéndez Ramos, who was Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. José Ramón Quiñones, who was Chairman of the Public Service Commission, and Dr. Chardón, who was the Chancellor of the University, were trusted aides, a kind of brains trust. All were of old family and all honored in their relation with the Governor. The "better
element,” the Spanish part of it, had a more obscure, perhaps a psychological reason, apart from faint formulations in their minds of the same sentiments the cultural reactionaries felt. Resentment at the assumption of Anglo-Saxon superiority—there never had been a Governor of Latin extraction—was always present in some degree. But feelings of this sort do not dominate the actions of reasonable and responsible folk. Those who did not like General Winship, who passionately disliked him, in fact, were the lowly folk of all sorts who felt that they were not getting anywhere under American rule except into deeper trouble. They seemed always to have hard work—with the paradox that often they had no work and were then worse off—little food, more sickness and no fun. They desperately wanted something more, not something very different, perhaps, but just more to eat and more fun. Even I, a casual and official visitor, carefully shown around by the insular elite, discovered that. And it was a disturbing discovery, so deep, so powerful, and so bitter it seemed. What was the colonialism which produced this resentment and distrust? No Governor was responsible, though any Governor might seem to personify it if he were sympathetic, as was the present one, to the going arrangements and without ideas for change. It was the system.

How many Americans any more are quite clear in their minds what their Revolution was about? Have they forgot the meaning of “taxation without representation”? Have they forgot the Boston tea party? Have they forgot that their forefathers refused to buy only English goods, to sell only in English markets and to ship only in British bottoms? This kind of treatment caused Americans to form Committees of Correspondence which amounted to a conspiracy against the home government: these, in turn, led directly to a Declaration of Independence which stated some very bold principles. We need to be reminded of them now and again. . . . These were questions I was asked and arguments I was given by Puerto Rican friends. They were polite, the Puerto Ricans I met, and they had a pathetic trait or two which were described for me as colonial. One of these was the desire to please—that is, not to run beyond the tolerance of the listener in arguing about this question of status. Another was the tendency to exaggerate in public pronouncements the real poverty and the genuine dangers of the insular economy. Both these were errors in psychology.

I found it the tendency of Congressmen, for instance, who, in the course of their duties on Insular Affairs Committees, heard a lot of testimony one way and another and saw a good many islanders, to accept the thesis that all Puerto Ricans wanted to be like Americans in everything, even to having Puerto Rico become a state of the Union, which gave them (the Congressmen) a comfortable feeling of superiority far from warranted, if they only knew it, by any genuine feeling. They forgot that most of those who were well enough off to come to Washington and talk to a Congressman or testify before a Committee had an interest in the status quo. Statehood was sometimes genuinely advocated, but it was best to inquire whether a particular advocate was not supporting such a program because he knew it had
no chance, wherefore his advocacy helped to prevent any change from occurring. They seemed to forget too, though Congressmen, of course, are not habitual innocents in these matters, that most of their visitors were on someone’s pay roll and that their trip was financed with a generous expense account. The people of Puerto Rico did not send these representatives. Some special interest sent them.

Those who furnished information to those on the continent who for one reason or another would like to keep up with Puerto Rican affairs did it in what I was taught to call the colonial whine. Jíbaros out in the country, I have since learned, do not use this tone. Their bellies may be empty, or relatively so, for the killing day they have to put in, but if you stop one of them on the road or talk to him in the field, you do not find him feeling sorry for himself. You find him full of the ancient wisdom unlettered men always have, and full of mental contrivances for getting the best of his difficulties. Or perhaps, because half-starved or sick, he is merely numb. But he doesn’t ask to have guaranteed more than the usual minimum of goods which, just as a human being, he thinks due him. He is told a good deal over the radio and in print (which he may have to take secondhand, illiteracy being what it is) that he is worthy of tears and hand-wringing. He comes to notice, however, that the injustices talked of by the politicians— which he is aware of when they are real and remediable—are usually said to be traceable to the weaknesses of other politicians and eradicable by a change in officeholders. And he is as skeptical of all this as most other normal and sensible people are. Not that he is uninterested in politics. He is concerned with an almost unhealthy intensity. But he does not expect economic miracles from local political turnovers. Outsiders do not have a chance to know about the common mind of the Puerto Rican, to understand the exaggerations of politicians, and to discount the apostrophes to the representatives of Tío Sam. I seldom knew a Congressman —or any other interested observer—who after actually coming to Puerto Rico, and being around for a day or two, seeing the worst there was to see, which was El Fanguito\(^1\) and the other marsh slums, did not draw a long relieved breath and say, "Well, it’s not half as bad as I was told!"

That is what colonialism was and did: it distorted all ordinary processes of the mind, made beggars of honest men, sycophants of cynics, American-haters of those who ought to have been working beside us for world betterment—and would if we had encouraged them. Economically it consisted in setting up things so that the colony sold its raw products in a cheap market (in the mother country) and bought its food and other finished goods in a dear market (also in the mother country); there was also the matter of foreign products to be carried in American ships. In that sense Puerto Rico was a colony just as New York and Massachusetts had been colonies. Except for "relief" of one kind or another, which George

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\(^1\) Little Mudhole is the literal translation.
III and the others were too foolish to give when it would have been wise, Puerto Rico was just as badly off. And relief was something which the Congress made Puerto Rico beg for, hard, and in the most revolting ways, as a beggar does on a church step, filthy hat in hand, exhibiting sores, calling and grimacing in exaggerated humility. And this last was the real crime of America in the Caribbean, making of Puerto Ricans something less than the men they were born to be.
I AM GOING TOO FAST. It will be understood, though, I suppose, that these observations and conclusions were not all shaped on that spring trip to Puerto Rico in 1934. It is not possible to retrace one’s mental history in detail even if anyone else could be interested in the process. My view of Puerto Rico, if it has any value, has it because I have tried to understand her problems and to be helpful to her people over a considerable time. My motives, I think, are generally recognized; my methods and conclusions are often disparaged, oftener, I say, by those who would come off badly as a result of a policy based on them than by those who would not be affected one way or the other. What the common folk think, we may sometime discover, though at present ’none of us can honestly pretend to know.

These common folk have been enigmatic, I find, even to most politicians whose business it is to understand them sufficiently at least to get their votes. The truth is that voters have only a few choices, actually; and that a small percentage preponderance happens to favor one politician rather than another is a foundation upon which he often builds altogether too vast a structure. He is apt to represent himself as commissioned to do almost anything on the ground that 51 per cent of the voters disliked his opponent more than they disliked him. This is just as true—perhaps more true—in Puerto Rico than elsewhere, made worse by the colonialism of which I have spoken, by the natural ferment of insularism, and by the ebullience of the Spanish temper. There will be those who will deny the competence of my conclusions because I am a Continental and because I am not Latin by race. But I do not pretend to speak as anything but a New Yorker or to have made investigations or reached understandings not open to any fair American. I have, however, acquired a sense of shame which, if I could convey it to my fellow citizens, would, I think, result in ending a long-standing injustice, perpetrated unthinkingly, against all conscience and principle. It is my view that this is being done by a people who, if they could be made to realize what is going on in their name, would instantly bring it to an end. This may make me by now a prejudiced reporter, but it must be remembered that this feeling of mine has had a long gestation. It was conceived back in 1934 and has grown within me ever since.

To those of my friends and enemies who so often ask, "Why did you want to be Governor of Puerto Rico?" I make this kind of answer: "This was no more my job to do than yours—perhaps less mine because I have sometimes made an effort or two to change things—and you may well feel some responsibility. It is for us—some among us, supported by the rest—to make free people of Puerto Ricans, to give them self-government as I had it when I grew up as a citizen of New York or as you had it elsewhere in the States." I want no man to have to ask favors of me—especially I do not want him to beg for what is his of right.
Disregarding altogether what it does to him, that asking makes something of me I do not care to contemplate or to give a name. I am no longer unprejudiced, it is true, but that does not necessarily mean, I insist, that I have not got hold of something urgent to be done.

I remember very well how this began. It was with me, as it has so often been with others, partly or largely the product of argument from the servants of the present system. I was prepared, of course, by outrage at what I saw. But it was the talk which lit the determination to work for change—that and the affecting contrast, everywhere in Puerto Rico, of beauty—intense physical beauty of land, sea and air—and squalor—squalor without any of the saving quality of investment through past generations which transforms the poverty, for instance, of Europe into something dignified and respectable. It makes an important difference that Spanish and Italian farm laborers, poor as they may be, live in a house whose stones were laid up one course after another by generations of ancestors or that the farmers around the Mediterranean carry out their labor on terraces it took a thousand years to build and put under irrigation. There is a sense of permanence and continuity there, no matter how meager the living, which is tragically lacking in Puerto Rico. The characteristic quality of life in Puerto Rico—among the masses—is its impermanence and essential worthlessness. A man works and gets poorer, lives in a shack, and knows that even his remains will find only a temporary resting place: in ten years they will be thrown out on a common bone heap to make way for others. Maybe this is why, against all reason and sense of responsibility, such a man has seven or ten children instead of two or three.

All this has long been a forgotten range of sentiment, however, to those who serve the system best. These are practical men, lawyers perhaps, or engineers, or accountants, not necessarily Puerto Ricans, sometimes Continentals. They have got over any shocks about poverty or any enthusiasms about beauty or any irritation at the contrast between the two. They are full of complaints about workers' laziness, full of tales about how happy and productive they once were, certain they are spoiled by relief or by high wages, distressed by their improvidence and carelessness. These are obsessions which have all the characteristics of compensation, as any psychologist will recognize—part of the pathology of exploitation, necessary to the maintenance of peace of mind and avoidance of guilt. But there are other, more sophisticated symptoms. These run to general carping about the New Deal, the destructiveness of high taxes, the lack of protection for property in strikes, and in the most esoteric (but nevertheless familiar) manifestation, in assertions of hostility to private enterprise, leanings toward Communism (or fascism if that is more unpopular) and the general unfitness to take part in government of those to whom they care to attach these fantastic labels. I was treated to all this in the spring of 1934. The Bell Committee was to hear it all in the spring of 1943 as the Chavez Committee had earlier in that year. In the
Senators I should be able to see the same reaction I had earlier developed. The Representatives would seem at least to take it seriously—even to ask for more.

The Chavez Committee, however, would have seen a good deal more of the island, have talked with a greater range of people and held hearings in other cities than San Juan. Fortunately, also, Senator Chavez himself would speak Spanish, being himself New Mexican Spanish-American, and he would like to wander in and out of stores, to stop by roadsides and to walk through coffee fincas and cane fields. Of course, the greatest surprise that Committee would have for us, after all the newspaper accounts, would be to discover how honest and sagacious Mr. Taft could be and how genuine an interest in Puerto Rico he would have. Mr. Ellender we should dread a little because of Louisiana’s competition as a sugar area; that would, however, only seem to make him more knowledgeable and sympathetic; Mr. Homer Bone, it would not surprise us to find, would be as willing to champion underdog Puerto Ricans as underdogs from anywhere else. How different it would be with Mr. Bell and several of his colleagues (excepting Mr. Robinson and Mr. LeCompte) who would seek earnestly for what they came determined to find and would carefully winnow all the chaff from the wheat for preservation in their record.

I preceded these visitors by a decade. I was not a Congressional Committee or even, as I later was (in 1941) an accredited investigator. I was merely an official seeking guidance. I went on the classic trip in a somewhat more extended way than did Senator Chavez and his colleagues. That trip, if Puerto Rican hotelkeepers had a touch of the French or Swiss genius for their trade, and if Puerto Rico were more accessible, would be as famous, I thought, as the Grand Corniche on the Riviera or the Storm King route up the Hudson. We were never out of sight of the mountains and seldom of the sea. The roads were good—different from continental roads, but still good. A lot of the Spanish engineering was still visible then, good sound work but, of course, with short radii on the curves and a tendency to avoid heavy construction and follow the contours closely. But the grades were decent. It was only necessary to go more slowly than we were used to in the States. However, we wanted to go slowly anyway. I had found in myself a genuine curiosity to know everything about this strange, lovely, stricken land.

San Juan lay near the mid-point of the northern coast. Most of the city was a kind of thumb, resting obliquely in the sea. El Morro was out on the nail; Río Piedras, the suburban University town, at its base. The harbor lay inside the thumb and was bordered on all the land side by mangrove marshes. On these there had begun that shameful slow growth of shack slums which, in spite of the New Deal, would extend itself relentlessly throughout the decade. From about the center of the thumb a filled road ran out across the tidal lands toward the south and the higher country there. From this road or from Río Piedras one could enter on the so-called military road to Ponce, the Pearl of the South. Not many works of man in the island antedated this highway connecting the one metropolis with the other,
but, of course, it had had many incarnations. First an Indian path, then a donkey track, afterward a carriage road and now an all-weather highway topped with asphaltum from Trinidad. In the military era, later on, it was destined to be widened again and to become something quite like the smooth serpentine motorways of the States.

We did not go out that way; we saved that for the return. We followed another road to the west which someday would become even more important as the service road from the port of San Juan to Borinquen Field, the vast air-city of the Caribbean. Following this road along the coastal plain, the mountains lay on the left, the sea on the right and everywhere at first the curious limestone mounds which were a feature of this north coast. They had the appearance of gigantic green haystacks and broke the monotony of the cane; for, though this was not the best cane country, I was told, except in the deltas of the rivers—the Bayamón, the Arecibo, the Ciales—still cane was everywhere, or so it seemed to me.

I was struck, as any Northern visitor would be, by the care given the roadsides. Everywhere they were bordered by bamboos, bitter almonds, flamboyantes (though this flame tree, like the bougainvillea or trinitaria, does better in the South where it is drier) and especially by hedges of hibiscus, low-trimmed, running along with us mile after mile. Road improvement in the States had usually involved widening and consequent cutting of trees. We could hardly grow trees again in New York State within a man's lifetime. And we were to have bare roadsides always, so far as my generation was concerned. It was an agreeable contrast to see them here and to drive down their green tunnels as I had done in my Chautauqua boyhood. I was told, too, what I had not thought of before, that it does not take a lifetime or even a great portion of one to grow a respectable tree in the subtropics. This brought up a question Silcox and I explored more thoroughly as we went along. The roadside trees were not timber trees; their usefulness to man was more or less limited to being ornamental. But Puerto Rico grew or could grow mahoganies of various kinds and other similar hardwoods as well as the more useful borer-proof bamboos, so useful, according to report, in the Pacific islands. To illustrate timber possibilities we were shown, at the Federal Experiment Station in Mayagüez, a mahogany whose age was known to be twenty years, because it was planted there, and it was twenty inches in diameter. A growth of an inch a year for woods worth as much as mahoganies seemed to open optimistic prospects. I saw that this and similar possibilities ought to be explored.

We came, by following the coastal road around the western end of the mountains, to Mayagüez. Here some of my Washington paper work came alive, as so much of it discouragingly never did. For the Station had been a small issue just before I left. The Congress in an absent moment had extended the benefits of Federal aid to Puerto Rico. This would help to support an Insular station in Río Piedras. The work at Mayagüez—purely Federal—was going to be stopped. I objected because of belief in the future importance of the tropics, and had my way. I had read Benjamin Kidd and others earlier who had seen
great possibilities in the year-round growing seasons within 20 degrees north and south of the equator. Puerto Rico and Mayagüez were not full tropics, it was true, but, except for Panamá, they were as near it as our flag came and they were in the frost-free zone. I had studied the maps, too, and it seemed to me that Caribbean possibilities were going to be greater rather than less in the years to come. The neglect and lethargy into which all the islands had fallen might change again as it had before. The names of the great pirates—Morgan, Kofresí, Kidd, Blackbeard; of the Spanish conquistadores—Columbus, Ponce de León, Cortés, Pizarro; and of the great admirals—Rodney, Drake, Nelson and the rest;—all these were reminders of a time in the past when the Caribbean had not been out of the world’s way but at its center. That might happen again. Who knew? Silcox liked to discuss these possibilities. In fact dear old Silcox, who is gone now, liked to discuss anything at all. That evening we sat on the porch of the Director’s house at Mayagüez, cool after the regular afternoon rain, well fed with the products of the garden and the dairy, evidences of the tropics’ possibilities, and let our talk stretch like a ladder into the high future, as it might be, as it would be. For Silcox and the scientists at Mayagüez were typical products of American schooling, respectful of facts, careful of reason, but neglectful of the monstrous maliciousness of men. Of this last both Silcox and I were soon to have some experience—he with lumber and stock men, I with them a little but more with the big-farmer representatives, the processors of farm products, meat packers, millers and milk companies—and for an extra punishment, the patent-medicine lobby and the vast advertising machine.

I should come to think of maliciousness as not alone supported by economic interest but as opening out from that into a psychological justification which took on a fantastic life of its own. Those who were to lie so deliberately and on such a vast scale and to conspire so persistently to discredit my public career were to conduct their campaign with an intentness and at a cost which would be unaccountable on other grounds. But we were inclined then to regard the world as inhabited by reasonably motivated folk, not lunatics, and we thought we could see some of the things reasonable folk would undertake to do and be. The subtropics were important to that future and centers like this at Mayagüez were necessary to its development.

We talked of a civilization freed from many of its old enemies—heat and cold, for instance. Do you realize, Silcox asked, that no one has mentioned the weather since we arrived? Mayagüez (Puerto Rico in general) was never cold and seldom hot, using those terms as they would be understood in Washington. It had no changes—no "weather" as we meant it. The temperature range, 70 to 80 degrees, was a very favorable one for comfort and to have it persist around the year (with a summer-winter difference of so few degrees) seemed Utopian to us who had just survived a Potomac Valley winter and now had to face its summer. We were told we should need a blanket that night for sleeping; we thought of
burning beds we had tossed on throughout the heat waves we had somehow survived. Of course there was a theory—and we discussed it—that those ups and downs of temperature and the physical discomfort which went with them led to inventiveness, to greater initiative and productivity, the evidence for which, when all was said, seemed to be that civilization as we knew it had localized itself within the Temperate Zones. I had a fugitive thought. My recollection was faint, but when I suggested it and suitable search was made in available histories, it seemed to be true that on one of the occasions when San Juan had been captured (there had been five, distributed among Dutch, British and French) by the British, they had abandoned their conquest and sailed away after a few weeks because of losses from yellow fever. This made the suggestion tenable that fortuitous circumstances, a few disease germs, the dependence of refrigeration on electricity (which was a recent development), the lack of proper minerals and vitamins in an over starchy diet—that these changing and conquerable conditions were responsible for civilization’s avoidance of the tropics. We asked the scientists if they worked better in the North. Why, no, they said, rather better here.

We thought at least that Mayaguez was an important place in the war of man against such old enemies as heat and cold and hunger. And we got to talking of cellulose. From it paper, building materials, plastics of several sorts were made. It was an important adjunct of living. It was produced in the tropics rankly and continuously—sugar cane was that, and the many softish trees and so on, all with annual growths which seemed spectacular by Temperate Zone standards. These were immediate and practical suggestions compared with those we went on to discuss. Who knew the potentialities of the equatorial sun, or of the trade winds which blew across the whole middle of the world? The scientists looked a little blank. I pointed out to them that when the Carnegie Institution got around to studying light in the tropics, as they ought to do, in environmental conditions, their beginning data was going to be the known fact that many plants—coffees, vanillas, and so on—would die in the full sun. Every propagating house in the tropics provided controlled percentages of shade for certain plants and for others at known stages of their cycle. Perhaps the same was true of animals and humans. Yes, humans! We knew literally nothing except old wives’ tales within this whole range of important fact. We said the blond races stood the sun and the heat badly, that color conditioned men to light. We did not know that this was true; and if it was true, what its elements were—what in the light, heat, pressure or humidity of the tropics made pale skins an unfavorable conditioning. Did anyone know—it was a rhetorical question—Silcox asked, of the work, as yet unpublicized, on the using of energy from the sun or even of the less difficult, more purely mechanical, problems just being solved, in the perfection of wind motors, so obviously adaptable to the lands where the trades so seldom failed? No one did.
From the porch of the Director's house we could look out into the soft cool night. The lights and chatter of the town were a few hundred yards away across a wide down-sloping lawn and the experimental plots from which much of the future might appear—who knew? That few hundred yards transformed itself into hundreds of years and thousands of miles. From the home of an American scientist, and across the plots which represented the rationale of modern science, it was quite possible to see a hundred, a thousand houses where people lived at subhuman levels. Their houses were made of a few ill-assorted boards picked up from somewhere, eked out with flattened oil cans; their diet was rice, beans, dried fish, and never enough of these; they lived as they might, hosts to innumerable parasites, often burning and shivering with malaria. All this belonged back in the Middle Ages. Yet as we paused in the kind of talk which interested us, we could plainly hear drums and with them the rattle of maracas, the scratching of güiros, and the hollowish syncopation of tambores. Some little house was bulging with dancers, overflowing into the yard, perhaps, and shaking the whole neighborhood with noise. The time—or rather the rhythm—was a danza. Men and women were not yet too beaten to be gay in Mayagüez. There was undefeated humanity in these thousands of shacks wanting only to be free of disease, of hunger and of fear. It was unsubdued by anything that had happened to it yet. The güiros and the maracas were an evidence of the defiant human spirit which runs with the blood. Would those experimental plots, the brains of these scientists, furnish the modicum of chance these people needed to conquer life instead of existing dangerously, even if defiantly, in the shadow of disaster? I could not for the life of me guess, as I lay looking out through my mosquito netting at the stars. Because I could not gauge the willingness or stubbornness of their organized masters. How much good will could be counted on? I became conscious, as my thoughts wandered, that I was hearing a lovely sound for the first time. The danzas had stopped. But a sweet, clear pure note, exotic, strangely enchanting—a chorus of them, perfectly in tune—filled the still night. Was it a bird, some stranger I had never heard of in this land of surprises? It was a first experience with the coquí (Eleutherodactylus portoricensis), that modest sweet singer of the Puerto Rican countryside in the darkness.

We came back to San Juan by a long route which crisscrossed the central highlands, and I had my first look at the coffee and tobacco regions. The Commissioner of Agriculture had a coffee finca of his own. He warned me of something I had many later occasions for recalling. "You can't trust any of us Puerto Ricans when we talk about coffee," he said. And went on to explain that the old life of the island, the happier days—at least for proprietors, and, I was ready to believe, for their workers—was most nearly approximated here in the hills. The struggle to keep it alive was uneconomic; the whole industry should have disappeared long ago. And after the destructive hurricanes of '28 and '32, it should not have been built up again. But all that was merely material. The life of the coffee country, it seemed, was more than commercial. There was a sentimental fix which could not be killed by adversity. I
could see a little of what he meant on the mountainsides or in the valleys which had escaped the worst of the destruction. The trees for shade grew tall and shapely, almost like Northern elms. The coffees grew beneath, bushes of a dark, liquid, waxy green. Some I saw blossoming, white as a blackberry patch in moonlight. Some had the berries just setting along their stems. The roads sometimes ran obliquely up and down slopes buried in a bloom which hid itself from the sun and impregnated the still air of the forest with a priceless scent. I saw several fincas; and the life there was nearly feudal still, such life as was left. And I could imagine what it must have been like before so many other areas with even cheaper labor and with better-producing trees had come into competition. This coffee, when the European markets were open, had often run to double the price of ordinary sorts, it being a high-flavored kind, which the trade knows as "mild." Those days were long past, of course. Loans to repair the damage from the hurricanes, outright subsidy and excuse from taxes, all had been resorted to. But still the industry was sick. When one of the old proprietors died, often the plantation fell into neglect. Soon workers in desperation began the surreptitious cutting down of shade trees which they burned to make charcoal. They could get in this way a little cash. But it was a fatal resort. Many an old coffee stand was now mere brush from which the workers had dragged themselves away. "Where," I asked, "could they go?" "You saw El Fanguito, La Perla,¹ and the other slums," said Menéndez. Silcox and I looked at each other. Here it was, that nexus between soil destruction and the impoverishment of people which we could talk about in the States but which no research had yet tied down to fact. This was an island. Migrations were short enough to be seen. The people had washed down out of the hills along with their soil and come to rest in the slums. It was even clearer in the tobacco country. For there the process was quicker. A hillside was cleared and cropped for two or three years, then had to be abandoned, a gutted ruin of a field, filling the streams and reservoirs, moreover, with useless subsoil silt. Still a number of the coffee enterprises we saw were operating in the old way, losing perhaps, for their proprietors, or at least not making much in the way of profit. And tobacco production, losing year by year as it was, still made a considerable contribution to insular income.

General Winship was not ignorant of all this. Indeed he had a good understanding of the processes at work. The only solutions which would occur to a judge advocate general’s mind to impose on a Southern plantation would, however, have the general intention of re-establishing a vanished prosperity for proprietors who would then share, of course, with their workers. This would not save the coffee and tobacco industries. What I thought I could see about coffee was that improvement had stopped, and about tobacco that erosion would finish it if nothing drastic were done. I had seen, at the Mayagüez station, a Columnaris coffee which was producing year by year, under precisely simulated conditions, double the crop yielded by the West Indian variety in general use all over Puerto Rico. But when I had inquired whether it was being adopted the answer was that it was not. There

¹The Pearl
was no interest. This stood in the greatest possible contrast with the sensitivity of sugar growers to improvements. Any new variety of cane with superior resistance to disease or increased productivity was immediately put to use. Indeed considerable sums were devoted to research in these matters. And if even here the Government had taken the lead and had at first had some difficulty with technical conservatism and with the innate skepticism of planters, still it had not been of the tough quality found among the coffee and tobacco farmers.

Unemployment relief was just then spreading into Puerto Rico from the continent. What its critics called "leaf-raking" was in full operation; and Mr. James Bourne and his wife Dorothy were working themselves to distraction trying to establish a program which would not only bring the unemployed a day-to-day income but would strengthen the economic life in general. They were having the troubles usual in such efforts, the same ones administrators were having in the States. To do anything constructive about the economy it was necessary to touch some enterprise from which someone either made or hoped to make a profit. The P.W.A., the F.E.R.A. and the W.P.A. were noble institutions. They were at least half of a program which saved the nation from the revolution Mr. Hoover and his colleagues had prepared; but it is easy to see now what more of us should have seen at the beginning (I think Harry Hopkins did see it), that unless all this capital and labor were used on something other than conventional public works we were in danger of creating a burden of expense for upkeep which no community would be able to bear. It is not only the first cost of schools, highways, armories, libraries and the like which local officials dread; it is the fact that the expense of their upkeep relentlessly drives up the tax rate and by so much reduces the available income of the community. This is apart from the argument that such works are desirable; of course they are: they are what we call civilization, and depression is a good time to build a lot of them: but that they should be the apex of a pyramid whose lower courses are supporting productive enterprises, there are fewer to deny now than there were when policies were being shaped in early New Deal days.

It is the definition of depression that these enterprises are not functioning. One cure for non-functioning would be for government to take them over and run them, to set up new, or to enlarge old ones. If this is to be avoided, however, and if at the same time a vast program of public works is not to be undertaken, there is no alternative to leaf-raking. It was the avoidance of interference with private enterprise which forced most of the expenditures during these years to be for projects of inferior quality in Puerto Rico as elsewhere. The rule was established that 60 or 70 per cent (or even more) of the funds spent must go directly for wages. Relief thus was to create customers for private enterprise by putting money into consumers’ pockets. Logically, the less value the community received for the work done the better, although there were elaborate attempts to gloss over this reality. Business wanted no additional tax burdens; it wanted no competition; but it
still reserved the right to be cruelly satirical about a program shaped to its own criteria. It would not be hard to forecast that the exigencies of this dilemma would break most local administrators. They would either violate the rules laid down for them in Washington at Congressional insistence, or they would be pilloried as inefficient. This could be seen to be happening to the Bournes, along with characteristic Puerto Rican political trimmings, and after a while they would give up, to the considerable loss of the community.

There were a few public enterprises allowed (with limitations and under constant protest and attrition) by private business. One of these was forestry. That is why Silcox was so happy in these days—because he felt that his work lay in a field in which public investment could be considerable in a truly productive sense without encountering the implacable resistance to be met almost everywhere else. His work was going to expand and the causes for which he had always fought—conservation, sustained-yield cutting, wage control and the like—were going to have new support.

There was a kind of token reserve on El Yunque, the Luquillo forest. We could see that vastly more acreage would have to be acquired both in this area and in the more desirable one to the west, the Toro Negro, if much was to be done in producing timber. In the decade which followed some of this land was to be acquired and the whole reserve in Puerto Rico would be renamed the Caribbean National Forest. But even more important, Silcox’s conception of small lease holding farmers at the forest edge (or even within its boundaries) who got their main living from development work, was, at least on a small scale, to be carried out. The parcelleros on the vast side of El Yunque, with their year-round plantations of foodstuffs and their solid small houses, are as secure—and perhaps as happy—as men get to be on a piece of land in the country anywhere.

Luquillo was, in the exact sense of the word, a revelation to both of us. Silcox was a South Carolinian, a product of the Yale School of Forestry and a graduate from the Forest Service into the wider field of industrial conciliation. I had persuaded him to leave this and come back to be Chief of the Service, and had talked the President into consent against the advice of most of the professional pundits who thought him a little unorthodox—as, of course, he was. We saw a good many things in the same way; and it was so here. We thought this Forest was an opportunity and not only for Puerto Rico. For it was unique in being a tropical-rain forest, and in developing it we might learn a good deal about the resources of

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2There were some exceptions to this. Mr. Harold L. Ickes, as Public Works Administrator (in 1934, as Chairman of the Public Works Board on which I sat for Mr. Wallace), fought through with more courage than any other New Deal official: he assisted most notably in building power plants, both national, like Grand Coulee, and municipal, of which hundreds were built. There was even set up in his Department of the Interior an ably staffed Division to combat the resistance of private power interests to the expansion of these facilities

3A parcellero is a holder of a “parcel” of land. Workers in El Yunque are given a small house and two or three acres of land in its level stretches, as well as wages, in return for their labor in the upkeep of the forest preserve.
other American subtropics. To one who has not seen it’s like the quality of Luquillo is difficult to convey. El Yunque is a mountain which, because it rises out of the sea and serves as most of the northeast corner of Puerto Rico, magnifies by many times, somehow, the advantage of 3,400 feet. It looked a lot bigger than it was to us as we came to the end of the motor road and started upward on foot through hundreds of Civilian Conservation Corps workers who were making trail. And that impression of magnified size, as though everything were being seen through a reading glass, persisted. Perhaps this was because we were looking at tree ferns, giant palms and other such plants for the first time, and were relating them to others familiar to us which they would have most resembled if they had had more moderation in growth. Here, of course, everything seemed to have been seized with a kind of elephantiasis, and to have got all out of scale. There was not much color. There was a silvery cast to a whole patch of mountain when the wind turned the leaves of the *Yagrumo* (*Cecropia peltata* L.). The waxy reddish bloom of the *pámpano* (*belieonia borinqueña*) seen low down in the dense undergrowth was not conspicuous. It seemed not unlike the wild trilliums we used to see in the woods at home; in mysterious transformation it had become something exotic, almost baleful to the eye, shining there in the wet dark greens and browns. Aside from this, the African tulips’ dark rich red blossoms were about the only color to be seen.

A rain forest is not a comfortable place to be. Not only is there the constant uneasy interest in vegetation which seems to have got completely out of hand, but there is also the atmosphere of mystery created by the drifting rain and mist. For El Yunque is a mountain with its head in a turban of cloud. The trades blowing from the Atlantic rise to cross the heights and find themselves converted from what was a clear dry wind bound down the latitudes into a perpetually precipitating fog lingering on the way. At the top the annual rainfall approaches two hundred inches— by which it can be seen that it does literally rain a good deal of the time, and that the sound of rushing water, which here provides a background for the limpid counterpoint of the *coquí*, has an explicable origin.

We felt incredibly enriched by this experience, and I was encouraged to find a clear way forward in one enterprise, however limited. So much was confused by conflicting interests, so limited by human failures! I wondered whether someday a grandchild of mine might not come to a forest of his day here and hereabouts which had vast stands of mahoganies and other hardwoods, perhaps also *Cinchonas* and other trees, useful for many purposes, grown to maturity! and the whole serving as the source and reservoir of vast flows of hydroelectric power which would make possible a hundred industries, lifting a whole people to a new level of life.

Thus my first acquaintance with Puerto Rico. . . .
IT WAS just after our first boy was born in the summer of 1939 that, for the first time in several years, Puerto Rico came alive again to me. My wife and I had planned a trip to Europe. Letters to and from Mr. Harold Laski and other friends in England and France had prepared the way. On 1 September we were to have sailed; our passages were engaged and our bags packed; we had taken hotel rooms in London. But everyone knows what was happening on the first of that September and why our steamer never sailed. Instead, we acquired a new car with a radio and ran slowly down the coast and out over the sea to Key West.

Those were days when, listening hour after hour to what was happening in Europe, I learned, like other Americans, the lesson that war is only the logical extension of diplomacy, and diplomacy the extension of politics, as old Clausewitz said so long ago, and that appeasement does not work with people who do not play games with balls. I had less to learn than many others, perhaps, about the technique which was being exposed, having long been a student of industrial organization and its consequences in social accommodation. A couple of months later I was to encounter Mr. Walton Hamilton on a New York-Washington train and take inordinate satisfaction in having him say, "You understood this long before any of us, didn't you?" I was honest enough to point out that I had merely taken seriously the lessons available to all my generation and had listened to Patten and to Veblen rather than to Brandeis or the English economists.

What had been loosed on Poland was the enormous power of a relatively disciplined industry directed to the achieving of a definite purpose. It seemed obvious that when that machine was turned upon nations disorganized by competitive profit-making, wounded within, and lacking any mastering purpose, there could be but one result. It was already clear that nothing could save France; and, in Chamberlain's time, any chance that Britain might resist successfully seemed slight. Hamilton and I pointed these things out to each other and talked at length of our own situation. There was a lot of soul-searching in those days. Germany's monstrous power was appearing to be far greater even than in fact it was, to those who had been blind to its growth and suddenly saw results they had until then stubbornly refused to anticipate. I was a Jeremiah with the satisfaction of having my prophecies fulfilled; but having the fear, too, that they might result in my country's humiliation.

It is clear to me now that luck saved us—the luck of Goering's miscalculation about the kind of an air force needed to soften Britain for invasion. No one had any right to count on that; and I did not. The forces gathering even in this country which could resist were not easily discovered. Businessmen would betray us for their own gain as they always had and we
might be an easy conquest when the full time came. It might have happened just that way, too, except for the Spitfire, and except for Mr. Roosevelt's seeing the whole danger. His tour de force of giving businessmen charge of war preparation was an act of genius. Knowing what he did—for he had no illusions about the aims or methods of business—it was so reckless as to fill me with despair. I believed in my heart that we were lost when he made that decision. It can be seen now that he took as long a gamble as any statesman in history, but that it was the best choice. The vindication is that he won. He understood how thick was the fat on our collective ribs and how little it mattered how much was wasted or taken in profit provided time was telescoped and the lead of the methodical Germain bureaucracy overcome.

As we drove south along the coast, with the radio on, stopping in the summer heat to bathe, reluctant, however, to leave the car for long, lest we miss the latest bulletin, all the years of intellectual conviction just behind me seemed to be turning from something only conceptual, in the last analysis unreal, into something horribly materialized in reality. What I had said and written somehow embodied itself in spectral form and stalked alongside the car, a shadowy monster undeterred by the swamps and waterways of the Carolina coast. It might be wished back into its vessel by one who had conceived it; but it would not actually return.

My private gestalt, my understanding of the world, was something which could be regarded now only with a kind of amazed horror. It is no wonder that I was uneasy in an occupation of an ordinary everyday sort. What was there, though, that I could do? I was, for one thing, a political undesirable. Or so it could be inferred from reading the press. It might be that the lobbyists, like public-relations men, the "high-pressure boys," as Mr. Kenneth Crawford was teaching us to call them, had forgot me. There was among them a high mortality rate in spite of their foresighted care for their own security. Of course, the old Food and Drug business had given them the scare of their lives; but that had been years ago. It might be that my friends in the Administration, who protested their admiration for my courage but who would just as soon not be seen lunching with me at the Carlton or the Mayflower, had sufficiently recovered their courage—or felt that I had been sufficiently forgot—to admit me again to respectable company. I did not want to "offer my services" to anyone who would consider that I was asking for a job; I would not approach Mr. Wallace, who would simply repeat his suggestion that I become Chief Forester, which I would not do so long as the old quarrel existed between Interior and Agriculture about conservation in general and forestry in particular; but I could, I decided, write to Mr. Harold Ickes without being misunderstood. While I hesitated and considered, I read in the Miami News that Mr. Harry Slattery had left the Under Secretaryship in Interior to become head of the Rural Electrification Administration.
This, even to one not currently familiar with affairs in the Department, bore the stigma of arrangement. Mr. Slattery had certainly gone to make way for someone else. Nevertheless, it provided an opening for correspondence and I wrote to Mr. Ickes, saying that I had seen the notice of Mr. Slattery's resignation and, recalling that more than once, and with apparent sincerity, he had urged me to become Under Secretary in Interior, I thought I might with propriety inquire about the present situation. I ran over the reasons, dwelling on my restlessness as the crisis in our national life built itself up, not going into my uneasy feeling of having foreseen it and not having been loud enough in warning, but emphasizing my fear that those who understood the strength of Germany and its sources would very likely not be entrusted with the expanded administrative measures which would have to be taken. Interior, I thought, as a Department, might play a vast role. If it suited him now I would leave my New York post—Mr. La Guardia consenting—and come to work with him. The reply was warm and friendly but said that, as I had supposed, the Under Secretaryship was foreclosed.¹ But would I, he asked, become Director of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions? My answer then was that we would talk about it later in Washington.

We were technically not in the Caribbean at Key West. But the distinction between the Caribbean and the Straits of Florida was a fine one, not to be told by the eye. This was September, the month of hurricanes. From the bad press these tropical disturbances had had we Northerners had acquired an exaggerated idea of their frequency and of their domination in the life of their region. . . . But there was no hurricane; and we learned some of the pleasures of the summer subtropics in that month, a knowledge we have since enlarged. They are considerable. In the first place it is never so hot as is expected by the stranger. We kept casual track and were amazed to see that Washington and New York had daily temperatures which ranged from 10 to 15 degrees higher than those in Key West. We felt that we had made a discovery. Let those who knew no better go elsewhere! Besides there was no ragweed on the keys, apparently, because I had no hay fever and my nose was one which a grain of pollen would inflame for days.

It was a strange withdrawn interval. In those days Key West had only the first intimations of returning naval importance. It lived what life it had in memory of the Spanish war and of a vanished cigar-making industry. Mostly it was dead or felt itself so; but there were in the harbor several old four-stack destroyers beginning the patrol service they carried out during the neutrality-zone days. One of them was the Reuben James, later lost under tragic circumstances off Iceland. Commander Parker and the other officers swam and drank and dined with us and we with them in a mild sort of way. But Ernest Hemingway and most other friends in the neighborhood were away. And there was time to meditate. Bulging pillars of cloud stood about the horizon in characteristic majesty; the small persistent wind

¹I learned later that it had been offered to Silcox in a maneuver calculated to bring the Forest Service into Interior.
of summer blew through the intermittent curtains of rain which moved across the Straits and the Gulf; occasionally we watched a waterspout form and travel westward. And I asked myself over and over what I ought to do.

With Charles Taussig I had made a trip down the islands from St. Thomas to Trinidad in 1937, stopping at Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Kitts-Nevis and Barbados. We had seen and heard much that was disquieting. In the British islands, especially, there had seemed to be no relaxation of discrimination and bondage. The economic life of each island was held in a vise by a few merchants and planters. A high development of this system had seemed in Hawaii—where I had been for a considerable stay in 1938—to result in fair wages and advantageous living conditions. The profits of the five-family monopoly were so far less than the wastes of competition that everyone prospered. Elsewhere, and especially in the Caribbean islands, the system did not produce the same results. Either the missionary families which had produced the Hawaiian owner-manager group had left a heritage of ability, conscience and really enlightened self-interest, or circumstances were such that they could not carry their exploitation to extremes as did their Caribbean counterparts. It may well have been largely this. For no way has ever been found to harness the Hawaiian. He will not give up his freedom for regularly paid labor either in the factory or in the field. His athletic body, ample humor and free approach to life are physical and mental traits as unchangeable as the climate of his island. The missionaries covered the women with Mother Hubbards—the holoku—but they never succeeded in smothering the spirit of the men. Those who work, in the modern industrial sense, in Hawaii are not the Hawaiians but imported Japanese and Filipinos.

The people of African descent in the British Caribbean islands are not native there as the Polynesians are in the Pacific, their migration going back into prehistory. Everyone knows how and when the African tribesmen came eastward across the Atlantic and no descendant of the European races can take enough pride in his ancestors' activities when that movement was going on to claim that a moral superiority justifies his status. It is a sheer brutal economic monopoly which exists, long established and ruthlessly maintained, coming directly down, indeed, from the days of slavery, and not immensely improved in all respects since then. Or so it had seemed, in 1937, to Charles Taussig and me. We had felt so strongly about what we had observed that we had informed the President and others in Washington. They must in consequence have been less surprised, at least, when the bloody

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2Mr. Charles Taussig of the American Molasses Company, an old family business of which he is the main stockholder. The conduct of the business was such as to permit him to spend a good deal of his time in public service and ever since the early days of the New Deal he had chosen to devote a good part of it to the Caribbean, frequently representing the President. All he did was voluntary, even when he was Chairman of the National Youth Administration. He never accepted a regular position in any government department and was always more or less a free-lance. The old family business had always had connections in the Caribbean, especially in Cuba and Barbados, and he had been as familiar with the Caribbean islands all his life as most people are with a nearby county.
riots of 1939 in Barbados and Trinidad, and the almost equally serious troubles in Jamaica, disturbed Colonial Office complacency. It was these tragic events which led to Parliamentary questions, to Lord Moyne's Commission of Inquiry, to the West Indies Welfare Fund (later enlarged as the Colonial Welfare Fund) and, I suppose it should be said, also, to the establishment of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, though that would be later on in the anticipation of war, when it was clearer than it had been in 1937 how the islands lay like a fleet of great stationary plane-carriers in the path of any would-be attacker of the Panamá Canal.

We told the President that not only were economic conditions such that immediate explosions might be expected but that political conditions would be found to be equally contributory. The suffrage in Barbados, for instance, where we had taken some pains to inquire, was, by property qualification, restricted to an extremely small percentage of the adult male population. In this way, through the power of the Governor to appoint certain members of the legislature—which existed in all British colonies—representation was kept within a small governing and controlling group whose members were also the merchants and planters. Unrest seethed beneath a surface which was kept to a tranquil appearance simply by non-recognition. The bland denial, by everyone of influence or authority to whom we talked, that trouble impended, was unequivocal. When we came away we actually had not discovered whether their complete calm was only outward-seeming or whether it came from a colossal confidence in their old power of suppression.

Colony or crown colony, the economic conditions underlying disturbance were the same; and the agitation for political change did not seem proportional to oppression: it was not the most backward places where the demand for reform was greatest, but those which were making progress. This raised the question whether it was not true, as many of the merchant-planter class had told us, that there was no stopping place, once concessions were begun, short of "independence." Success in agitation, they felt, was an indication of strength which agitators would fully exploit under any conditions. These were essentially impractical demagogues who stirred up a peaceful folk. There were no hardships which had not always existed. Grievances came, such of them as were justifiable, from conditions which could not be improved anyway—perhaps had better not be improved if there were to come with it ambition, restlessness, incorrigibility. For then the already thin economic bark was further stretched. Those who were in managerial and political control were something out of this century. They had ability, but they were shrewd, hard, responsible to a narrow circle of family, of class. The remnant of noblesse which still existed was dissolving; and its place was being taken by a bitter determination to suppress disturbance and to resist outside interference. All this had seemed to us even then, when events had not yet definitely indicated that the Caribbean would be important in a national sense in an
approaching war, to be humanly indefensible, even if not in any way a threat to the interests of the United States.

Resting at Key West in General Andrews’ house, I could look across toward western Cuba. The Florida peninsula and Cuba, together with Jamaica down below, were the end of the bow which enclosed the American Mediterranean. At the other end was Trinidad—or, when the imagination really ran free, Brazil, whose hump stood out into the Atlantic within—and for days I studied borrowed maps which showed it—twelve hundred miles of Africa. That was French West Africa, whose capital was marked "Dakar," a name I did not recall from my school days any more than I recalled what were evidently the Brazilian opposites, Belém, Fortaleza, Natal and Recife. Below Dakar were Bathurst, Bissau, Freetown and Monrovia, not to mention Lagos in Nigeria and Brazzaville in French West Africa. They seemed to be placed so that more would be heard of them in years to come. I asked experienced pilots about that and discovered it to be commonplace among them that this short crossing was a future route to and from Europe; and that somewhere on the Brazilian and African coasts great airports would be built. A layman would never guess this. It had to do not only with the long line of Caribbean islands, and with the hump of Brazil, but with the prevailing winds and the weather. Pan American Airways routes did not run that way, but foreign routes did, and not as a stunt, but regularly with mail and passengers for South America. It underlined the advantage of Europeans in that continent which North Americans never appreciated, being confused by the names "North" and "South" as though they were halves of one piece. The geographic situation had become vivid to me when I had flown a whole day westward from Trinidad to Barranquilla. These ports are at north-center and northwest of the coast of South America, but they are hardly south of North America at all but south only of the North Atlantic Ocean—with the Caribbean in between, their northern boundary the Antilles. Someday, said one of my aviator friends, there will be an airfield on every one of those Antilles and on across Africa to the East. Another doubted it. These places would not generate much local traffic; and planes to South America, for instance, would need only one or two landing spots in the Caribbean—perhaps Trinidad and Port-au-Prince. Defense in the Atlantic was beginning to interest the naval officers, after years of preoccupation with the Pacific, and the conceptions which grew so rapidly during the next few years were generating then, or perhaps it should be said, were regenerating, for they were after all not new even in this or the last century—the conquistadores had them, and the great British admirals.

The Navy, at any rate, was reinteresting itself in bases. The naval mind had not yet gone freely into the air. The President was telling his intimates, and later would tell the

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3Planes almost immediately so increased their range that only one stop was needed—and a rivalry began between San Juan in Puerto Rico and Port-of-Spain in Trinidad.
4The naval base for the Antilles was being located about this time or a little later at the eastern end of Puerto Rico. I had been told years before that Coral Bay at the eastern end of St. Johns was to be the fleet anchorage,
Congress, of danger from Europe, coming by way of Africa and South America. It was bold talk because it was regarded by the uninformed as fantastic. To begin with, it was not admitted that there was a will to damage us in Europe. Hitler’s purpose even then was not clear to most Americans. But also American thought was not accommodated to the airplane as an instrument of destruction. It is hard even these few years later to realize the incredible provincialism of the late thirties when everything lay before us and we would not see it. I do not believe that a single one of the President’s associates felt that his advances into public education in strategy during those days were wise. No politician, according to the rules, should ever be startling. And Mr. Roosevelt, especially in talking about danger from air fleets coming by way of South America and the Caribbean, was, it was generally said, going far beyond the probabilities. It made everyone uneasy but it did not establish conviction. Events tumbled upon one another, of course, and month after month public opinion was compelled to overtake his lead. There was more belief that he was right at the end of 1939 than at the beginning of it; but not enough to free his foreign policy for preventive action. And the fact that he had been right and others wrong had, as so often happens, affected his popularity adversely rather than otherwise.

Looking at the Caribbean from Key West I had, then, new interests added to my old interest in Puerto Rico. Evidently, even quite clearly, it was becoming an important location in the grand strategy which must govern our defense. Evidently, also, it was something of a testing place for American professions of democracy. For democracy was not even a pretense in many of its neighboring islands any more than it was in most of the world’s dependent areas. Beyond that there was a tormenting question— and I bothered everyone with it who would listen in the winter which followed—if we had bases in the Caribbean, and especially air bases, had we not a real and immediate interest in the tranquility, even the loyalty of its people? How could we build a chain of fortresses on thickly settled islands which were hostile? These questions seemed important to a few people like Secretary

and I had gone to see it. That was supposed to have been one reason for our acquisition of the western Virgins from Denmark. But later maneuvers had centered in the larger protected area with Culebra and other islets on the north, Vieques to the southeast and Puerto Rico on the west. A sea wall was to be built across miles of sea from Vieques to the Puerto Rican coast at Ensenada Honda. Vast magazines were to be cut into the Vieques hills, a Marine base was to be established on Culebra and a great home port with dry docks, machine shops, and so on was to be centered at Ensenada Honda just under El Yunque. The navy eye obviously conceived of fleet concentrations in this stretch of water—a conception which was to be made obsolete by the experience at Pearl Harbor. It would take some time for the lesson to sink in to the naval consciousness, but gradually the plan would be changed to a more modest repair base and magazine. One reason for slowness in re-adaptation was said to be the admirals’ unwillingness to suggest revision to Mr. Roosevelt after having, for reasons of flattery, named it after him. Roosevelt Roads was an old-Navy plan. The rejuvenated Navy would not want fleet concentrations—though there would always be need there for dry docks, landing fields, magazines, and machine shops.

5Message to Congress asking additional appropriations for national defense, 16 May 1940.
6Much less, of course, to the anticipation of the rocket bombs and other robot projectiles which would appear in 1944.
Ickes, like Mr. Sumner Welles—to whom they were even old considerations—and to the President; but to almost no one else.

I think at this time, as he struggled with a reluctant public and with the recalcitrant Congress which represented it, the President’s true qualities of statesmanship appeared as they had never done in his domestic management. Here he was imaginative, truly perceptive, with a certain and stubborn grasp on strategic reality. He realized the commitments of our position and of our power; he would not let us rest in careless sloth while disaster was prepared by a smooth-spoken enemy. Specifically he was drawing closer and closer to our inevitable allies against the will of a violent opposition and the stubborn unwillingness of the public to awaken. Americans wanted not to be disturbed. They were not only—two thirds of them—living well and securely again after the fright of the early depression, but they were earnestly engaged in private internal quarrels—farmer and industrialist against worker, progressive against reactionary, Southern whites against Negroes, Catholics against Protestants and so on. They were also skeptical and pacifist. It may not be that the two necessarily are coincidental but they were everywhere prevalent together. The prevailing temper of the universities, of influential folk generally, had for generations now been confirmed in these two attitudes. All of us grew up that way. It was as unusual to be anything else as to be, for instance, non-Catholic in Italy, or vegetarian in Montana, and such attitudes are not conducive to the acceptance of positive responsibilities.

Did the offer from Secretary Ickes provide me a part to play in the drama upon which the curtain was rising? Perhaps; but there were definite difficulties. The Division was staffed far below its responsibilities and needed a man with the confidence of the Congress to enlarge its capacity. I was not the one to do that. Here was a minor Division of a Department, which was devoted mostly to a different sort of interest, entrusted with all the duties of a Colonial Office. Or, if not, where did those duties lie in Washington? The people who carried on the work were not career men and women in the sense in which those were who carried on similar work in other countries. Yet they were all there were. This underemphasis, careless staffing and general lack of equipment for the task of colonial government was obviously the result of our confused policy. We had interests of which we could not let go; but at the same time we felt compelled to pretend that they did not exist. It was part of a general public hypocrisy which was naturally shared by the Congress. And any attempt of the executive to clear it up had been smothered in the obfuscations of the Committees. After the occupation of Puerto Rico in 1898, military governments had been instituted for some reason or other—there had been a satisfactory local government recently reformed, and there was no resistance of any account to the change in sovereignty—and, after the change to civil government under the Foraker Act of 1900, the
home management of Puerto Rican affairs had simply been left in—of all places—the War Department. There it had stayed until 1934.

This leaving of colonial affairs to the War Department for thirty-four years while Puerto Ricans writhed and protested almost unnoticed, certainly without public sympathy, was not evidence of ill will, except among the lobbyists for those interests which would be furthered by neglect of Puerto Rico. It was more an evidence of a larger apathy and confusion. Foreigners did not interest us. It was true that Puerto Ricans had been made citizens in 1917 on the only occasion when serious revision of the Organic Act was undertaken after 1900, but it was done in a sudden realization of strategic possibilities, not as part of a policy, and, significantly enough, in time of war when Puerto Rican loyalty was important. Americans generally had not come to think of Puerto Ricans as real citizens—rather, when they thought of them at all, as citizens of a sort of second class.

Actually there was no policy. Did we intend to give this newly acquired possession statehood? To be American citizens without a State to live in, without representation in the Congress, without even incorporation of their Territory, was to exist in a monstrously illogical situation. The only possible justification might have been a declaration of intention as to the future. There was nothing of the kind; indeed there was much evidence that anything of the kind was unlikely. Were we going to "give" them independence as had been done with the Filipinos? Many Puerto Ricans were haunted with the fear that we might do just that; and those few who wanted it linked the possibility with such a special kind of arrangement economically, with subsidies and preferences, as could be expected only from a people suddenly become droolingly generous—and the American public or the Congress had shown no evidence of any such weakness.

The prevailing attitude was neither selfish nor generous; it was indifferent. Time spent on Puerto Rico was a political waste. Better to keep issues foggy, forget the whole thing; but on no account build up an executive bureaucracy with an interest in sharpening policy. I had seen Mr. Ickes and Mr. Ernest Gruening struggle year after year for appropriations which would support a modestly competent staff in the Division of Territories. They had never had any success. The Division remained, as it had been, an organization whose personnel hardly reached beyond the level of clerks and secretaries, without specialists, without technicians—and naturally without any objectives beyond informational contacts with the territorial governments. The creation of a Colonial Office was long overdue; and the right man might do a great service in beginning the work. But I could not see that the country or that the Congress wanted one. On the contrary it would be resisted; and I was not persuasive with Congressmen. I told the Secretary in October that, much as I wanted to participate in the coming events, I could not do it in that way. He would turn, a little later, to Mr. Rupert Emerson, who would struggle too, but would leave after a year as frustrated as I am sure I should have been if I had undertaken the task.
SAN JUAN is somewhat east of midway along the north coast of Puerto Rico. Against the beaches, on either side, the Atlantic rollers cast themselves in long white ranks. As the day goes, the sea out beyond becomes a dark and darker blue and the white flecks of breaking waves are more frequent. The wind rises late in the morning but the sea is deep and there are not many reefs, so that one looks out from shore without the transition of breakers on reefs and bars. A few miles out, in fact, the Puerto Rican Trough contains the Brownson and Milwaukee Deeps, the one reaching to 8,342 meters and the other to 9,220 meters. The harbor is a dredged river and the old city sits on a protuberance between the estuary and the sea. It is easier than it once would have been to forget that the base of this near-peninsula is submerged, making it an island—that is, easier unless it is necessary, for some reason, such as war or earthquake, to consider how the inhabitants of its crowded tenements might be moved to the mainland. An earthquake, conceivably, or a bombing might destroy the two bridges which carry all the traffic into and out of the old city which is at once the commercial port, the business center and the military headquarters. Most people who belong to the income groups above the workers’ level have long since established their homes beyond the bridges in Santurce, Hato Rey, Río Piedras, Isla Verde or Guaynabo. And a good many even of the workers have escaped there or to Cataño and other small settlements across the bay, some even as far as Bayamon on the road to the west.

The whole area around the bay had grown by 1941 into a metropolitan area about the size of Miami and was still showing all the signs, so obvious to a city planner, of rapid speculative expansion. I could see that even from the plane as we came in on our visit to hold hearings on the 500-acre law in February 1941. Housebuilding had been extended into neighborhoods where streets had not yet followed; in many places where there were paved streets there were no sidewalks but only paper-littered rubble; alongside the most expensive residences there had been established the most objectional business uses—garages, drink stands, cheap notion stores. There was no thought, no order, no community discipline. There were other sinister signs. First the filth; never, I thought, had I seen so little evidence of that civic or personal pride which shows itself in property care and cleanliness. Refuse lay along the streets and the well-dressed citizen walked over and through it with no apparent consciousness of its presence. But also what shocked me as it must any newcomer, or any visitor who, like myself, had not come to San Juan for some years, was the rising tide of slums which seemed about to overwhelm the city. El Fanguito, the shack city over the marshes beside the Martin Peña Channel, had, in 1934, consisted of a few hundred squatters’ houses; now we saw it stretching up toward Río Piedras miles away in a seemingly endless spread of squalor. It had a kind of order and governance of its own, such as a homunculus or some other low form of life has: the shacks were in rows,
that is, which left some open space for filth to accumulate, and the tide lifted the piles of garbage and deposited them again, in the same place, twice daily. What a startling evidence of the failure of all our efforts to outpace, with schemes for housing and public works, the forces of disintegration so powerfully at work on this island! Good lord, I thought, how glad I am that I have no part in this!

"Tell me," the President had said as I was leaving Washington, "whether we have got rid of the slums; and whether there is any place on the island to get a safe drink of water." Well, the answer to the first question was obvious. I had not yet seen any of the housing into which I knew large sums had gone, but at least it had not touched El Fanguito. I wondered what horrible virus was at work proliferating itself in this way toward lower and lower levels of life. On that same night I came into possession of the answer to the President’s other question, too. I remembered, coming back to the hotel after a walk, General Winship’s telling me years before that one of his ambitions was to provide an ample and safe water supply for San Juan. I asked the first person I met when I came into the hotel. "Hell," he said, "the water’s filthy; and half the time it’s shut off." That seemed true to an exasperated Continental, no doubt, though it was an exaggeration. I stopped at the desk and inquired of the attendant. "All the water we serve to guests is boiled," he said. And when I turned on the shower, being wringing wet from my walk in the hot streets, nothing happened. The water was off. I had a dry rub with a towel; but I began then and there to have unkindly thoughts about the city government of San Juan which would not be dissipated for a long time to come. With respect to this incredibly ineffective management, people maintained, as I should learn by diligent inquiry during the next week, an attitude of complaint in private and non-interference in public. Ay bendito? I came to see, in fact, as a principle which marked many phases of life, making for indifference and acceptance.

This attitude might have been one of the phases of insularism, of life on an island where acquaintance was wide and where family connections, also wide, counted abnormally. It may have come from the fact that the "better element" was conscious of limited opportunities and never relaxed its intention to keep them within a limited circle. It did lead to a widespread nepotism, with the usual results, something I remembered Mr. Omening to have pointed out. And it was true that one of the complaints about him had been that he had imported many Continentals for jobs which he considered Puerto Ricans unfitted to fill. Puerto Ricans, themselves, I had heard it said, were willing to mark a candidate for any job 90 per cent for being a Puerto Rican, leaving 10 per cent for competence. This had seemed a grossly prejudiced comment, quite typical, I suspected, of

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1An exclamation—literally, "Oh, blessed"—with many uses ranging from expressing mild interest to great indignation. To illustrate the sense in which it is usually used: should you complain that, for instance, a certain government employee is lazy, illiterate, incompetent, dishonest and a little weak in the head, it is not unlikely that the person to whom you complain (if he is a Puerto Rican) will agree entirely with your estimate and then say, "But ay bendito! he has ten children! He must have a job!"
unadjusted continentalism; but when, next morning, the water still did not run in the shower, I thought there might be more in it than prejudice.

It would require a more confirmed pessimist than I have ever managed to be, however, to see the world darkly on a Caribbean morning. I have always been an early riser, for which a good deal of sympathy has been wasted on me by those who—if they only could be persuaded of it—might have a renewed experience as I do of exaltation with each subtropic dawn. Not so much can be claimed for the early hours above the Tropic of Cancer; below it they reveal for an hour or two in a kind of quiet glory the full range of visual sensation. And this is especially true, so far as my experience goes, on the Caribbean islands. I thought it might be hard to leave so beautiful a neighborhood as the Condado. This, I could see, was the right side of the railroad tracks; half the houses were, however, unsuited in their architecture to the tropics, semi-palaces buried in the most resplendent foliage: palms, bitter almonds, flamboyantes, casuarinas, for trees; hibiscus, oleander, crotons, gardenias for shrubs; and trinitaria (or bougainvillea), allamonda (or canario), coralita (or bellisima) for vines; all-furnishing year-round color, pinks, purples, reds and yellows, to shine upon and through the basic liquid greens. The magical lights and distances of early morning came across the sea to the neighborhood of the hotel; and it was hard to believe that the slums across the lagoon and over the rise of ground, and the dangerous water supply, meant what they had seemed to mean the night before or even in the exasperation of the recent waterless attempt to shave.

I began at once a series of preparatory interviews with those: who had responsibility for reshaping tenure arrangements now that the Supreme Court had cleared the way.2 Naturally, I called first on the Governor, Mr. Guy j. Swope of Harrisburg, who had been promoted from the auditorship on Admiral Leahy’s recommendation. He was somewhat worried, as he frankly said. The Populares, just come into probable legislative control, were going to enact a land-tenure bill. It was bound to be one which would be opposed bitterly

2I shall not repeat the history of the 500-acre limitation itself, which is sufficiently dwelt on in my report to Secretary Ickes of December 1941. The reader may be reminded, however, that the way had been cleared for administrative action only after the Department of the Interior, together with a courageous Insular Attorney General, Mr. Benigno Fernández García determined to end the long period of law evasion. When Mr. Fernández García assumed office in 1935 he announced the beginning of enforcement and established a division for that purpose in the Insular Department of Justice. Even before this a bill giving original quo warranto jurisdiction to the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico had been passed. It had been introduced jointly by Mr. Muñoz Marín, then a Liberal Senator, and Mr. Bolivar Pagán, a Socialist, later Resident Commissioner in Washington, now an ardent enemy of Muñoz and an equally ardent ally of the sugar corporations. In January of 1936 the first case was begun. On 30 July 1938 the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico affirmed the law. The decision was reversed in the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals but was upheld, in the decision already noted, by the United States Supreme Court on 25 May 1940. Motion was made for the appointment of a receiver; the court decided favorably and there was appeal. Final decision in the United States Supreme Court did not come until 16 March 1942. By that time there would be an Insular Land Authority and the outlines of its policy would be taking shape.
by the sugar interests. Yet Puerto Ricans were so overwhelmingly for it that it would be a denial of democracy if he were to veto it. He knew how much trouble he was in for among the lobbies in Washington, but, being a Democrat and a Presidential appointee, he did not see how he could go against anything so clearly consonant with Administration policy. Besides he had a political instinct to obey the mandate of the recent election. He was much relieved, he said, to have me say that I saw no way he could escape from approving and that I thought the Secretary would give him support.

Yet I could see that he was worried and he told me some of it. He felt that Muñoz was public-spirited and loyal; but he profoundly distrusted some of his followers. The Populares were a conglomerate group, he said, held together by Muñoz' authority, but having among themselves the most diverse views and affiliations. He did not worry about the masses who had voted the Populares into power; that had been a protest vote against intolerable living conditions; and he did not worry about the professional politicians who had joined the movement simply because it had a chance to prevail; but he thought there was another group, very influential, who would in the end force Muñoz to the most extreme radical and anti-American measures. They were, in spirit, communists—that is, they had learned communist tactics. They lived on and for trouble, anywhere and everywhere; they wanted riots and disorders. These tactics were aimed not only at the upper class, the landlords, and so on, but at the Continentals in Puerto Rico. And when it came to that they had the tacit—sometimes open—sympathy of numerous wealthy Spaniards, Franco followers, falangistas. The press, too, had one dominant policy—to harass and to foment dissatisfaction with any and all continental American men and measures, not with anything constructive in view, but simply out of a malice which, apparently, its clientele approved.

Mr. Swope was a lifelong politician but he could see that he had got into a situation beyond his depth. He had succeeded Admiral Leahy on the eve of the first legislative session after the political overturn which had brought the Populares into power. The Admiral, aside from some problems of appointment, had had to meet hardly any of the issues involved in what amounted to a delayed 1932. In those few he had proved reactionary. Still he disliked intensely the Puerto Rican Republicano políticos. For while the United States had met the accumulating problems of the long depression with New Deal reforms, the old reactionary crowd had remained in power in Puerto Rico. And they had conceded nothing. The pressures built up in General Winship's regime were now to be released in a series of quick changes. Mr. Swope was afraid they would be anti-American as well as economic. He had been a lame-duck Congressman whose political affiliations at home were with Senator Guffey. Admiral Leahy had undoubtedly been glad to escape the demand of the Coalición that he should recognize its affiliated parties as a majority. This had opened up a range of

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3It will be remembered that at this time Russia was Germany’s ally and that the Communist “line” was distinctly anti-British, not to say anti-American.
problems with which years of quarter-deck authoritarianism had made him impatient. He was reportedly glad to go to Vichy; and no doubt he felt it a fortunate chance that a politician like Mr. Swope was at hand to deal with a situation so obviously needing professional handling.

The Coalición could claim to have a majority in the sense that its parties together had won a greater number of votes than the Populares. But it was made up of Socialistas and Unión-Republicanos—extreme leftists and extreme rightists, who were joined only in a tenuous election-day union. They obviously had nothing in common except an appetite for jobs; and they displayed this in ways which affected the Admiral’s stomach. The ruling reality in the situation was that the Populares had a genuine majority of one in the Senate. This meant that they could and would reject any appointment of which they did not approve. In other words, it was impossible to run the executive establishment without their concurrence in the choice of personnel. During the years since the Organic Act had made it possible, probably by an oversight, an indefensible number of positions in the Government had been made subject to confirmation. This was freely said to be necessary for keeping carpetbaggers in their places. It had had the incidental result of utterly ruining the well-intentioned civil service and of creating a vast nepotism, matters which the politicians thought unimportant. The Populares showed no signs of wanting any governmental reforms; in this respect they were as greedy for jobs as the Coalición. But they did have the confirming power and intended to see to it that the Coalición rascals were thrown out and Populares saints were substituted for them. They had even passed an anti-nepotism law intended to root out some well-entrenched families. The whole bureaucracy shook in its boots and the Coalición party heads went to extreme lengths in the attempt to keep their governmental machine in office, if not in power. Only the Governor, whose position and effectiveness they had helped to undermine, having been a long time in control, stood between them and the consummation of the election-day disaster. They proposed to the Admiral, as they later proposed to Mr. Swope and even later would propose to me, as the price of peace in Washington, that the Senate should be bilked by the device of interim appointments, with renewal after confirmation had been refused and the short legislative session had adjourned. Since the legislature met only once a year, for a few weeks, officeholders could be protected without too much trouble. This was their price for peace; if it was not paid there were ample funds available to be spent in making trouble in Washington for a recalcitrant Governor. This, they argued, was justified by the majority they could add up among themselves from the last election. But they were too frightened and too pressed by their followers even to be diplomatic. They made threats. That, of course, settled the issue with each of us in turn.

It was proposed, as a matter of mechanics, to follow the custom of years—how Governors ever allowed the custom to grow up, it is hard to understand—and to present a terna (list)
of two or three candidates for every job, one of which was to be chosen by the Governor, thus reducing his appointive functions to the ministerial level. The *Populares* expected, of course, to follow the same custom; it was an accepted procedure. The difference was that the *Populares* were prepared to guarantee confirmation while the *Coalición* proposal amounted in practice to a conspiracy for evading confirmation. Neither Admiral Leahy nor Mr. Swope gave in to the Coalition threats, though Admiral Leahy made restrained use of the repeated appointment procedure to thwart the Senate for other reasons, but neither resisted the dictation represented by the proposal of names. That this—together with other devices which will need to be mentioned later—reduced the executive to an appendage of the legislature and negatived the principle of tripartite government, no one seemed to realize. There is a delicate balance involved in this form which, when disturbed, makes a difference in efficiency out of proportion to the apparent cause. Everyone knew something was wrong, that administration was feeble if not corrupt, and so on, but no one seemed to see that it was such devices as this which had driven the Puerto Ricans back to committee government—essentially the system of the Continental Congress from which the Federal Government had escaped by the long evolution which had created the constitutional system. Sight of the old weakness and the means of its correction had been lost in an obscuring fog of resentments; reversion to the inertia of late-eighteenth-century government was all but complete.

Mr. Guy Swope, local politician from Harrisburg in Pennsylvania, made Governor of two million people whose culture he was ill-fitted to understand no matter how *simpático* he yearned to be, might have stood for all the reasons why Puerto Ricans had committed governmental suicide by smothering an alien executive. For this left the real power in the hands of a boss, a back-stairs dictator, a legislator whom all Puerto Ricans acknowledged, but who, so far as official recognition was concerned, did not exist. The typical boss had a vast retinue of hangers-on, mostly on the pay roll of the legislature. Their jobs were sinecures since the sessions were short, but they were expected to take care of the thousand daily details of a complete extralegal, subterranean government. Mr. Swope sat at the Governor’s desk in the Spanish throne room, lived in the palace whose virtually unfurnished spaces symbolized the emptiness of his authority, and presided over the weekly meetings of the Executive Council; but the Puerto Ricans who met him there on Tuesdays at ten voted solemnly on half a dozen authorizations, perhaps, of municipal borrowing or some such relatively insignificant matter, did not feel that they were very deeply obligated to him or that they owed him any duty. Their real business was done with the new boss, Muñoz, in far less formal ways; they took direction from him rather than the Governor. Puerto Rican ingenuity had defeated the United States occupation. This might not have happened if more effective Governors had all along been appointed, but retired military men and lame-duck Congressmen were easy game for clever *políticos*; even if they knew what was going on, they were usually unable to prevent it; and Muñoz, though he was
far from typical, was indeed of quite another sort, had inherited a tradition which he had to maintain because, by now, public affairs would not function at all if it were not maintained.

The comfort-seeking, middle-aged Governor, who had usually not been much of a success at home—speaking now of none in particular but only of the type—who had sought only a job for political duties well done in Iowa, Indiana or Michigan, and who found himself involved in the complex intrigues and conspiracies of insular politics, always falling into traps, fearful of his Washington support, which the "outs" in Puerto Rico early learned how to undermine, especially if they were monied "outs," was one of the unhappiest figures imaginable. He had usually come with good will, vaguely feeling himself a little superior, necessarily, to a conquered people, but had nevertheless tried hard to ingratiate himself with the influential "better classes." That these hated him for his superior feeling, and for the fact that he represented an alien overlordship, and while smiling blandly in his face, would gladly stab him in the back, he soon found out to his dismay. And he had no weapon with which to meet it. He soon became a member of a small alien set of Federal officeholders, with a little isolated society of their own, existing in a foreign land with what grace they could. There is not much evidence that any of them were aware of a vast mass of farmers and workers who hated the same selfish upper classes so many of whose members were ready to cut Governors' throats. These were potential but unused allies. Even if it had occurred to some Governor—and perhaps it did—such an appeal was hardly possible across the barriers of language, culture and tradition; if it was ever tried tentatively it never came to anything. So Governors lived in the palace with a few fiercely resented continental assistants, and the real life and management of insular society went on outside their knowledge, to say nothing of their control.

Mr. Swope, with whom I spoke that March day in 1941, was not, probably, a man to analyze all this. He was, as he said, a plain Pennsylvania Dutchman, by which he evidently hoped to convey that he knew more than he appeared to know. And I believe that if he did not know, he felt, that his position was quite impossible. For the empty honor which General Winship had been thick-skinned enough to hold onto for five years had grown so empty by now as to approach the ridiculous. Muñoz was the boss in Puerto Rico; and he owed his own political power to that great mass of common people who had been the only resource, even if unused, of any appointed Governor. It was no longer possible to turn away from those who so rapaciously exploited the masses and to appeal over their heads. Muñoz had done that and so foreclosed the possibility. Mr. Swope was, nevertheless, in defiance of reality, confronted with the demand of the bourbon Coalición for the juiciest jobs on penalty of a row in Washington—which he knew they could very well precipitate, since by a curious split in the liberal ranks, Mr. Bolivar Pagán, a Socialista once, but now more properly a Coalicionista, had been elected Resident Commissioner against the tide. And he would have command, for this purpose, of all the moneybags on the island. He had before him also the
example of the abuse to which Admiral Leahy had been subjected. With due observance of the reticences proper to a situation in which men understand each other and do not need to talk openly, Mr. Swope conveyed to me that he found the governorship uncongenial.

But I had a specific task to get through in analyzing land reform and trying to formulate a helpful program. Before I went to see Mr. George Malcolm, the Attorney General, however, I spent a day or two in general orientation. Mr. Swope I now saw as a distorted figure out of Goya, tormented by his knowledge of ill-concealed dislike and annoyed by the smooth complaisance of his nominal subordinates—an external deference which hid their real allegiance. I could imagine how the Spanish humor, basically sardonic, played with this now completely classical situation. The victory of a real people’s leader had added the last touch to a macabre landscape so unlikely in the bright tropics, but nevertheless an indubitable reality. What I was seeing was the twilight of confused colonialism; the occupiers were defeated by their own bungling and by the everlasting self-interest and intimate knowledge of the occupied. The shell of authority was empty. The generous subsidies were managed by a subterranean machine Governors seemed powerless to counteract, though as politicians they might understand it well enough. There was a delicious irony in the situation, quite to the taste of the islanders, and they smiled while Mr. Swope labored in futility as had Admiral Leahy, General Winship, Mr. Gore and so on into an undistinguished past line of Governors.

This was the pure product of colonialism entered upon by a people who did not believe in it, who were in fact on their own soil a people distinct and colorful largely because they had been unwilling to tolerate the system for themselves. They not only had lost their colony but they had ruined its Government. The Puerto Rican políticos were on the whole not men whose distinguishing characteristic was a disinterested patriotism; they were hard, slick manipulators, without the least sense of guilt about a thoroughly demoralized Government unfitted by years of back-stairs service to carry on such ordinary functions as tax collection, the protection of public health, maintenance of streets, sewers and water supplies, education, police protection and the like.

But it would be a mistake to leave it at that; these bosses were supported by a vast love for Puerto Rico among the common folk, which no cheapening by fake political oratory and no betrayal could destroy. It was rooted in the island’s hills and valleys, indestructible, native in the deep sense, and incredibly persistent. It was appealed to and rested upon by the sentimental independentistas as well as the professional politicos; but there is plenty of evidence that neither of these was regarded with anything but cynical reserve by the great masses. These common folk saw too many small evidences that the politicos were using their offices for the benefit of themselves, their extensive families, their followers and their friends, matters which, in a small island, cannot remain secret even if they never reach print; they understood too that the independentistas were literary, archaic, impractical,
willing to take long chances with an economic system which rested, after all, on the good will of the United States, evidenced in various preferences and benefits: not that they understood these in detail, how their arrangements worked and so on, but they knew of their existence and of their importance and did not want them jeopardized by irresponsible talk, much less any actual change.

Muñoz had made the first intelligent appeal to this patriotism by ruling out, specifically, independence as a campaign issue and concentrating on economic necessities. *El batey* is the little square of beaten earth before every jíbaro’s hut where most of life goes on. He had given that name to his campaign throw-away. It symbolized the interests for which he intended to labor: not for himself and his henchmen, riot for the *independentistas* (who were numerous in his following), but for the jíbaro, the agregado, the obrero. This was a New Deal for Puerto Rico after seven years of survival into the national New Deal of complete toryism in the island. He meant to pull up the slack and bring his country up to date. That, the common folk understood as really patriotic; they considered that the chance of a new betrayal was perhaps less than usual; and they had given him a mandate which even his opponents recognized as authentic. He spoke with the voice of the land.

The fact that he had a mandate might not necessarily have made him wise. The Government would have to do most of what he had promised, and how ineffective an instrument it was he must have known even if he had little sense of such inadequacies. And it was a fact that his group was poor in technicians, practically all of whom were in the employ of persons who detested him. He would have to reconstruct the public services and raid the other camp for help if he was not to fail, out of sheer incompetence, in the creation of a New Deal in Puerto Rico. That had been the situation of the Federal Government too, in 1933, and I recognized it as one more likeness to that experience. We had often, even usually, been betrayed by the old officeholders and the borrowed technicians. I thought it would also happen to him, perhaps with worse effect. But I felt also a reluctant wisdom in Mr. Swope which might endanger all he—Muñoz—had set out to do. Mr. Swope indicated to me that he had found he could trust Muñoz, that he believed him to be a high-minded man; but that he was, nevertheless, profoundly concerned about his followers. They would, he felt, push their party further and further into anti-Americanism. This, of course, could not be tolerated. There was certain to be trouble in which he—Swope—would be involved. For these *Nacionalistas* were, if not communists, at least allied with them in the common purpose of causing disorder; and they were well educated in terrorist tactics. As the national defense work went on and the interest of the United States in Puerto Rico as a base became greater, he foresaw grave trouble which would be precipitated by an intolerant military and end in widespread incidents. He was a man of peace who believed in civil

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4A farm hand.
predominance and in free speech; but he was afraid of the events he saw gathering about him.

It might be that Mr. Swope was capable of managing things under such tension and of coming out at the other end with unimpaired civil liberties, and with Muñoz’ New Deal established. But there were legitimate doubts—which I think were his real reason for wanting to be relieved—whether it could be done without hurting any politician’s reputation at home. For what had been demanded of a Puerto Rican Governor was that Puerto Rico should never be heard of; and it was going to be heard of in the months and years to come. Mr. Swope definitely did not want to be associated with it. He was not politically uneducated. He realized that Puerto Rico had substantially got her independence. That was the meaning of his administrative frustration and his feeling of helplessness in the face of serious impending clashes. The independentistas who bulked so large in his fears did not know it however—or rather, and more accurately, they were people to whom symbols were always more important than realities. They demanded the orator’s satisfaction of a flag to point to and a Puerto Rican in La Fortaleza, even if these were inconsistent with rice, beans, and codfish for the jíbaro and the agregado. They were incorrigibly intransigeant and they were going to have trouble with military men who were feeling in prospect their expanded wartime powers. Not so Muñoz. He was intent on the reality of land redistribution and he had forbidden even the discussion of such expensive sentiments as those for which some of his followers yearned. Whether he could enforce this prohibition remained to be seen. Mr. Swope did not think so. Perhaps, however, it depended upon success with rehabilitation. Here, added to all his other difficulties, he had to contend with an Attorney General who was suspect by Mr. Guerra Mondragón, upon whom Muñoz depended.

Mr. Malcolm was an individual with ambitions whose inappropriateness he had the intelligence but not the humility to recognize. That, of course, is true of many officials; but in his case the double characteristic was present in a personality whose main other feature was a consuming bitterness. He looked like certain portrayals of Uriah Heep with his long body, short legs, a general paleness which made one wonder if he had not been hid somewhere out of the light for a long time, and his rather slippery voice. He had come to Puerto Rico, really against his wishes, he said, after long and profitable service in the Philippines. He received me in his office flanked by the various Puerto Ricans who had, since 1935, been carrying, on the prosecutions under the 500-acre limitation. It had been indicated to me that he was bitterly disappointed not to have been made Governor instead of Mr. Swope, who, after all, had been only an Auditor in an administration in which he had been the Attorney General. He was likely, being the sort he was, to embarrass the new Governor at every opportunity. It had also been indicated by those Puerto Ricans who now sat with us that he was earnestly sabotaging their work. The worst grievance of this kind
which seemed to be specific was a general conference he had held with the sugar-company lawyers during which Mr. Guerra and Mr. Venegas had taken notes. These revealed Mr. Malcolm as feeling that the Rubert Hermanos, Inc. decision was no more than a "theoretical victory." He had told the lawyers that the whole affair was unfortunate and that, if he had been Attorney General at the time, the cases now pending would none of them have been brought. Since they unfortunately had been brought, a way out had to be found. Actually he proposed to Governor Leahy a commission "well balanced between those understood to be favorable to the enforcement of the 500-acre law and those opposed . . . ; otherwise, someone would arise to charge the Government with sponsoring one or the other points of view."5 The Admiral evidently felt that an "impartial" commission to determine whether a law ought to be enforced was a contrivance for which he had rather not be responsible and none was appointed.

This seemed a peculiar attitude for the chief legal officer of Puerto Rico to assume under the apparent circumstances. But I said to myself that I probably had not been thoroughly briefed. His real affiliations and alliances must have been well enough worked out already, and we, on our side, would gradually discover them to be appropriate for a Michigan Republican even if not for a New Deal official in a Puerto Rico lately caught up with Washington. But I did not know it then, nor for some time to come; and I did not think that in any case he could do much legal damage. He was not enough of a lawyer, for one thing, to circumvent Mr. Guerra Mondragon, whose later life and well-developed abilities were pretty much centered on the 500-acre business; it was Mr. Guerra who had fought through the Rubert Hermanos, Inc. case, for instance, and won the Frankfurter decision which had brought me in; and Mr. Malcolm did not dare go so far as to replace the lawyer who was known to be doing most of the drafting work for Muñoz on the pending Land Authority law. Muñoz might not have money to spend in Washington, but his acknowledged credit with the President might make trouble for an appointee in Puerto Rico who betrayed his trust outright. Mr. Malcolm’s resentment later on would get the better of his judgment; just now he was proceeding with caution.

It was in this conference that I first saw a draft of the proposed insular law. I did not then give it much attention except to examine it for possible provisions which would make Federal action difficult. I was still of the opinion that the financing was impossible with insular funds alone and that it would have to be done Federally; and I was still confident that most of what was hoped to be accomplished could be done through the Farm Security Administration. Its officials, Mr. Baldwin back in Washington and Mr. Oppenheimer and Mr. Mitchell who were with me, thought so too. What I wanted from the insular law was not much more than non-interference; but I was inclined to think, with Mr. Oppenheimer, that

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5Memorandum of 9 August 1940.
Mr. Guerra, not being interested in economics, and having assumed that to break up the big holdings into small ones would accomplish most of what was wanted, had got into a procedure which would not lend itself to anything more constructive. I said frankly that I had been fearing this. Mr. Malcolm—who, a few minutes before, had made a speech about the necessity of going slow lest "the whole economy be torn up"—defended the procedure by saying that after cases were won the law gave only two options: the breaking up and distributing of the estates by public auction in 500-acre lots or less; or sale to similar purchasers from a list privately made up. He said that the former was obviously a safer course and since in his first case he had only six months he would follow it. Later cases might be treated differently.

I indicated my fear that in an indiscriminate breakup productivity might suffer. The Attorney General’s interest in not "tearing up the economy" would be better served by working out ways to maintain productivity while alienating ownership from present holders than by "going slow" in prosecuting the cases. The lawyers present, except Mr. Oppenheimer, were obviously lost in this discussion. Mr. Oppenheimer had convinced himself that the whole receivership method was awkward; and he was exploring alternatives. I wanted only to see the estates held in escrow until public ownership could be financed; after that, I thought, disposition could be worked out in such ways as to preserve full productivity. But if the courts were going to authorize seizure and public auction of all estates over 500 acres, straight off, my time was being wasted.

As we discussed the situation the pending insular law seemed more and more important. We thought we should see whether something constructive could not come of it. Study of the Federal courts’ attitudes convinced us that they were going to reject jurisdiction, too, and this lent more significance to insular legislation. Obviously the thing to do was to try to meet Muñoz on policy.

The insular law had one feature of great interest. There was in it a touch of that inventive genius which is sometimes hardly recognized by its possessor. Perhaps one particular—carelessly outlined—provision in the proposed law might be emphasized, made its most important feature, though this, it was clear enough, was far from the intention. This was the device called the "proportional-profit farm" which seemed to have the possibility of preserving large-scale agriculture against its enemies and of keeping far enough away from classical co-operation to escape the "communist" label. Sizable chunks of the great estates, according to this provision, might be rented to entrepreneurs whose pay would be part of the profit (from 5 to 15 per cent); the remaining profit would be shared among the workers. It could be said to keep the orthodox incentive; it preserved the efficiency of large-scale operation; and it admitted the workers to the benefits of their labor.
Much of my talk with Muñoz, after renewal of our old acquaintance and getting through the amenities, was centered in this device. He was obviously a little surprised by my interest. Apparently it was his own invention but not a valued one. I told him that I wished sincerely I might have thought of it. We went on, of course, to discuss the administrative provisions of his law. I congratulated him on the courage it must have taken to include individuals along with corporations in its prohibition. He seemed a little surprised at this too, almost as though he had not realized that it was there. But we soon went on to the matter I had most in mind. I put before him my doubt whether the insular Government actually could do much. I pointed out that it had an annual general-fund budget which was far less than the sum needed to finance alienation. If the lands were valued as I was afraid they would be by the courts, the total would run to hundreds of millions. He spoke of the method, indicated in his draft, of issuing bonds with the seized land as collateral. I asked if he knew the experience in the Philippines with the Friar Lands, which he did not. I then went on to say that the enormous technical and administrative task seemed to me fantastically beyond insular competence and said that what he needed was the sympathetic help of a Federal agency. This brought us to a long and heated exchange in which he made it clear that he was going to dominate what was done, that he wanted no Federal interference and so on. He used such warm phrases and identified himself so completely with the "democratic will of the people" that for the first, but not for the last, time I appealed to his sense of humor. I did it hesitantly, not knowing how much of a "foreigner" I was to him and being uncertain always of the limits of humor outside my own bailiwick. He finally admitted that "the will of the people" called for some pretty general reforms and that his personal ownership of devices, resting upon the election mandate, was doubtful. Still this was only between the two of us—that "democratic will" business worked with more people than would be believed.

We got along better after that and grew hopeful together that the Farm Security Administration might, in collaboration with his Land Authority, gain the objectives both of us had in mind. He had not my fear of reduced productivity, however, and I could see in his eye an intention to keep to the letter of his campaign promise to distribute land in small parcels to the landless. It appeared possible that this issue would be a cause of later differences. When I talked again with Mr. Swope he warned me of something I had considered, as things turned out, too lightly. I have always since credited him with political acumen for seeing what would happen. Congress, he said, if they found out that the Farm Security Administration was being brought into a land-reform scheme, would take away that agency's funds. I had thought of that, but had said to myself that this would be too illogical. After all, the 500-acre limitation was Congress' own. Its members ought to be outraged at forty years' neglect and eager to implement their own intention. He laughed and said I talked as though I had never heard of the sugar lobby. It gave me something to think about. Until then I had been confident that I was on the right track. Now I wondered if
Muñoz was right after all; whether the insular Government would not have to do all this in spite of the Congress instead of with its help.
THE HEARINGS for which we had set out came on within a few days. On the list of those who had applied to be heard it was discouraging but not surprising to see that not one of the "sugar men"—that is, the principals—proposed to appear. My appeal had been ignored. My hope that the hearings might go to the responsibilities in the Puerto Rican economy faded. Those most involved proposed to go on as they always had, hidden behind elaborate corporate structures and screened by lawyers, bankers and technicians. Warning had been given that of these second-rank individuals only the technicians would be welcome at the hearings; lawyers especially were not wanted; and none attempted to appear, though the legal hand was apparent in some of the managers' statements for the record. Mr. Lord wrote about it afterward in The Land from notes taken at the time:¹

We held hearings at the Capitol in San Juan. They were stirring hearings. Between the long dull stretches of hired technicians reading papers that had been ghosted for them by lawyers, both the technicians and the people spoke out. A complete record was provided reporters and others especially interested. ... If I ever get time I should like to edit, annotate and point up that transcript. There is a great deal in it that may interest us, here on this far wider mainland, in the years to come.

"Bread! Land! Liberty!" was the slogan under which Muñoz Marín and his back-country Populares had attained to their slender and varying majority in the insular Senate and House. Break up the big holdings. Restore the land to the people in little pieces. Let them grow food and make homes. The emotional appeal of such a program is undeniable, especially in a place so cursed by a one-crop, cash-crop economy, and half starved. Land hunger, sharp enough anywhere, is a ravenous sentiment in Puerto Rico. But the island lives by sugar; and sugar—when all is said—cannot be raised economically in very small units. Bigger units, rather than smaller; more machinery rather than less; and consequently an even greater displacement of hands from agriculture, may seem to make more sense, from a strictly business point of view, for Puerto Rico.

Thus the dilemma, stated simply. But the land situation in Puerto Rico can really not be stated simply; it is terribly complex. These are but random notes, set down from memory. The most enduring conflict, it began to appear early in the hearings, would not be between the corporations and the people, but among the people themselves. The corporations are willing to be bought

¹The Land, Vol. i, No. 4, Autumn 1941, pp. 389-390.
out. Their only real fear at the moment is that, having broken the law, their lands will be confiscated. The head men, the really big shots among the sugar people, did not appear at the hearing, or on the island. They stayed in their offices up on the continent and sent word through legal and technical representatives (who often burst out a bit, personally, as honest individuals, apart from their set papers). The really big sugar men sent word, in effect, that Puerto Rico was not in any sense their major concern. The sugar future there seemed to them highly uncertain, and they wouldn’t mind being paid to get out. If sugar quotas were to be cut for the island again, if the Triple-A practice of placing a top limit on adjustment payments were extended to the special auxiliary Sugar Act; if, in other words, there were to be a break in the elaborate web of subsidy by which the island has been kept in the sugar business (with adjustment checks in five or six figures to the biggest corporate operators), well, then, the biggest operators would be, very generally, glad to sell their lands to the Government for a "reasonable price."

Legally, the situation of these corporate holders exceeding 500 acres is probably that of squatters, but they are very large squatters in Puerto Rico, and cold bargainers. And there is no use in forming moral judgment against them just because they are not what the law calls "natural persons." They do, in the main, raise sugar more efficiently than the "natural" smaller operators; and they are on sound economic ground in arguing, and proving time and again, that even with things as they are, Puerto Rico is a relatively high-cost sugar-producing area. Any action that would run up sugar production costs might well have to be met with the provision of further subsidies to keep this half-sick industry and this half-starved island alive. And so on. You can chase the tail of such an argument around and around until you are dizzy. The courts have been doing so for forty years. The Committee was not sent down there to bargain with the corporation lawyers, and did not. But some of the attempts between expert witnesses to establish principles of valuation between "book value," including Triple-A payments, on the one hand and actual value in terms of nutritive yield to an emaciated and driven native population, may well be of interest to agrarian historians of the future.

Almost the last occurrence before we left was what I have since learned to call a pasadía. If English-speaking readers will say that word slowly, its meaning will occur to them: but they will not in this way catch the flavor of such a day in the Puerto Rican countryside or on a beach under the palms. Muñoz and I with various others, would have hundreds of pasadías in the future; and by themselves they would be ample pay for all my Puerto Rican griefs; but this was the first. Mr. Zoilo Méndez was a heavy, quiet man without a word to
say for himself, the most inconspicuous of those present. It would be judged offhand that he was a businessman. And he was. But if by that it should be intended to imply a competitive, grasping spirit, a hard intention to do the other fellow down, it would only go to show how external appearances can deceive. For he was a man dedicated to good works. Also he had had the poetic impulse to build a white house on a shoulder of Luquillo looking out toward the east—toward Vieques, Culebra, St. Thomas and St. Croix—and into the steady wind. It was not a house as Northerners think of houses: it was a series of terraces paved with tiles, covered with roofs of tile too, and with some walls but mostly columns to support the roofs. The wind goes in and goes out. The mountain is behind; the sea lies down in front, a wide and rumpled platform, changing color every hour. And how, in such a place, could anyone's thoughts be other than spacious? And how could they be frivolous? Puerto Ricans, friends, go there for a day of talk, as his most honored guests. They also drink and eat and dance. But mostly they talk. On this day, at least, it was good talk.

Mr. Jaime Benítez was there, vivid, voluble, ardent for his country's good and obviously talented. It was then that he first said to me, "Do you suppose they would ever let us be a state?" I answered too quickly, "Yes." I had been inquiring what Puerto Ricans wanted. And it was in this way that he let me know his feeling that this was not a fair approach. What he meant to convey was that we who were assured citizens of states wanted Puerto Ricans to want to be a state; but that, after so long a suspense, Puerto Ricans had earned some prior commitment on our part. Had they not a right to the pride which would keep them from yielding a purely academic "yes"? We should say first, Puerto Ricans thought, that they were welcome, or would be if they chose to ask for affiliation as a state. I ought not to have answered in that way. For then I hardly had a considered answer; now it is apparent that I spoke for myself and my close kind, not for the lobbyist and the legislator, pushed by forces they scarcely recognize in the complex relations of Washington, but which come out undeniably ungenerous and mean without anyone's thinking himself responsible. Americans intend well for Puerto Ricans, but the United States, somehow, does not intend well for Puerto Rico. That occurred to me a good deal later; and I have tried to make reparation since for violating the terms laid on talkers by Zoilo Méndez' kindness and by the mountain and the sea. But it was a subject on which progressives, like myself, had only one admissible attitude. And I had put it in words.

There was another subject on which the clarity of Muñoz' thought, and that of others there, was a revelation to me. The year 1941 was the year, it must be remembered, in which the American intellectuals of my generation had to reverse half a lifetime of skepticism and pacifism. These attitudes were appropriate to science and to personal relations; they were no more appropriate to world affairs in an age which had syncopated time and killed space than was Calvin Coolidge's New England shopkeeper philosophy to the control of gargantuan business enterprise and international finance. We had thought it fun to
caricature Coolidge back in the twenties; but the truth was that we were no -more modern in this decade than he had been in that one. Some of us, not many, as I had cause to know, had revised our economic theory to accept and explain large management; but we thought withdrawing attitudes and the non-acceptance of force in social relations sufficient twin attitudes to governor relations in society. It never occurred to any of us that these were weak negatives in a monstrously positive world. The Great Society was passing its adolescence. We needed new faiths, new aims, new controls. We hesitated and objected until it was just next to too late. We were still doing it in 1941 in America, even after France and Britain had been beaten into the ground with the great rude hammer strokes of men who knew enough to use the modern technique but were not wise enough to direct it to civilized ends. In the spring of 1941 Muñoz saw this more clearly than most of my friends in the States. He spoke of it at length that day. He obviously had the outlook of a statesman and it was easy to regret that his stage was small: some of that comprehension and foresight would be useful in larger national affairs.

Soon our party was gathering up its notes and going back to Washington to work out, in several weeks of research and conference, a tentative set of propositions on which later hearings would be held. Meanwhile the insular legislature, being then in regular session, would enact the Land Authority bill. It would not be passed, however, by a two-thirds majority; consequently it would not go into effect for ninety days, that being the arrangement in the Organic Act. That would be about 10 August if Mr. Swope signed the bill. There would be agony about the signing; he would try to get positive directions from the Secretary, or someone else, whereupon I should be consulted. Mr. Burlew would then turn out to be deeply concerned and to have communicated his fears to Mr. Ickes. Without knowing positively, I should feel certain that, however they reached Mr. Burlew, these particular sudden reservations—I should have some different ones of my own—would have originated with those interested in preventing the enforcement of the 500-acre limitation—the ubiquitous sugar lobby. But I should not go beyond advising the Secretary that Mr. Swope, as Governor, ought not to be relieved of the responsibility. Accordingly Mr. Chapman, the Assistant Secretary, would convey this to Mr. Swope and, on the last allowable day, he would sign the bill.

Numerous individuals who have since been stirred with the noble purpose of harassing me have been disappointed to find that I did not have more to do with the establishment of the Land Authority. The purpose has sometimes seemed a little confused —I was to be shown at once to be a communist assisting in the seizure of private property and to be an extravagant idealist who wanted to present every incompetent jíbaro with a piece of land. If the first were true it would not be extravagant, because it would not cost the Government anything; and if the second were true I should be the opposite of a communist. These inconsistencies never bother opposing politicians because they do not expect their charges
to make any sense; their purpose is merely to create an atmosphere of confusion and discredit. Ample experience of this had been available to me before—during my association with the President until I left the Government in 1936. But it was perhaps not to be expected that members of the Congress and of the Government would lend themselves, without apparent reason, to this kind of thing, affecting distant Puerto Rico, and in time of national crisis. It was easy to forget how deep was the reactionary hatred for the President, Democratic as well as Republican; and how far gone our country was in the same divisions which had ruined France.

If I had really sensed the depth of this bitterness and the lack of restraint with which it would be displayed, even in a situation which jeopardized the national security, nothing could have induced me to undertake the governorship which, without my knowing it then, lay just ahead. At the moment what we were doing was excellent preparation, although it was not meant to be. It required analysis of the whole Puerto Rican economy. We were doing more than that, actually, because the imminence of national crisis had led our group into considerations which were Caribbean-wide.

The background of this was the President's interest in the area as part of our national defense—for that was the phrase we used then, the country not being willing to hear the possibility of war mentioned even though we were well into an enormous program of preparation. In the fall of 1940—that is, the fall before the spring I write of—the President had sent a preliminary Commission of Investigation into the Caribbean to report to him personally on the situation there. The terms of reference had been wide. And the Commission's conclusions had been made available to me. For its chairman had been Charles Taussig. I thought it not drastic enough; I even thought myself of more to be said; and on my way back to Washington in the plane I set it down. Later my conclusions would seem harsh but still logical and indicative of results to be reached, if not of measures which must be taken. The situation had deteriorated so much, I said, that only heroic changes would establish a safe foundation for our defense. "To set down numerous airfields, naval bases, army camps and other such centers in the midst of populations which are poor, ignorant, disease-ridden and resentful is to build them on sand. We can be said to have direct and full responsibility only for Puerto Rico and the American Virgins; but we have a limited one also for Cuba, Haiti and Santo Domingo. None of these is worse off than the British possessions in health, prosperity or morale—but none is enough better off to be safe."

I pointed out that each island had its special economic problems. These were different because of national affiliation—they might be American, British, Dutch or French possessions; or they might be independent. At the moment some of them were isolated,

almost completely cut off from the mother country—this was true of St. Martin, St. Eustasius, Saba, Aruba and Curasao which were Dutch; it was true of Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana; and it was only less true of all the Windward and Leeward islands and of Barbados, Trinidad and British Guiana. Being cut off, their customary trade affiliations were broken; many, in spite of the most severe restrictions, had used up their stocks of ordinary goods and were close to the end of their food supplies. The construction of our bases was going on, so that unemployment was not so severe as it otherwise would have been, but there were few goods to be bought with the wages received, so that there was actual privation and an unrest which was becoming dangerous.

The temporary difficulties caused by war were superimposed upon chronic ones. In each island there was a small group of businessmen whose members monopolized the import and export trades, taking a cruel profit on food and other supplies coming in and on exports going out. Nowadays, however, they were beleaguered by a rising resentment which occasionally exploded in revolt, as lately in Barbados and Jamaica. The end results of this private taxation of food and labor were squalor, disease, illiteracy and unrest. For public taxation was so moderate as not to cover any substantial social services which might mitigate the general wretchedness. There were no income taxes. And such government as existed was financed largely from import taxes on necessities—a system which increased the pressure of high prices on the workers.

It was suggested that it would be better for us to set up a system of public aid, so creating good will among these people, than to use our soldiers for repression. We were in danger, all through the Caribbean, of affiliating ourselves not with the people but with the handful of shippers, merchants, brokers and other exploiters who were considered by the masses of the people to be their enemies. For there was an active movement, whose causes were traceable to economic disadvantage, for the dispossession of the monopolists. Too often the Governors and the official class were—or were considered to be—in such close association as to be practically identified with the planters and merchants generally and to be committed to a policy of repression without reform. There had been exceptions—our own Governor Cramer in the Virgins and Sir Gordon Letham in the British Leeward group, to mention only two—but they only proved the rule. This affiliation drew upon constituted authority the whole weight of the opposition. The real offenders hid behind Government House.

It was difficult to see how this could be changed without drastic reform, without, indeed, dispossession the exploiters. It was hard to see how it could be done without achieving such control as could only be effected through a general Caribbean government of some sort—"one government or one league; and that to be dominated by the United States." It was "our defense which is involved, not directly that of Britain. Our lifeline runs through a canal on the opposite side of the world from the one through which her life line runs. We
must," I said, "work out a system of representation with full territorial status which will permit the free functioning of all our Federal welfare agencies within a plan authorized by the Congress for rehabilitation. The process will take a generation; but the results in gratitude, morale and safety will be immediate. And that is our first practical objective."

There was more to my argument. I touched on education, housing, health and so on, and on the possibility of loans for farmers who would increase their crops of food as well as the establishment of a substitute for the merchant monopoly and ways of rationalizing the few big export crops—sugar, molasses, rum, bananas, coffee and spices.

At that time the report of the Royal Commission headed by Lord Moyne was a vague rumor in Washington. Few had seen and none had studied it. The Commission had carried out its investigation in 1937-38, after Parliamentary questions on the Caribbean disturbances had become embarrassing. And much that we did not know about, or knew about only vaguely, was under way already to alleviate the situation in the British colonies. The report had not exactly been repressed but it had been held in confidence. This was because war had begun. Perhaps also it may have been because of a feeling that exposure of grave ills and injured morale in the Caribbean might have dangerous effects in Africa and the Far East. That these revelations could not have changed matters much became clear a little later when Malaya and Burma went out from under the Empire in time of tension. But at the moment the report was known only to a few Americans, mostly in the State Department, who could think of nothing to do with it. Of course, Mr. Taussig knew of it and was contemplating a policy based on its recommendations. The West Indies Welfare Fund had already been set up; but that, in spite of some Parliamentary discussion at the time, had made little impression on most of us. It promised a pretty leisurely and not very drastic reform. So did Mr. Taussig's suggestions. My memorandum was a little bitter, perhaps, and very direct. It was also undiplomatic. But then it was only intended to be seen by Mr. Ickes. The hope was that it would stir him to inquire and to get busy. What he did, however, was to send it on to the President. Mr. Roosevelt thought it important, all right, and being in a puckish mood, sent it on to Mr. Welles, knowing certainly that it would be shown to Charles. Thus it was that on 1 o April I had an urgent call from him.

I was on my way to the airport to take a plane for Washington. A later plane proved to be available, so we lunched at La Guardia Field in the restaurant over the runways. The snow was hardly off the field; but the sun was bright and the room cheerful. Charles seemed a little excited, inclined to spar, although it was plainly the Caribbean business he wanted to talk about. I mentioned, not feeling sensitive about it, that I had written a memorandum for Mr. Ickes. I had not seen his—Charles's—report to the President, as I reminded him, and had only been told generally what it contained; mine, I was sure, was more drastic. "Yes," he said, "I know. I've got it." Then he went on to tell me why and how; but also, that the President had asked specifically that it be returned.
This last evidently had made Charles think that he had com-petition which had better be taken care of, though certainly he also knew that we shared a concern in these matters which not many others felt. He went on to say that conversations had already begun between Mr. Welles and Lord Halifax looking to a joint Anglo-American Committee. When I asked if this Committee was to have a representative from Interior, it seemed not. I said this was sheer folly and that it assumed, what I had no reason to believe was true, that the Division of Territories was to be moved from Interior to State: he and Mr. Welles might find the Secretary hard to work with but that was no reason for not trying.

In fact I said we had not time, if my judgment was right, to play with all this international note-writing and protocol. The war was almost upon us; unrest smoldered all around our most necessary bases. We should do something at once to secure our position. I had to tell him that I had sent another memorandum to the Secretary only that morning calling attention, in strong language, to the fact that the Caribbean was very possibly going to be our first line of defense within a matter not of years but of months. While notes went back and forth it was not unthinkable that we might be involved in serious local troubles exactly when we had, with our bases half ready, to brace ourselves against attack; and if it came it would be well planned, almost overpowering, as Nazi attacks had been elsewhere. It seemed not unreasonable to suggest that we consult briefly with our allies and then assume a Protectorate over all the Canal’s defenses. Otherwise we might temporize until the last moment, at which time the Navy would be forced to take over. Charles did not deny the critical situation. He persisted, however, in his Committee idea and said he wanted me to be a member, as did Mr. Welles and the President. It still did not seem to me enough. One might think we had not watched the massive ruthlessness of the German march across Europe. We must meet strength with strength and at once.

To the memorandum which was thus mentioned to Charles, and which Mr. Ickes had promptly forwarded to the President, there was a reply on 21 April. Mr. Roosevelt agreed that something must be done without delay to pull things together in the Caribbean. Also he finally forwarded Charles’s report for the Secretary’s information. Nevertheless the State Department way was apparently to be taken. For on the 25th Charles told me that the State Department was about to set up a Caribbean Division; and that the international commission, whose American members would be appointed by the President, was to include me, but no official from Interior. And then he got around to a suggestion by which it was hoped to eliminate Mr. Ickes altogether: I was to be designated as the Interior representative for Caribbean affairs. That was easy to see through. "Only," I said, "if asked by Mr. Ickes"—which would not happen because I was not even a Federal official. And sure enough it did not. We had other conversations in the weeks following, but matters dragged and nothing much happened until later in the year.
THE NECESSARY TIME SCHEDULE called for our agreement, before the end of April, on a set of tentative conclusions to be tested in the second hearing in Puerto Rico; and on agreement between Interior and Agriculture on a division of functions, in which Interior, for the Government of Puerto Rico, was to accept responsibility for pursuing the 500-acre cases and Agriculture was to follow up with Farm Security and Farm Credit procedures. As a preliminary Mr. Swope had had to sign the legislature’s Land Authority bill; a Memorandum of Understanding between two more or less hostile Departments had had to be negotiated; and Mr. Baldwin had to see his year’s appropriation secure. As we approached 1 May, I found most of this accomplished and set the hearing date for late in the month. It would not be until we had reached San Juan that the appropriation bill for Agriculture containing the necessary Farm Security funds would have been agreed on; and until then I could not feel confident. But everything else was ready.

There was a period, in the few days before Mr. Swope acted on the Land Authority bill, when I was tempted to advise veto. It came about in this way. When the version which had been passed by the legislature came to us in Washington we found that it exempted from the prohibitions of the bill all individual holdings. I knew that Muñoz had among his supporters a number of old landholders whose competitive antagonism for the absentee corporations was undiluted by inconvenient patriotic sentiment.

This was the self-interest I had congratulated him for ignoring when we had talked in San Juan, noting however even then that he seemed to avoid discussion of the point; and I had even said to him that one of his dangers was the need he had to appease this group of followers, explaining at some length the role a similar class had played at home in matters of agrarian reform. Repeatedly in our hearing it had been shown that there was no distinction between corporations and individuals so far as the economic effect of large holdings went except that there was overwhelming evidence of worse exploitation by the individuals. The corporations, in fact, were relatively good employers. The individuals were shown to be violently anti-labor, and to have an implacable hostility to any kind of social legislation. Favoring them deliberately seemed to me a betrayal of those to whom the Populares owed their accession to power. I had no way at the moment of exploring the contradiction apparent in this sudden deletion from the law of individual holders. After considering this and other elements in the situation for some time I felt that to suggest veto would be to create a new difficulty; but I find that by 9 May I had been moved to make the following observation in my notes bearing on the tenure situation in Puerto Rico:
Anyone who tackles the Puerto Rican agricultural problem finds himself struggling among paradoxes and dilemmas. What seems on the surface to be the obvious solution, the one most politically approved and most orthodox, is to substitute for the great sugar estates a system of small holdings. This seems easy and complete; the land is simply to be expropriated and paid for by bond issues; it is then to be turned over to independent enterprisers who borrow on their mortgages and repay the state. Unfortunately, to accept this solution is merely to pander to the judgment of the uninformed and the prejudice of the politician. That this is more acceptable because the agricultural hierarchy has a determined set in favor of family farms and a "sturdy peasantry" does not make it any more remedial. It is, in fact, no solution at all. On the one hand, it would reduce the productive power of the land, now highly capitalized and efficiently managed, and so make the meeting of the obligations difficult. On the other hand division of the land into individual enterprises could not possibly result in more than 3,000 of them, since there is in question here no more than 170,000 acres, whereas there seems no good excuse, if the state is to take it, for not considering benefits for all citizens or at the very least for all engaged in agriculture on these lands at present—not less than 200,000. Then there is the not inconsiderable problem of the price at which the land is to be taken, the difficulty here being that most of the value—or a large part—is governmentally conferred. This may be by tariff or by benefit payment; but such of it as is traceable to this source is temporary. Legislative change or even administrative regulation may affect rates of this sort with relative suddenness. And if a farmer had acquired a property based on such vanishing values, his income would certainly not meet the payments for amortization and interest which would be required of him.

What is required by common sense is probably psychologically, or, shall I say, institutionally impossible. Technique, history and so on have one set of requirements and the prejudices in people's minds have another set. This is the dilemma.

With this consideration in mind it is not difficult to see how in our various group discussions we arrived at the eleven points which were published about this time as the basis for final hearing. They were as follows:
1. The United States Supreme Court has held that the legislature of Puerto Rico may determine, within the limits of the 500-acre restrictions, how the policy of Congress is to be realized. This policy restricts corporations engaged in agriculture to the ownership and control of not over 500 acres of land. The 500-acre law, in express terms applicable only to corporations, does not go far enough and the division at 500 acres regardless of value, use or productivity is obviously arbitrary. The law does, however, provide a useful means for approaching a wider diffusion of benefits from the soil and for lessening the prevailing sense of exclusion from the land. Literal enforcement is to be regarded as the beginning of its enlargement in such ways as will advance the welfare of the people of Puerto Rico.

2. This enlargement has recently been undertaken by the insular legislature. The land law of Puerto Rico, recently enacted, establishes a Land Authority to acquire the holdings of artificial persons in excess of 500 acres. But it imposes no limitation on the amount of land which may be held or acquired by individuals. Changes in the law to correct this would seem necessary if it is to be useful in attaining its expressed objectives. The all-important consideration is to have effective administration of the facilities provided by insular legislation or made available from other sources.

3. Because the sugar crop is vital to the economy of Puerto Rico, and the island is already a high-cost area, maintenance of efficiency in production is imperative. For this both large-scale working areas and scientific crop and field management are essential.

4. The most generally acceptable land-tenure pattern, assuming unlimited land, would be individually owned and operated family-type farms. That pattern has traditionally symbolized security and independence. It may be followed where conditions of soil, rainfall, and topography do not make large-scale agricultural operations imperative. To assure any considerable diffusion of benefits, however, individual holdings should be limited to genuine family-size units, with such restrictions on alienation and seizure for debt as will assure tenure and forestall reconsolidation into larger than family-type units. Individual family-type farms cannot now be established in large numbers. To do so would be to reduce yields and to increase costs. Highly intensive farming is made necessary by the scarcity of land.

5. One suggested alternative to family-type farms is for natural persons to buy excess corporate holdings in large units or to lease them with option to purchase. This would not fulfill the spirit of the law. It would transfer to a few the incomes of present corporate owners, with no adequate assurance that present efficiencies would be retained or that whatever gains may have been made from collective bargaining would be maintained.

6. A better procedure would be to provide for initial holding by a public agency, setting up on family places, with secure lifetime tenure, as many families as possible who desire to live that way, and establishing large cash-crop farms to be operated on a participating basis. With continuous and active supervision of farming practices, present efficiencies and yields should be retained. This would leave open for the future the possibility of eventual
family ownership or any other tenure arrangement which may in time be evolved as especially suitable for Puerto Rico. These arrangements ought finally to be worked out by the people of Puerto Rico.

7. Action by Federal agencies, assuming satisfactory tenure arrangements, should center on financial assistance based upon supervised farm and home plans.

8. Valuation of properties to be acquired ought to be determined without regard to governmental benefits.

9. The alienation of lands now controlled by corporations which also operate centrals will make necessary a thorough study of the future relations of centrals with the suppliers of cane. The objectives should be fair payment to growers and an assured sequence of supplies to the centrals.

10. Education, health, and housing policies must be restudied to meet the new conditions of agriculture and to develop subsistence activities. Changes ought to be made looking to wider diffusion of benefits resulting from the Sugar Act of 1937. Assistance from the A.A.A., Surplus Marketing Administration, and the N.Y.A. should also be sought in stimulating insular subsistence crops and in raising the nutritional level.

11. Planning, co-ordination, and the following-up of execution ought to be centered in the Governor’s Office under the direction of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions and the Secretary of the Interior.

It was in no very philosophical mood that we sailed from New York on the old Coamo, having chosen to go by sea rather than by air. The Secretary, just as I left, had reinforced his plea that I take over the Division by a most serious exposition of the breakdown in Washington morale. We were still within the most distressing beginnings of the shift to war production; the country was deeply divided; business interests (and this I had from Mr. Henderson and others as well as from Mr. Ickes) were so busy fighting one another and grabbing easy profits that it sometimes seemed as though we should never get started in time to stave off disaster; and Germany was being more and more understood as a colossus of strength which had been deliberately written down by the press for years and was now suddenly being fearfully and cautiously revealed to overoptimistic readers for what it was. The Secretary felt that the President had gone too far in domestic appeasement and that the problems it had created were swamping him. He was impatient too with the Japanese policy and felt that it ought to be stiffer than it was. I rebelled now at the thought of working in Washington. There were those there who seemed to me to have the most baseless and irresponsible ideas in their heads, yet who were being trusted to carry out important tasks; and the businessmen were shouldering their way back into control in a way to which I could not accustom myself even though the reason for it was understandable. There was also the fact that they seemed to be doing a poor job of it judged as administration, and apart from the question of their profiteering. I hoped, of course, that the President would someday call me back; but
that could only be when things were again at such a crisis that the self-interested pressure groups would have lost their use to him.

It had not been easy to say no to the Secretary. I wanted more and more to be at work in national service as tension rose. That was a simple and powerful impulse; but what I was offered was something less than that; and I had no stomach for Washington intrigue. However, Fiorello La Guardia had told me by then that he had capitulated—he was taking, almost tearfully, but under inner compulsion, not what he had wanted but what the President had offered: a temporary job, under executive order, to create a civilian defense organization; and my ties of loyalty to the New York affiliation were thus definitely weakened. Then too I had been allowed to see a confidential report on the progress of defense work in the Caribbean which was enough to try any civilian’s patience with its account of stupid spit-and-polish militarism, of lagging progress in the work on the bases, and the latent quarrels of every sort which were hampering the work on all the foreign islands, especially, but also even on our own. The Caribbean was far from ready for what by now was clearly an imminent war. It might be that I could help.

We ran into a storm almost at once as we passed Sandy Hook and were ill; but not too ill, I recall, to have got through Eric Knight’s true and beautiful book This Above All which someone gave us for shipboard reading. I was moved by the passage in which the survivor of the Dunkerque ordeal asks: "What are we fighting for? A new world? A better world—or to be the bully of the schoolyard again?—If you ask—and people have asked—you shall be told that 'We shall think of peace when we have won the war!' That isn't good enough—not for me." It wasn't good enough for me either; but neither the subject of Mr. Knight’s writing nor I seemed able to change matters much.

The publication of our eleven points had drawn the lines in Puerto Rico. That is to say, we were approved by Muñoz and his group and disapproved by the Coalición in general. The sugar men sulked in their palaces. There were no notable new appearances at the hearings and nothing was adduced which tended to invalidate our tentative conclusions. What happened outside the hearings was more important. There was an acrid exchange with Muñoz about changes in the Land Authority Act as it had been passed in which no defense worth mentioning appeared. It seemed to me pretty obvious that a source of party funds had been interfered with and had reacted; but beyond expressing my dissent it was inappropriate for me to go; and we ended that conversation in an impasse. He did not enlighten me. But that did not interfere with other pleasant exchanges. And before long he and others together approached me to see whether I would not become Chancellor of the University.
That, under other circumstances, and if I had been looking for a chance to leave New York, would have been an agreeable suggestion. On my other trip, I had been consulted about the chancellorship and had suggested an old acquaintance, Mr. Fernando de los Ríos, lately Ambassador to the United States from Republican Spain, now a refugee professor at the New School for Social Research. I had known him years before when he had been an exchange professor at Columbia and had followed his work in the Republic in various Ministerial posts and then as Ambassador. It seemed to me a most suitable suggestion and I had offered to do all I could to persuade him. But he had been unwilling to leave New York and his immediate contact with the Spanish Republicans there. Now I was urged again to think of undertaking it. I was pleased, of course, by the implication, but at first did not think of it seriously.

Almost at once, however, a conversation with Mr. Swope changed matters somewhat. It had to do with the directorship of the Division. He asked me and I told him that I had been urged to take it but that I felt I could not. Since he was about to go to Washington on leave, why not, I suggested, himself discuss his availability with the Secretary? The Secretary had had great difficulty with the Directorship partly, at least, because incumbents found it hard to get along with Congressional Committees. He might well be receptive. I knew that he was worried about it now.

Besides, a new idea had arrived. If Mr. Swope left, who would be Governor? The President and Mr. Ickes both had indicated that they wanted me to serve somewhere. And I had wanted a tough job for the duration, one in which I could feel such of the blows of the enemy as were appropriate to my age and abilities. Perhaps the governorship might be a place for me! That took some thinking over. But in the course of the next week I decided. The basis for decision I worked out at the time in this way: I wanted war work but evidently it could not be anything closely associated with the President as I should have preferred; I was prepared by interest and, to an extent, by knowledge and experience, to work in the Caribbean which promised to be on the frontier of our defenses; I had a sympathy for Puerto Ricans which made me feel that I could work in harmony with the new majority party there; I had had considerable experience in government, and, although I had hoped not to have further jobs requiring administrative responsibilities, the modernizing of the Puerto Rico executive department was so badly needed as to challenge anyone with a feeling for good government; the governorship could be a wartime task, undertaken as a temporary duty, and, after it was done, I might go to the University as Chancellor.

For there was a whole group which was anxious to have me at the head of the University. It had fallen on evil political years. While the Coalición had been in power
the institution had been used as the rest of the Government, both insular and municipal, had been used, as a source of party plums. Appointments, in large numbers, of incompetent or mediocre instructors with consequent damage to the standards of teaching had reduced the reputation of the institution. It was not recognized by any of the associations which act as accrediting agencies for American universities, which indicates that it was by any objective test below the level of other institutions which were so recognized. There was indiscipline among the students, also, which could not be controlled by a faculty chosen by political recommendation and a Chancellor whose claim to educational distinction rested on a couple of exotic degrees, an interest in philosophical discussion, a genuine gift for interminable oratory, and a party post with the Republicanos. The Trustees were partly, at least, ex officio, which made the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate its most powerful members: they had most to do with legislative appropriations.

Having as Chancellor a party hack, student indiscipline was almost incredibly prevalent. Whenever it liked, any small clique could demand and secure the suspension of classes to discuss and resolve on public questions. They objected to difficult courses and stiff examinations, and since they could blackmail many of the faculty through their parents' political influence, they had established, in many courses and in some whole schools, what was no better than a parody of the educational process. Since most students came from middle-class or well-to-do families many of them were reactionary—almost fascist—in sympathy; and their resolving on public issues was of the sort to be expected from embryonic blackshirts. They, and especially their leaders, belonged to the privileged class in Puerto Rico. They were determined not to enlarge that class and to see that the prerogatives of the present generation were passed down to them. I was warned, also, in discussing the matter with those who were competent to judge, that the University was the center for the sentimentalists who combined reaction with a demand for independence. As in most state universities there was, I gathered, a majority of children without any developed judgment or any guiding criteria for the complex questions into which they were led by the activist groups. Then there were hangers-on, I was warned, who had been around for years, keeping up a nominal connection by taking a single course so that they could, by fascist tactics, keep control of the mob of irresponsible youths who allowed themselves to be used quite willingly. Being able to command a mass meeting whenever they liked, and being able to dominate it by oratorical tricks and the clever organization of claques, they were able to use the University for reactionary purposes.
The worthy scholars and sincere teachers who had stayed on loyally, as happens in any educational institution, however degenerate, and the students who were earnestly seeking an education, rather than a fortuitous advantage over other Puerto Ricans, were in despair. Among these was Mr. Jaime Benitez, for instance, who, along with the others, implored me to undertake leadership in the necessary work of rehabilitation. It was an appalling task, requiring legislation, educational planning, the discharge of large numbers of teachers (which can always be made to seem illiberal and oppressive) and the recruiting for an institution of doubtful reputation of a new group of instructors. The fact that these would mostly have to be from outside Puerto Rico would make the job much worse; it would be sure to rouse all the latent provincialism which is never far under the surface of any islander.

Even Muñoz shuddered when I told him what was the minimum reform, and plaintively asked if a Puerto Rican faculty could not be found. My discussions and inquiries had not gone far before, somewhat to my own amazement, I found I was contemplating the task as though I should undertake it. It had for me all the fascination any job has for an old hand who is challenged with something practically impossible, yet which is indisputably within his range of competence. Nothing about it was attractive. Yet I could see that unless I took a brace I should find myself involved. Its relation to the governorship was not immediate. That might never eventuate; Mr. Ickes or Mr. Roosevelt might veto it; Mr. Swope might think that after all he had better not resign. Then too perhaps I might not be confirmed. I had run that gauntlet twice before and some of my old enemies—Senators Smith, Byrd, Bailey, Vandenberg, et al.—were still in the Senate and would ambush me with loud cries of delight. And this would vastly please a press which had never forgiven me for not conforming to the stereotype they had created for their purposes in the old Food and Drug fight. If the President did nominate me for the governorship I should be committed to Puerto Rico, since I should have resigned from the New York City Planning Commission. Perhaps, if the Senate was determined enough to keep me out of public service, I could do no better than come to the University. At least I should have an active life for a while.

There was much that was attractive about the University in spite of its current difficulties. It had been somewhat better in past days. When I had first come to Puerto Rico Dr. Carlos Chardón had been Chancellor and, although at that time most of its work was elementary—the training of teachers and so on—there had been less of the vicious devotion to class interests and less political interference in faculty affairs. Since then some additions to plant had been made with grants from P.R.R.A. Most of the funds had gone into an elaborate bell tower and a theater rather than
into laboratory facilities and classrooms; and the whole campus had an unfinished and disreputable air which went well with the mental processes of students who insisted successfully on snap courses and excuse from examination; but the one was as remediable as the other. Sewers could be built, weeds cut and sidewalks laid; and there could be discipline, high intellectual standards and devotion to public service. It was a question of insisting on these changes and of being supported by a non-interference vow on the part of Muñoz and his group. This, I was told earnestly, I could have.

Also, from the vantage point of the University, even better than from that of the governorship, I could pursue my growing interest in the Caribbean outside Puerto Rico. That this bulked large in my decision, finally, to accept, is clear from my notes at the time which repeatedly mention the significance of the Caribbean in world affairs and the possible role of Puerto Rico as the administrative and cultural center of the area. I was reminded of Simón Bolívar’s statement more than a century ago that "If the world were to select a spot for its capital, it would seem that the Isthmus of Panamá must needs be chosen for this august destiny, situated as it is at the center of the world, looking in one direction towards Asia, and in the other towards Africa and Europe, and equidistant from America’s two extremities."1 This was long before air commerce could be envisaged. The present fact was that the sea no longer was the barrier it formerly had been. No place in the Caribbean was now more than seven hours from San Juan and most of it, including the north coast of South America, was much nearer in time. Trinidad, for instance, was three and a half hours away; Santo Domingo and Haiti one and a half and two hours, respectively. The choice for a center might lie between Miami and San Juan—they were of equal size at the moment—but very likely either one would predominate. San Juan, at any rate, had all the advantages Bolivar had cited for Panamá.

It might be emphasized, perhaps, that the weeks in which I was considering all this were the last weeks of the Battle of Crete. Britain then seemed in a worse situation than at any time in her history. True the air blitz on London had already failed, but inconclusively and not as yet to anyone’s certain knowledge. It seemed, my notes suggest, as though a vast pincers movement was inexorably developing; as though the African and South Russian armies of the Wehrmacht would that summer meet somewhere in Persia or Afghanistan, roll through India and meet Japanese armies there. That we should be next after—or perhaps even before—India, seemed not unlikely. And, if the drive came, it would be straight on the Caribbean with South

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1The Caribbean, W. Adolphe Roberts, p. 263.
and North American flank movements branching out of that central Sea. San Juan might indeed soon be the center of the world at war!

My drastic suggestions for the Caribbean, though they had interested the President more than anyone except I myself knew, were evidently not going to be followed. There had been a time, some two years before, when Mr. Roosevelt had had to decide whether or not he would take the British colonies in the West Indies. The situation at that time had been such that there had to be a public showing of equal exchange for the fifty old destroyers we were ceding to Britain. It would have been easy for him to secure such a quid pro quo. It can be imagined, however, how his thoughts must have run. These would be, if we took them, permanent colonial possessions; they could never become an integral part of the nation—a state. Our government is un-suited to colonial administration—the Congress always has and always will find itself so much at the mercy of interests adverse to offshore areas, that we should not be able to build up a Caribbean economy, as we ought to do, with the encouragement of local food-growing, the stimulation of industry, and the suppression of private monopoly. We should fail, probably, and finally fall back on the confession of futility implied in granting independence. And there would be a long and agonizing period leading up to that when all the Caribbean people would be added to our relief rolls. For, although Americans can never bring themselves to do economic justice, they cannot bear the responsibility for unappeased hunger. The one would be more costly than the other, of course, but not to the same interests; and the ones who had to pay would characteristically not blame those who had forced the policy which made the expense inevitable. This is all regrettable, I can imagine him saying, but that is how it is.

Then, too, there must have been considerations bearing upon the tender new policy of the Good Neighbor. For, although a change for the British possessions from British to American sovereignty could not reasonably be looked upon as a revival of imperialism, still, no longer ago than Wilson’s administration, there had been incidents which all Latin America had regarded as ominous. Mexico, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Haiti, Cuba and Santo Domingo had in various ways felt a Puritan hand heavy upon them for what they obviously regarded as not-too-sinful departures from the path of national rectitude. Not the same view of such matters as was held by Wilson prevailed everywhere in Central and South America—evidently it did not prevail in New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia and other large cities, as Lincoln Steffens and others have so amply revealed; but free use of the United States Marines in Latin America to restrain governmental excesses was not duplicated at home. There was justification for delicate hints of hypocrisy in some of these
instances, as, Mr. Roosevelt must have recalled since he had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy at the time.\(^2\)

Nothing is more certain than that they could have become American possessions for the asking. There is not only to be recalled the exigent nature of Britain’s need for those destroyers, but also the perilous situation of the whole Empire. I have mentioned impatience in Australia, disorders in South Africa, incipient revolt in India and so on, ominous signs of dissatisfaction with overlordship. There was also the fact that in the Caribbean the possessions were crown colonies, which meant that government was carried on under the management of the Colonial Office in London and that the various staffs were heavily weighted with Englishmen of the career service. It was difficult for a native to get into the service or, if he did get in, to rise.\(^3\)

Legislatures were controlled by the Governors in various ways, mostly by appointing a majority of the members. The Governors themselves had an interesting constitutional position. They thought of themselves as representing—almost being—the person of the Sovereign; yet they had powers which royalty had not

\(^2\) He and Mr. Josephus Daniels had made amends to Mexico for the Vera Cruz incident, although it seemed at the time a strange arrangement to send as Ambassador the man who had ordered the reprisals for the salute which Admiral Mayo had demanded and never got. Mr. Daniels’ natural lovable qualities and his sympathy for the principles of her revolution had soon convinced Mexico that things were different now. I myself, in 1935, had gone to a ball game in Mexico City with the old Ambassador and seen the genuine rapport between him and the common folk of the country. I have seldom been so pleased about an incident of that sort; and the President had been glad to have me tell him of it. Still, Mr. Roosevelt was reputed to have drafted the marine-imposed constitution of Haiti and to have been active in interferences with Santo Domingan affairs. He must have had these things in mind as he decided not to take the British possessions.

\(^3\) This is a controversial matter even in Britain where there are many critics, even among those who believe strongly in the Empire, who feel that more opportunities ought to be opened to natives in the colonies. For interesting references in Parliamentary discussion see the printed debates for 13 July 1943, pp. 63, 130 and 137. The Secretary of State for Colonies expressed some pride in the fact that out of 250,000 public servants of all kinds only between 5,000 and 6,000 were European. To this Mr. Riley (Dewsbury) replied: "That works out at one hundred white officials on the average to fifty separate territories, large and small. It seems to me a disproportionate number of white officials, in view of the fact that many of these Colonies, particularly in the West Indies, have been under our direction for three hundred years—Jamaica for nearly three hundred and Barbados for just over three hundred—and some African territories for one hundred fifty or two hundred years.” Mr. William Brown (Rugby) also pointed out that there were disparities in wages and perquisites which were "a prolific source of ill-feeling in the colonies.” He pointed specifically to Malta where the Maltese civil servants were usually bilingual, trilingual or even quadrilingual and their education much superior to the English civil servant. The Maltese, however, was on the average paid about half what his English colleague was paid. He contrasted this rather caustically with the tributes paid by the Government to the magnificent heroism of the Maltese under the blitz and went on to the worst indignity of all. When Malta had to be evacuated and the offices were moved to Alexandria the Maltese, who were equally away from home, received only half the subsistence allowance the Englishmen received.
exercised for hundreds of years. They came very close to being absolute monarchs, a survival from beyond the Magna Carta. And, on the whole, although business interests liked dictation because it "kept the natives in their places," the people generally were a good deal exasperated by the stiffness with which an impossible situation was defended in London. A governmental change could not have improved their economic lot, which was desperate, except perhaps by loosening the monopolies which controlled each-island; but, as such leaders as Mr. Norman Manley in Jamaica, Captain Cipriano in Trinidad, and Mr. G. H. Adams in Barbados were insisting, there is more in life than economics. The British, fighting a war for democracy, were required to explain in all fairness why it was denied to their own subjects in the Caribbean.

Up to this time I had never met a British Colonial Governor; that experience was reserved for the future. Consequently I was not aware of the augustness into which I was contemplating entry. When I should have the opportunity later to meet those in the Caribbean area I should understand better why the colonial system had persisted. For all of them were different but all nevertheless somehow alike. Having much power and being responsible only to a distant "Office," they develop extraordinary personalities. Each becomes a "character." Yet they share a vast dignity which even on casual acquaintance can be seen to be founded on an ancient tradition considered changeless and impregnable. A British Colonial officer, when he ascends to this final grade, is customarily made a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, and his commission reads that in the Colony he is "Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and Vice Admiral of the Same ..."

Becoming identified with the person of the King seems to invest Governors in the British service with more regality than ever seems quite natural or appropriate to an American. Long accustomedness makes them marvelously at home in their roles, however, and they live their lives without ever unbending. Sir Arthur Richards, Governor of Jamaica, would tell me in 1941 that even when he and his wife dined alone they would invariably rise at the proper moment and drink His Majesty's health. My wife and I would never bring ourselves to thus honoring the President in our intimate moments; perhaps if we had controlled our risibilities and done so it might have contributed to making American colonialism a success in Puerto Rico. We were, short of that, to do a good many things ordinary families do not do; none of them I hope unnaturally, but still in the President's honor. But he never would get from us the representation so well recognized in British custom.

We were too innocent in such matters to be either terrified or anticipatory. We were thinking of other things. Some of them I discussed with Muñoz and Jaime Benitez. They were of such a practical nature, referring to the University, as that I had no
Spanish and no familiarity with Iberian culture, to which Muñoz replied that I had the more important qualification of sympathy with people and familiarity with their future if not their past. Jaime added that culture is not national, that my years in Europe were evident, and that anyway I represented another line of academic country—the social studies—which very few of Spanish descent or culture had cultivated and which above all needed development in Puerto Rico. I was even more practical: "What about politics?" I asked. I said that there appeared to be only one way to escape from the present bad habits.

If I agreed to come at all it would be only with a ten-year contract and the promise from Muñoz of University reform legislation which would allow me to carry out the reorganization so obviously needed. To this he also agreed.

It was then, with the University matter out of the way between us, that I surprised him with the governorship suggestion. He had not known at all that Mr. Swope felt himself cornered and obliged to quit. "Would Puerto Ricans rather have me as Governor or as Chancellor?" was the way I put it. Without hesitation he suggested that the two might be combined: that is to say, I might regard the governorship as a temporary assignment and the University as a permanent one. I was a little searching in my questions as to whether that would be well received; but he seemed to have no doubts. My journal records that:

I said I had no reason to think that it actually would be offered to me except that the Secretary had wanted me to take Rupert Emerson’s place and I might infer that he would scarcely mind switching to the governorship if I made a practical suggestion for the directorship. Then I went on to say that I liked my professional work as a planner but that in so disturbed a world it seemed natural to desire active participation in affairs; and as to this the Caribbean seemed to me likely to become suddenly a very significant area. If Britain failed under the German strokes, America would in some fashion have to take over. I described my fears for the near future, my attempt to hurry decisions, the International Commission already suggested and the probability that I should be a member though I did not think its operations could come soon enough or would be drastic enough when they did come.

It was Memorial Day. We had gone out toward Isla Verde and dropped down across from each other at a table beneath the casuarina trees not far from a juke box to the music of which a crowd was dancing.
The music was a little strident and we moved further off; but we could see the boys and girls dancing, drinking pop or beer and playing games. The light from the sea and the music set the whole neighborhood into a kind of blue-and-green motion. And it did not seem incongruous in Puerto Rico to discuss world problems within sound of a juke box or the future of the University within sight of a holiday crowd. For there was the immemorial deep note of the sea and the spectacle of subtropics splendor which even the tinny music and the careless crowd could not do more than overlay with superficial sight and sound.

A few days later Muñoz came to say that enough of the Trustees had been consulted so that he could be certain of his position. Before I left, he said, he would have in my hands a formal offer of the chancellorship. We agreed that this should come before the governorship so that I should be permanently Chancellor and only temporarily Governor. By this time I had had an enthusiastic letter from the Secretary. Matters did seem to be clearing up although I noted that I was "still skeptical of all this turning out."

On the week end before we left for New York on the Borinquen we found it possible to be in the coffee country. Mr. Jose Ramon Quinones, Chairman, then, of the Public Service Commission, had wanted us to see something of a typical finca. This one had been in his family for generations. He had adopted the Colum-naris variety, following advice from Mayaguez, and he had gone against the trend to plant a sizable citrus orchard, believing that the neglect into which most of the island's plantations had fallen was a mistake. But otherwise not much had been altered from his grandfather's time. The mill was set on the pleasant Dos Rios to run by a thirty-foot wheel in the old way; and a dozen families existed somehow between harvests as squatters on his land.4

On the way to Maricao we stopped at Camp Tortuguero where Puerto Rican recruits were having their elementary training. The camp was in an unfortunate spot, I thought, on the sandy shore plain, a hot and desolate place, when it might as well have been at some elevation. It was there for a characteristic reason—it had been a National Guard encampment; and it had been chosen by the Guard for a characteristic reason, too—because it happened to be such poor land that it had remained in public ownership. By now, from such fortuitous beginnings it had grown into a semipermanent installation. The commander was Brigadier General Luis Raul Esteves, a Puerto Rican West Pointer, who asked us to lunch at the officers' mess. I liked General Esteves and we lingered while he and Mr. Quiñones

4Mr. Quinones was friendly then. But he was a Republicano, and the time would come when he would say, to a rumor of my going, that that would be Puerto Rico's best Christmas present. He would then be President of the Farmers' Association and wholly devoted to opposing all my policies.
reached into their rich mutual recollection for accounts of island life in the past. In the course of this conversation General Esteves told us a story I have been delighted to retell many times since. It had to do with two scientists—weather-bureau men, according to him—who came to Puerto Rico in 1918, just after the disastrous hurricane and tidal wave, to study the effects of the storm and to gather reports of its character in progress. They stayed for a while at a mountain finca and rode out daily, accompanied by a local jíbaro as guide, on inquiring journeys into remote districts. One bright blue morning, as they prepared to leave, their guide for the day objected; there would, he said, be a severe storm presently and they would better wait until it had passed. The scientists, who after all were weather men, had another look at the innocent sky, consulted each other in a look, and decided that this was absurd. They went on their way. They were, however, drenched within an hour and had a really difficult time with suddenly deep streams and slippery trails. When finally they got back, they asked their country friend how he had known. "That, senores," he had said, "is simple. The donkey went under the mango tree. That, as everyone knows, means that a storm will come soon."

"Everyone," General Esteves reported one of the investigators as saying, "but us. Perhaps we'd better retire from a country where the donkeys know more than the scientists."

"Now what would interest me about that," I said, "is how the donkey knew. But that kind of investigation is still rare." Such an inquiry, however, would lead us deep into an ecological discussion neither of us could sustain. We returned to the hurricane:

"This would be a poor place, wouldn't it, to live out a storm?" I asked. But General Esteves had thought of that; he told amusingly how he had put that question to his superiors a long time before and had recently got back his query with a long series of endorsements from one officer to another with the final notation that he would have to meet such a contingency with local ingenuity. "And that's what I shall do," he said. "If we have a storm, with twelve hours' warning, I'm going to send every last one of these boys home where they have the kind of sense about calamities which made the jíbaro trust the donkey. In a hurricane-earthquake country no generation outlives the memory of some disaster and it is always more or less expected. I'll stay and see it out here with these hutments disintegrating and their fragments flying, but I won't ask the boys to do that."

I have since heard General Esteves called "a political General," and I should later be able to get him for the organizer of a wartime State Guard because continental officers would not value his services. But that would be their mistake. He was a man of sense. If he had not been he would not have treasured that story.
We went on up by the unfinished hydro project at Dos Bocas, another P.R.R.A. undertaking which I should later on, as Governor, dedicate to the use of the Puerto Rican people—perhaps a little defiantly—forever. (For we should then be in a situation in which it was uncertain whether the war would not operate to throw the hard-won public-power developments into private hands.) Beyond there the high country began, cool, deep-lighted and spacious.

Those were a good two days, withdrawn and recreative. Withdrawn because so far from immediate concerns; recreative because we went a little backward into wisdoms neglected now but perhaps important. The *finca's mayordomo* knew what happened to a mango tree planted at various phases of the moon. One could insure its bearing by attention to this and other auspices. What the *mayordomo* told me of this sort, and the way I could compare it with what the researchers at Mayagüez knew, became the theme of an address at the University of Virginia that summer. I studied over the crowding suggestions in rides and walks on Mr. Quiñones' land and through the village; and I lay half thinking, half dreaming, steeped in ecological wonder for hours on both those nights. There was a misty moon, there was the odor of *La Dama de Noche* 5 from the garden, and the sound of the river just beyond the garden. But there was another thought too, a disturbing one. Crete was also in the subtropics. Probably in the gardens there *La Dama de Noche* had another name but smelled as sweet. Probably the moon was as misty and the rivers were as musical for men fighting and dying—men of Britain, and Cretan peasants, as men of America and Puerto Rican *jíbaros* were preparing to do.

I thought I had learned something of value. To have been in touch with the *jíbaros* of Dos Ríos was to be reminded of the underlying tragedy of this people—that their culture had been stolen. Those countless thousands of families who lived in the slums of San Juan, Arecibo, Caguas, Cayey and all the rest of the towns not only had no assured relationship with the modern life they had presumably gone there to find but they had also lost the elemental culture which had been held by their ancestors through the ages of their peasantry. What the foreman knew at Dos Ríos still, and what the *jíbaro* knew who warned the investigators about the donkey-predicted storm—all that was by way of being lost to those who came to the city slums. And the modern substitute for this, which I presumed to be vocational education, the teaching of many trades, we had never provided the funds for. Hence the tragedy—a people lost to both cultures, the old and the new. The slum dwellers scarcely had the ingenuity to make a chair out of a packing case; yet they were descendants of a:

5 Lady of the Night—a vine with tiny white flowers which open only at night, but then fill the air with heavy fragrance.
people who, with a few primitive tools, had had the wit to exploit nature in the Puerto Rican hills for four centuries.

For the smell of the coffee flower and the orange blossom the migrants had substituted the stinks of unsewered marshes; for work on the hillsides, roustabousing in the ports, for a diet of plantains, breadfruit, yautías, ñames, gandules and mangos, the old slave food, rice, beans and semidried fish. I could see that there was no way back; I was not sure there was any way forward—but it was long past time for a trial to be made.

Vaguely I remembered a passage from one of Aldous Huxley's stories. It had to do with Italy, the peasants there, and the contrast of earthy cultures. Later on I looked it up. The novelist Miles Fanning was talking:

"But make the acquaintance of a few practical business men—the kind who have no time to be anything but alternately efficient and tired. Or of a few workmen from the big towns. (Country people are different; they still have the remains of the old substitutes for culture—religion, folk-lore, tradition. The town fellows have lost the substitutes without acquiring the genuine article.) Get to know those people; they’ll make you see the point of culture. Just as the Sahara’ make you see the point of water. And for the same reason: they’re arid."6

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JUSTICE TRAVIESO of the Supreme Court had been, before retreat to the bench, an active politician in the former Unionist Party. However, he was a prominent University Trustee and ought to be consulted. He was not so unloquacious as judges are reputed usually to be. He did a good deal of talking, and it seemed to be frank, informative talk. He began by telling me something of his own history, most of which I had known from others. But not all. I had not known, for instance, that he had practically been asked to be Governor in 1933 and then had had the humiliation of having his name supplanted by that of Mr. Robert H. Gore. That had been Mr. Flynn’s doing, I should learn later, although Judge Travieso rather blamed Mr. Farley. Somehow the Church was supposed to have been involved also, which had been hard, because it seemed that Justice Travieso had always been an especially active and devout Catholic.

His telling me what he knew of this, how Mr. Roosevelt had called him to the White House for tea, and how he had gone away assuming his appointment had been arranged and how he had heard through the press of the Gore substitution, came about because I mentioned the governorship and suggested that I might take office for the duration on leave from the University. "The President," he said, "always spoils his statesmanship with politics. There are plenty of Puerto Ricans capable of governing —not," he caught himself, "that you would not be as good as any outsider. But the time for that is past and the President ought to know it." I suggested mildly that with a war coming on it was not an auspicious occasion, perhaps, to ask any Puerto Rican to undertake the governorship: the first Puerto Rican to be Governor ought to begin in less troubled times. He agreed: he was testy about it, but still he did agree. And we went on to discuss the University.

About the University he was indignant, feeling, for some reason, that its degradation was the responsibility of others. He did not see that this degradation was the same one which was overtaking all Puerto Rican institutions in the welter of politics, graft and favoritism for sycophants which had been maintained these many years and consented to by his own party. My heart failed me as I heard him tell how the law students had demanded—and got—degrees without examination until the Supreme Court had intervened. I inquired how the standards of the School of Tropical Medicine had been kept up. That was simple —they had to be, in order to get the contribution and recognition of Columbia University. That started a train of thought; and although the Justice had, shortly before, made a resounding speech about Northern interference, he now calmly admitted that the most decently run institutions on the island were those which were held to accountability by outside interference.
That was colonialism—fierce pride built on small foundations of performance; the hiding of mediocrity under a spate of praise; the admission in saner hours that new life was needed as well as the standards of a more exacting outside world.

Before I left I sent to the Trustees a statement of educational policy to which I asked formal assent; I said I must have a ten-year contract; and an agreement that two years' leave would be possible. This was the statement:

That the Trustees agree in principle to the establishment, as part of the University system, but separate from its higher center, of junior colleges covering roughly the first two years of college or, if possible, the two upper years of high school and the first two years of college; this curriculum to be of a generally orientational character suited to the student's own approach to his world rather than that of the scholar preoccupied with the study of a subject.

That the Trustees also agree to the view that the University's higher center should be reserved for those students who expect to and are able to move forward into a chosen creative life. The terminal point for others stops short of this. But tests and measurements ought to indicate vocational courses in the junior colleges suited to their capabilities. The higher center of a University is not the place for a student to acquire elementary education, to lead a sporting life, to accumulate social graces, or even moral character. It is a place for serious training in the intellectual pursuits. This is also vocational, even if it is labeled law, politics, or philosophy, and it should be carried on under rigorously qualified instructors in a professional way. Students should be more or less on their own responsibility as to daily conduct even in relation to the body of knowledge and the discipline they are pursuing. The terminal examinations should be elaborate and definitive, set by outside or professional examiners. And success in these, not conduct in courses, or in examinations set by their instructors, ought to be the goal set by the University for its passes and honors. These methods are not suitable for lower colleges where elementary tools are still being acquired and boys and girls are learning to be disciplined.

These objectives—the setting up of a junior college system and the transforming of the University into a creative center—can only be reached by vigorous, even harsh measures. I should expect to be supported in using them when necessary. After the establishment of a
new system I should look forward to a free and secure faculty, self-governing and self-determining, in the higher center. In the lower center these last objectives would be harder to reach and would require a longer time. I should expect the extension of patience until that time arrived. This program will also require financial support but it accords so fully with the aims of the present administration that no guarantees of this sort seem necessary. A master plan ought to be developed, in the course of a year or two, for Puerto Rico’s higher education and a fiscal program spaced over a period of years and according with the resources of the island.

I state these things clearly so that there may be no mistake as to my educational theory. Puerto Rico ought to be a great regional cultural center. Its Spanish quality, its mediating values with other cultures to the north and south, ought to be emphasized and enlarged. That can only be done by strenuous effort and with a secure sense of time for accomplishment. I should not like to undertake it unsupported or with misunderstanding in anyone’s mind.

I found when I got to Washington that the governorship was settled. Mr. Ickes had an optimistic moment over this. Not until I saw him a second time a few days later did other matters come up; when they did, his mordant mood was resumed. During this conversation I felt I ought to tell him that his Federal appointees in Puerto Rico were often mediocre and even more often a prospective trial for a new Governor on other grounds. He asked for a suggestion of the sort I should like in case of vacancy. I gave him Mr. Maury Maverick. He said, "Maury would steal all your publicity." I said, "That would be fine. I don’t have any ambitions which can be injured." I was uneasy about confirmation but that he shrugged away. It would be simple. Dempsey would handle it. This, of course, referred to Mr. John J. Dempsey, then Under Secretary, on whom Mr. Ickes leaned heavily at that time for Congressional contacts. I thought he—and Mr. Burlew, too— took the confirmation matter too lightly and said so; but they would make no preparation.

The executive branch of the Government at this time became concerned with other matters. Something happened within a week which lifted the prevalent depression as if by magic and gave all the blundering business neophytes in Washington new courage. There was a precious gift of time. From my notes of 22 June 1941 (Sunday):

Hitler invaded Russia last night, ending a month of strange maneuvers. I am sure that neither our government nor Britain’s really believed that we should have the luck to have a new front open in the
east. After our disasters in Yugoslavia, Greece and Crete this seems an incredible and hardly deserved good fortune. It is a final mistake for Hitler. As a matter of grand strategy I don’t see how he can win now no matter how inefficient the Russians turn out to be nor how remarkable the German blitz.

This ought to give us at least another year—which should be almost enough, counting also on a certain percentage of German exhaustion. For us to straighten out the chaos, get rid of this businessmen’s inefficiency, and create a mechanized force with adequate advance bases, will take more than one year; but it had begun to seem as though we should not have months. England might have fallen this summer; and that seems impossible now. . . .

It may be that German-Russian war will tend to push the Caribbean out of view again. If it relieves Britain, the prospect that all the islands of the area will fall into American management is less for the moment. Charles says that the international commission is moving along and that I cannot escape appointment no matter what Ickes thinks. Churchill, he says, has replied favorably to our suggestion but wants time to consult "on certain technicalities" which, I was unkind enough to suggest, meant asking the Governors, who would say "no" in their dozen different ways. However, Charles is optimistic.

If the Russians do put up a respectable resistance—against our Army’s belief—and thus relieve the siege of England, all such organizing jobs can be carried out with some grace. I had thought until now that we had time only for emergency measures. It is just possible that instead of improvisations under pressure we shall go to the other extreme of neglect. . . .

It may be, too, that if Russia really engages Germany the policy here may be to go after Japan. That would turn all attention to the Pacific again, as in prewar days.

From then on we became furiously busy, my wife and I, getting ready for the Puerto Rican activity. Our small son went to live with "Grandma" Ahues, who was the only person in his world he could love and fear at once and was therefore wonderfully good for him. We lived at a hotel; and although we saw him every day it was she who guided him out of babyhood and into the widening life of the walker and talker. While he emerged as a personality we set about to complete the 500-acre report (which still required a lot of background work although the Secretary had agreed
that it ought to be delayed until the contemplated arrangements were substantially effected); to learn all over again the sources of funds and controls in Washington for housing and other works, for relief and so on; and to study the part Puerto Rico would play in the war drama just opening up.

Work on the report was not so difficult now; we were well into the subject, although there were some difficult spots. For instance, we needed information concerning experience with various tenure arrangements in other places and at other times. So great was the complacency of the orthodox that this proved very hard to assemble. The general opinion seemed to be that there could hardly be any useful purpose served by looking into foreign vagaries in these matters. Nothing could be as good as the American family farm. So we had trouble there. And in the end this part of our work went unfinished. Someday I hoped I might go back to this and study, without prejudice, the inventions and experiences of other peoples on the land. After all, men have been farmers as long as they have been anything, and something must have turned up in this experience which is less wasteful and more humanly satisfactory than a system which has produced, from the free homesteads of less than a century ago, 50 to 75 per cent of tenantry, and has so exhausted our soil resources as to generally reduce rather than increase our natural wealth. It cannot be, either, that the absentee-owned factory farm of Puerto Rico (and of Hawaii, California, etc.) is the answer to this old riddle. What may be a satisfactory solution I was not prepared to suggest—although Senator McKellar would a little later be infuriated with me for uncertainty on this point. I should not like to dissolve into senility until I have gone a good deal further. But I had not done it in 1941.

The search for sources of funds for Puerto Rican rehabilitation soon led to the White House. I saw that not much progress could be made without the President’s help. I took with me when I went to see him on 12 July pictures of the enlarged slum areas which would have revolted a Hottentot—and on such questions Mr. Roosevelt was never a Hottentot. He said that, damn it, he had told every Governor since he had been President that it was his business to clean up that disgrace to the flag—and now, eight years after he had begun to talk about it, I was showing him that it was many times worse than at the beginning. What was the matter? To that I made the best answer I could, not really knowing. I thought it was because there were about 6,000 new families founded every year, of whom about 5,500 settled in the slums where they had no rent to pay, or at least very little, since most of them were squatters. Poverty-stricken Puerto Ricans didn’t regard rent as just; they got that from slave days perhaps; at any rate two thirds of them escaped it somehow. Not all the slum dwellers had to live there. Still there was the stubborn fact of low income—the Puerto Rican average being only about one third that of the continent and
perhaps one half that of the Southern states. A good deal of it was traceable too, I said, to the decline of coffee and tobacco which had formerly provided work on the land. Probably the biggest of all New Deal years in Puerto Rico had not resulted in as many as five hundred new houses; and since this disproportion had gone on for a long time the situation had become the appalling one I laid before him in photographs. I told him we should never make any real progress either unless he took an interest to the extent of giving some instructions. Whereupon he called in Miss Tully and dictated a message to the Director of the Budget: The slums in Puerto Rico are a menace to public health. This should be attested by the Surgeon General of the Navy and the Medical Director of the Army. Then you should find a source of the funds and get this project done. I want action. With that I was satisfied. I had been around enough to know how long a way I still was from the action Mr. Roosevelt wanted; but he had risen to the occasion. It was a good start. I hoped to build on it.

We had, however, talked for some time, and mostly about other matters. A large group of Congressional leaders had just gone out and left him looking discouraged. He seemed glad to see me, to relax, to know that he could talk outrageously if he wanted and still be safe. We had always had that kind of relationship. And even if I had not seen him in months, and had not the least idea of the inside of White House matters, he talked as though I had never left his side and knew not only the facts but his mind about them. He did that now, going on about extending the service of draftees which Congress was reluctant to do.

To him too, I could see, as more and more to me every day then, the war, not yet really begun, was logically won. There was grief between where we were and the submission of Germany, but the attack on Russia had after all settled the matter. The deep danger was past. He asked if I didn’t think so. I said how should I know the answer: he had all the sources of military intelligence open to him: I had only a belief that Russians were tough and well munitioned and with the only "ism" which could compete with that of the Nazis in morale. He said ruefully that he saw it so; but that the whole Army was against that view, and aggressively so. He was nevertheless sure that Hitler had made a fatal calculation. He had underestimated by at least the necessary thirty days — probably much more — the time it would take to subdue Russia and pull out all but occupying forces and administrative staff. It would be impossible to invade England after 1 October; he figured, consequently, that it was going to be impossible to invade England at all.

These were wide matters in which I could venture no information and no wisdom. I did encourage him, if my warm support had that effect, to trust his own rather than the Army’s judgment. It was on this same subject that he was to continue getting what he believed to be prejudiced intelligence and would finally send Mr. Harry
Hopkins to Russia for observation. The resistance to Russian aid, on the grounds that Russia was always about to collapse, would be one of his most troublesome problems from then until after Stalingrad. It found well-prepared ground, this prejudice, among the businessmen who were in charge of production and distribution of raw materials, machinery, munitions, ships and foodstuffs. And equally well-prepared prejudice in the military—more especially the naval—staff.

Turning to the subject closest to my interest he told me of recent talks with Keynes and Halifax about postwar planning. The situation was such, he said, that on all but a few subjects work must necessarily be in the large rather than in detail. There were still many unsettled issues of policy which made any work, other than preparation for negotiation, futile. One of the exceptions, however, was the West India islands—the whole Caribbean. He had said to them, "I suppose you may be surprised to have me tell you that the British West Indies are worse off than either the independent countries or the United States Possessions." He had, he said, got the desired attention; and he had used the opportunity to go right on about what it seemed necessary to do. He had said to them that all the great absentee landlords would have to be dispossessed and agriculture reorganized. (Mr. Roosevelt did not enlarge on this, but, knowing him of old, I suspect he had in mind homestead farms.) The same was true of the monopolies in control of shipping and of the big mercantile firms which exploited all those who bought imported goods—which was everybody. Often these interests had merged and, in any case, they worked together. As to education and health—all the islands were in some degree in the same situation—much illiteracy, lack of vocational training; and prevalent endemic sicknesses of all kinds, almost unchecked, which reduced vitality—except, apparently, for breeding.

There ought, he said, to be an international commission which would not only do research and give advice but might well administer transportation agencies, set up a subsidiary bank to make agricultural and co-operative loans, and so on.

I thought this dissertation from the President of the United States must have startled Keynes and Halifax a good deal. I knew that word of such a talk would get back to London at once. The chances were good that somehow it would get to the vested interests under discussion promptly too; and unless a war situation was created in which it could not be avoided, they would find ways to escape dispossession. The West India Interest was not what it once had been in London. In the century centering at 1750 the rich absentee planters and the merchants who represented them had pretty well controlled Parliament so far as their own affairs were concerned.¹ This was the heyday of sugar and molasses. The sweets were still

¹Through the rotten-borough system which, Benjamin Franklin complained, gave the West India colonies many advantages over Northern ones.
luxuries; but not so inaccessible to the English middle classes that the market was not growing. There was still slave labor to keep costs down and virgin land to keep production up. The planters and their agents were so rich as to furnish the language a phrase meaning lavishness and opulence. "West Indian planter" connoted vast establishments abroad and in the islands, an army of slaves and spreading green seas of cane. But the new political economy of Adam Smith destroyed the preferences and bounties of this plantocracy, the slaves were freed, and the overworked land began to require fertilizers. The century-long bonanza disappeared.

Still the traces of these days remained in the prevalent psychology and, to an extent, in the actual economic situation, as Mr. Roosevelt very well knew from old knowledge of his own and from recent reinforcements brought to him by Charles Taussig and by myself. Perhaps also by others; with him you never knew. . . . He was well read in history. He knew all about the old West India Interest and what had happened to it. He knew also that in English counti

nghouses, and maybe in a Tory Parliament, it might still survive in sufficient strength to defeat its newest challengers. He might have suspected that planters would find a friend in Mr. Winston Churchill. That would seem likely in view of the Prime Minister's lifelong affiliations. If they did they would be quite safe in spite of Mr. Roosevelt and his commission. The British were admiring themselves immensely just then, as they had a right to do, for their fortitude under the blitz. Mr. Churchill's strange combination of eloquence and John Bull appearance had centered all their reticent narcissism in him. He could do no wrong. But if anyone expected anything of him or of his group which would benefit the subject peoples of the world they would be disappointed. I felt sure that the commission would be set up, and that Charles would put in a lot of work at it. It would be well advertised but its activities would probably come to rest in a safe "research," avoiding any "dangerous" activity. Nevertheless if that was how it was to be I was resigned to participation and by now resolved to do what I could.

What Mr. Roosevelt thought about our chance of leading the way in colonial change he did not confide to me. It seemed that we were going to try not only to do something in Puerto Rico but to call on the best instincts of the British to improve crown-colony government in the West Indies and living conditions as well. Perhaps we should not get anywhere with it; but we should make the effort. There was even more than this. We discussed the University matter. He was delighted beyond my expectation. I found him well informed about the deficiencies in Latin-American education; he spoke particularly of the preference for large matters of philosophy rather than the more precise matters of engineering and economics. But also he was
interested that knowledge of the Spanish language and culture should be
encouraged in the States. There had been talk, endless talk, about Puerto Rico as a
halfway station, and of Puerto Ricans as mediating folk between the English and
Latin traditions. The President was willing to take that seriously and asked me to
work at it with Mr. Rockefeller’s Inter-American group and with the State
Department. I promised to try. During the next two months I wasted much time in
this effort. For the first time, in the executive branch of the Government, and outside
as well as inside the Department of State, I found coldness for all things Puerto
Rican. I made many efforts to overcome it but without much result. The idea seemed
to be that Puerto Rico was an American failure and that in the practical effort to
persuade our Southern neighbors that we meant to be good, our poor dependency
had better be ignored and if possible forgot. The promoters of culture finally got rid
of me by procuring a ruling of counsel that, like the Department of State, their funds
could only be expended in foreign lands. A Puerto Rican friend who had been telling
me from the beginning that this would happen laughed and said, "You see, we’re in,
so we’re out. It’s always the same. If we were out, they would have to get us in. Then
we should be eligible for all the good things. As it is, nothing doing!"

My ambitions at this time went somewhat beyond what this cultural group could do.
The Good Neighbor policy in at least one instance had developed a practical
undertaking which seemed of immense promise. I wanted something like it for
Puerto Rico. With funds furnished by the Export-Import Bank there had been
established in Haiti the Société Haitien-Americaine de Développement Agricole. It
had had only a brief existence as yet but already its usefulness was apparent. The
intention was to make an effort at the rationalizing of agriculture—incidentally
furnishing some much needed products for a country which depended dangerously
on the Netherlands East Indies: rubber, quinine, insecticides among others, all
subtropical, all lost to our hemisphere through neglect and the superior efficiency of
the Dutch on the other side of the earth. For Haiti the establishment of this
enterprise was the greatest windfall of a century. The success there had led to
schemes of a similar sort for other South and Central American countries. Why not, I
wondered, Puerto Rico? After negotiation and taking advice from the State
Department, the Export-Import Bank, however, gave me a similar answer; the funds
were only available for use outside the United States. It was getting monotonous.
Said my friend again, "You see; it’s always the same; we’re out because we’re in."

By now I was really annoyed. I had failed to get cultural and educational help; a
Development Company could not be started; I must not fail with housing, with
sanitation and the water supply—or with the Institute of Tropical Agriculture. But I
did fail on all of them in one way or another in spite of everything—hard work, the
President’s directive, everything. I had not counted on quite so much ill will, or, of course, on the war which would come along presently. But most of all not on ill will. Let me relate, a little out of chronology, a typical instance.

As I was leaving the President at a later interview he called out: "Don’t forget, you have to get rid of those slums and you have to clean up the water supply—make it so I can have a drink next time I come to Puerto Rico." I thought I ought to, with his help. So I started on both. And the start was good. The funds were actually earmarked and, as to the housing, a project for the elimination of El Fanguito would be within a week or two of the dirt-moving stage on 7 December. But then everyone in Washington would act as though the bombs had hit that city instead of Honolulu. All funds would be withdrawn; all projects would be stopped. I would argue myself black in the face that since the materials were on the island they could be of no use to the war effort on the continent; and that since Puerto Rico had no war industries, the crisis had only enlarged the idle labor supply; but all to no purpose. We could put everyone on relief; but we couldn't permit them to build homes. The resistance to reason would closely resemble paralysis. The Washingtonians would not even be capable of answering letters. Apparently all they could do was sit and stare at their navels. While the slums grew faster and faster.

It was a little different with the water-supply matter. Colonel Gilmore, then in charge of Public Works, was receptive. He told me frankly, however, as did the Public Works Engineer for Puerto Rico, that their experience had been such with the unsatisfactory government of San Juan that they would carry on no further projects under such sponsorship. The horror tales they had to tell of what went on were sufficiently convincing. They volunteered, however, for purposes of planning, to make the project a Federal one, and said that once I was Governor I could ask the legislature to insularize the water-supply system, thus freeing them from the dangers they were unwilling to face. With the planning done we could then go ahead rapidly. It would be, accordingly, one of my first acts as Governor to carry out this informal agreement, insisting that a special session of the legislature take the necessary action. Indeed I would mention it prominently in my inaugural. Anyone who has familiarity with old-fashioned municipal government will recognize that taking the water system away from San Juan would be to really stir up the animals. The politicos would wait, unbelieving, until they were sure I meant it; then they would set out to show me the limits within which American Governors were expected to stay. Mr. Bolivar Pagán, for instance, would make many impassioned speeches in the Congress (or at least have them printed in the Record) showing what a perfidious fascist (or, as the case might be, communist) I was. He would even complain bitterly to the President, as
Mr. Roosevelt would tell me with a big laugh. What the President would say to Mr. Pagán I cannot repeat. It couldn't, however, have pleased him much. And all about the water system of San Juan I And all the time with the highest cause of death in Puerto Rico, enteritis, a wholly water-borne disease, caused by inadequate supplies and ineffective treatment. The Record would seem to have used more paper, ink and printers' wages on the subject than the capital worth of the whole system. Of course, it would be put on pretty noble grounds, freedom, home rule and so on, and with no mention of infant and even adult death rates, many times those in the States, absolutely controllable with a few miles of water pipe and a treatment establishment operated by civil servants. Anyone with any political experience could see what was going on. At least Mr. Roosevelt would, although numerous Congressmen would profess not to comprehend.

As I say, I should undergo all that. The bill would be passed. We would make application to what would be now the Federal Works Agency. And the next event in the series would be a message from General Philip Fleming, by then Administrator, to the effect that unless I knew of some reason against it, a rival project presented by the Board of Commissioners of San Juan would be approved within a few days. The politicos would have put one over; with Washington help they would have shown an interfering Governor just where to head in. I would try feebly to protest. But nothing would come of it; and I should be too discouraged by then to appeal to Mr. Roosevelt.

Then there was the attempt to secure the Institute of Tropical Agriculture for Puerto Rico. Here I was on solid ground. I knew what it was about. And I could argue with complete reason that Puerto Rico ought to have the establishment. I went at it tooth and nail. I buttonholed everyone, high and low, who might have something to say about location. "Here is the test," my argument ran. "For forty years we have talked largely of Puerto Rico as a halfway station between the United States and South America. Having the advantage of our protection and our institutions and of the Spanish heritage; and having as well, among educated people, command of two languages; being, as a matter of fact, at that level, bilingual, it is well suited for this role. But "we have never implemented this claim of ours. We hold the island, the South Americans have been known to say, as a pistol pointed at them, not as a service station for the transfusion of cultures. Up to now they are entitled to say that our pretensions are empty. An ideal demonstration of reversal would be to put there an institution we are prepared to subsidize generously and which is expected to function in the industrial field closest to South American interests—agriculture."

This project was not a new one. It had been proposed years before and revived when Mr. Wallace and I were in the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Mr. E. N.
Bressman, as our special representative, had meanwhile, in several journeys to the south, Interested agriculturalists throughout the hemisphere in its possibilities. The plans for it had been threshed out in numerous conferences. Furthermore the funds had been put at the disposition of a Board. There remained only settlement on a location. I thought it shrewd to point out that a certain amount of ill will would follow its establishment in any foreign country. Those who had lost out in the competition would be envious. That could be avoided by selecting Puerto Rico.

The whole case was so good that there was indeed a slight embarrassment in turning me down. Nevertheless it was done with firmness. We would afterward establish an Institute of our own at Mayaguez of which Dr. Carlos Chardón would become the first head. But, of course, it would not meet the purpose of proving American good will. I was sad about this failure. But Mr. Bressman was an old colleague; we would have no difficulty in dividing the field—Costa Rica taking graduate training, and we centering on research—but still it was one more evidence that my country’s intentions toward Puerto Rico, when it came down to business, were pretty accurately represented by the Congress and the State Department. It was the more embarrassing for me that the project had really originated in Puerto Rico as a part of an earlier scheme to make the University a dual culture center. It had even at one time reached the stage of promised foundation support and affiliation with Cornell University, which, more by accident than by intention, had finally not materialized. To have picked up the idea and to have insulted Puerto Rico by deliberately embodying it in a Government-supported institution elsewhere—well, that was another illustration, I could suppose, of the aphorism which was beginning to annoy me with its appositeness. Said my friend still again: "It’s always the same; we’re out because we’re in.”

If these experiences, as I have related them, convey some feeling of disillusion, they have served their purpose. I didn’t mind putting in the hours and expending all the talk, but, aside from the co-operation I was getting from Farm Security, there actually weren’t any results. Before I began, the preview of what it was to be like in Washington was clear enough. Toward the end of July, the University matter furnished a disappointment too. I was finally told that the ten-year contract could not legally be made. Muñoz said he would persuade the legislature to remedy that, but still it made me uneasy. There was a nasty job to do within the institution, and I was afraid of politics. There were a few days just at the last when I thought seriously of going to Fiorello and saying that after all it might be better for me to stay with him. I even went to talk with Mr. Ickes about it, finally, on the 29th. But I was so nearly on balance and he was so obviously pleased with telling me that the governorship nomination was ready to go from the White House to the Senate, and
with discussing ways of getting things done for Puerto Rico under the new arrangement, that I came away without voicing my reluctance. That night I had dinner with Charles Taussig; and his optimism, too, was infectious. Between the jellied soup and the Iced honeydew he rationalized the whole Caribbean. At any rate on 1 August I went to the District of Columbia Court and was sworn in as Chancellor:

1 August—I am now an employee of the University of Puerto Rico rather than of the City of New York. Trouble has begun, as I had told the Secretary it would, about confirmation. I myself was optimistic after my call on Tydings the other day. He was caustic about Puerto Ricans; but friendly to me. Yesterday, however, when, according to request, I attended at the Committee (Territories and Island Possessions) in the Senate gallery, Tydings called me aside and said that Tobey (Charles W., Senator of New Hampshire) had asked for delay and so it would have to go over until next week. He was still affable; but managed to convey the impression that something was up. La Guardia, whom I saw this morning, was downright reproachful. He said I wouldn't like Puerto Rico and that my wife wouldn't either, and offered to keep my job open for at least a few months to see what happens. I told him of my trouble about confirmation and he offered to help although he said—and I thought it damned nice of him—he hoped I would get turned down so that I would come back to him.

Burliew says he has talked to McKellar; and Chapman fears sugar trouble. Dempsey is optimistic. As for me, I don't like it and wish I had had sense enough to know when I was well off.

I do not propose to linger, in this account, over the humiliating experiences of the three weeks which followed. My hearing was put off from Tuesday to Wednesday and from Wednesday to the following Tuesday. Each day I reported, hung around for an indefinite time and was then told to come back. My old friend Senator Robert M. La Follette did some scouting for me and said it was a Republican matter: Taber of New York and Crawford of Michigan, Representatives, don't want to lose this chance and have persuaded Tobey, Austin, Vandenberg and Danaher (members of the Senate Committee) that they have something. "Hold your hat," he said, "it sounds like a Rube Goldberg contraption." And it certainly did. The story was that Taussig's Caribbean report and the activities I was to carry out in Puerto Rico were to reduce land values there so that Taussig's concern could buy them up. Then he was going to split with me. To say that I was flabbergasted was to put it mildly. But as soon as I heard what it was I recognized it for that type of chisme which is useful for subterranean attacks on reputation but which cannot stand the light. It had all the

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2Chisme—vicious gossip.
earmarks of the kind of near-slander to which I had been subjected in the Food and Drugs fight. It was getting a build-up, however, and I could see that if the delay persisted I was likely to become again, as I had in other years, an involuntary cause célèbre.

After four postponements a hearing finally came off which was pretty nearly pure farce. The threats of exposure, of course, faded out. Representative Crawford was present but confined his opposition to the suggestion that a businessman would have been preferable. He appeared, as usual, with an armful of books and papers; but what I had been told they were going to prove—that Charles and I were conspiring for mutual profit—did not emerge. Mr. Crawford had been an accountant once, and, true to this former profession, had an insatiable appetite for "facts" (which in this instance required to be put in quotes) and feverish energy in collecting them in spite of what appeared to be a wholly inadequate physique. He and a few others had, highly developed, the irresponsibility peculiar to Congressional opposition. Concentration on the negatives peculiar to insistent carping derogation has a characteristic effect finally on personality and on the pattern of action. My years of public life ought to have taught me what to expect. But I admit to having been taken by surprise not only in Washington, but also a little later in San Juan, at the massiveness and determination of the opposition I encountered. There seemed so much to be gained for the nation by exhibiting good will and common confidence that, in spite of temperamental warnings, I had believed that I might be allowed to preserve the dignity necessary to a successful colonial Governor.

Messrs. Crawford, Taber, McGehee, et al., cannot have escaped the knowledge that there was trouble coming; and that part of it might come to the Caribbean whose administrative defense base was Puerto Rico. They might, it still seems to me, for once, have acknowledged the need of the President for someone at such a place and at such a time in whom he could have the ultimate kind of confidence upon which, with things breaking up, he might conceivably need to rely. I was not a political appointee. I have no doubt that Mr. Roosevelt had taken into account the political situation in Puerto Rico and thought that the period just ahead was inappropriate for a Governor who was out of sympathy with the aspirations of the masses. But that was not the usual basis for "political" appointments. His practical demonstration of sagacity concerning Puerto Rico took place about this time. And it was a striking one. For he publicly introduced Muñoz to his neighbors at Hyde Park as the "Prime Minister" of Puerto Rico. The implication of dominion status would stick in my mind and would contribute to later decisions. Just now it was a rebuke to the politicos in Puerto Rico and a hint to the Congress.
It was one, however, which they chose to ignore. The attendance at this first hearing—for there was to be another, as I shall relate—was not very good. The newspapers had plenty of copy in that month even if most of it was imaginary and misleading speculation concerning the length of time Russia might hold out. The Republicans and the anti-Roosevelt Democrats, I hoped, were deciding not to use me at the moment as a sacrificial representative of Mr. Roosevelt. They might even be thinking it was necessary to be Americans rather than anti-Roosevelt in Puerto Rico at this moment. It looked a little like it. True, at the hearing, an hour and a half of the time of several important people was devoted to hearing Mr. Cayetano Coll y Cuchi, a character known better to the islanders, evidently, than to United States Senators. This was the same individual who had suggested so delicately at our hearing in San Juan on the 500-acre limitation that such ideas originated in Russia and had better be confined there. On inquiry I was amazed to find that he was a Socialist. I thought I had never heard anyone talk more like the caricature corporation lawyer. I also found that he was Chairman of the San Juan City Commission, that model among all municipal governments with whom the Public Works Administration—when under Mr. Ickes—would do no more business. That explained something; but aroused further curiosity. The first person I asked casually about Mr. Coll y Cuchi talked for an hour. I could hardly stop the flow. And I found it the same everywhere. His deeds in the strange world of law and politics were regarded half humorously, half deprecatingly by Puerto Ricans. Everyone acknowledged his smartness at the same time that they expanded with gusts of rueful laughter on his exploits. Just after his performance before the Senators—which he carried off with the utmost gravity and an air of complete sincerity—Muñoz told me how he had suggested the night before that he had always cherished the ambition to be a professor in the School of Law at the University. At a later meeting of a Committee of the House of Representatives, after Mr. Bolivar Pagán had used his most vituperous talents on me, Mr. Coll y Cuchi would appear. Asked if he agreed with Mr. Pagán he would say, "Yes; only more exaggerated."

The opposition politicos were not yet "exaggerated." They were still feeling me out, individually and collectively—individually after the fashion of Mr. Coll y Cuchi and collectively by means of delegations who were sent to Washington with instructions to appear in opposition to my confirmation unless I would give commitments. I didn't give any. But by now I was embarrassed for time. I had to leave soon if I was to reach the University before its opening. I consulted with Mr. Dempsey who was confident, and with Mr. Tydings who was not opposed, and on the morning of 14 August left for Miami. The Committee was to meet that day with a favorable report apparently foregone, since there had been no opposition and a good deal of support.
Landing at Charleston, however, I found a wire from my wife which said: "Come back; they want to examine you again."
WHEN ON 12 AUGUST the Senate Committee on Territories and Island Possessions had finally proceeded with the public hearing on my confirmation, most of the members had not attended. Two or three had come in for a while and then gone out. At the last only Senator Bone had been there; even Mr. Tydings had found business elsewhere. When they were to vote on the following day, however, in executive session, more of them had been present; and, as Mr. Tydings told me over the phone, there had been wrangling and accusations. It seemed to have been fantastically far from fact, and utterly unrelated to any disclosures made at the hearing. It was charged, for instance, that I had been responsible for "land division" in Puerto Rico, which was "socialism." There were other accusations, too, some of which, I gathered, the Senator was too kind to pass on; at any rate the best he had been able to do was to postpone action and to suggest that the suspicions be cleared away by a hearing which those with adverse inclinations, especially, should attend. No explanation of non-attendance before seemed to have been made. At any rate that was why I had been called back.

On that day the Atlantic Charter was announced, with all the drama of the meeting at sea between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, attended by their staffs. Still with all the news thus provided, there was room for a front-page story about my distressing situation. It looked again as though the thing might be worked up into a politically embarrassing incident.

Taking counsel together, my wife and I decided that what the situation demanded was a simple historical statement—with perhaps some exposition of the land problem, since there was evidently a misconception in the Senators' minds about this. The distortion of my views was probably welcome to those who were nursing political or personal ill will, and they might not be anxious for clarification, since it is always safer to know very little about people who are disliked out of convenience; still, this time, there would at least be an audience—the publicity guaranteed that. The Committee members would be there; and so would the press. What was needed for the occasion was, moreover, at hand; I was letter-perfect in the required exposition. It would be enough merely to recite a good deal of the report we had been working on.

This, in fact, was what I did. Senator Tydings gave me every opportunity to recall for the Committee and the roomful of auditors the history of the 500-acre limitation. Even though this was a Congressional matter, and so one on which they should have been informed, it seemed new to everyone there. My position, of course, was unassailable. Not I, but Congress, a Committee of which had undertaken to examine
me in not too friendly a spirit, had required that the land be divided and then had ignored the responsibility for implementing its own Act. It could hardly be "socialistic" to devise means for carrying out a forty-year-old Congressional measure which had been reaffirmed at least once (in the Jones Act of 1917) against executive recommendation.\(^1\) I was allowed to make a long statement, almost uninterrupted, which ended with a frank suggestion that a Congressional duty had been evaded. A policy had been established; it was one, however, which could not be carried out without implementation; and the Congress ought either to have provided funds and set terms for enforcement, or it ought to have reversed its policy and confirmed the big owners in their holdings.\(^2\) I said, however, that no people in the world had willingly lived in poverty alongside productive lands owned in absentia and not used to the fullest capacity. Furthermore I knew of no instance in which the Congress, in such a situation, or in one anything like it, had favored landlords as against homeless people. Going on, I said that since the situation had developed so far, and since it was the neglect of the Congress which was at fault, a good deal of forbearance ought to be granted the insular Government if it tried to do something and the Congress did not.

This was a kind of tour de force, it will be seen, but the evident interest on the part of Senators Clark, Ellender, Danaher and a number of others seemed to warrant it. Certainly the questions they asked were not hostile. But Senator McKellar did not like the way things were developing; and he insisted on a line of questioning apparently intended to prove that I had radical beliefs in the matter. Did I favor government ownership of land? That seemed to be his objective. He wanted a categorical yes-or-no answer even though I insisted that to give one without conditioning and guarding it would be utterly dishonest and misleading. He followed the same routine on other matters, including the question of Puerto Rico's status, being wholly personal, obviously hostile, and uninterested in the material to which the others had given close attention. On the whole, however, in spite of Mr. McKellar, it seemed likely that the hearing had counted for good. Those present, at least, would have a revised, a more informed, view of the issues being determined in the possession. And they at once voted to recommend confirmation.

On the morning of 20 August I again left for Miami, working all the way on my address for the University's opening ceremony and continuing all next day at the McAllister. It was disappointing to read in the Miami Herald that Senator Taft now

\(^1\) That of the then Secretary, William Howard Taft, who had been the cabinet officer in charge of Insular Affairs.

\(^2\) A few years later certain members of the House Committee would favor repeal of the 500-acre provision; but until now no one had publicly suggested such a possibility.
appeared to have become the champion of those who opposed me, and had objected to a vote on confirmation in the Senate until he could prepare a speech. But that was how it was, and patience was still needed. That speech, when it came off a few days later, seemed obviously a Republican political production, denouncing the New Deal as socialistic and so on. As to me he was content to accept the newspaper stereotype: "The worst administrator who ever lived" and "a failure at everything he ever tried." Even if their source is known, as the Arkansan said when kicked by a mule, such assaults hurt. But beyond the hurt there was the irresponsibility exposed by denunciation under the circumstances when good will needed so much to be established and was so easily injured by partisan sharpshooting. Mr. Taft did not expect to prevent my confirmation. He only meant to discredit another Roosevelt appointee. That this was a dangerous time for that kind of thing did not detain him, nor that Puerto Rico was an inappropriate place in which to practice continental politics. Mr. Taft would be a little embarrassed, I think, when he became acquainted with me later, about this uninformed diatribe. And certainly he would turn out to be a useful friend in the exigency of the blockade. But up to now he had been, along with Mr. Vandenberg, merely one of our more thoughtless enemies, wholly partisan in approach.

In the plane outward to San Juan the University address was finished. I had hoped, even after Mr. Taft's announcement, that confirmation would come during the days en route. But it continued to be withheld at the request of various Republicans; and I arrived in San Juan still the target for belittling speeches in the Senate, still uncertain of confirmation. Taking its line from Mr. Taft, one of the largest newspapers in San Juan began, the morning after my arrival, a series of savage personal attacks. Characteristically, the issue was completely artificial: it was said that I was a "phantom Chancellor" (canciller fantasma), and there followed the first of many thousands of words to be expended in the month which followed on the agony of the University." There was behind these attacks, as I gradually learned, more than at first appeared. I was inclined to be amused; but that soon turned into disturbance as the hatred behind the artificial issue became evident.

During the months and years ahead I would have other chances, plenty of them, for studying the technique used in this instance, but none would be more characteristic: at the beginning a phony fact is fastened to a universally approved principle; throughout several days of development the fact is enlarged and the principle commented upon; editorials are written in more and more pointed language; citizens are interviewed and, if their words are sufficiently indignant at the violation of accepted truth or custom, they are played up prominently; if it is at all possible, meetings are fomented and resolutions are passed; these are sent to prominent
persons of many sorts, from the President down; Washington correspondents are ordered to find a way to get comment there from Congressmen and other officials. By this time, if the thing has succeeded at all, what began as a wholly imaginary excuse for attack has become a public issue. Perhaps the victim has even been foolish enough to react, in which case a screaming climax is possible.

This game seemed to be worked in Puerto Rico with public connivance. Everyone was aware of what was going on; but everyone joined in. If the statement of a commentator was published, his satisfaction seemed to be quite unrelated to his knowledge of the origin of the request for it, which must have been complete. When all was over, the victim was not supposed to hold it against those who had exhibited themselves at his expense. This, of course, held true only for outsiders. It was an insular game and not intended to be used on the home folks. When it was tried on them occasionally, a first-class feud resulted, with furies on each side equaled only perhaps in the Kentucky Mountains, and extending in aggravated cases through generations.

These generalizations were not available to me in my first month in Puerto Rico. Consequently I was puzzled and upset. That, I suppose, was realized by everyone else concerned, which made the game more interesting. I was handicapped by an incorrigible tendency to attribute standards of fair play to those who had none; and to cling to liberalism, if I may call it that, as a method of action. These attitudes had the effect of at least confusing the newspaper gamesters and the clique of teachers and students who, without my realizing it, had set out to drive me out of Puerto Rico.

The issue, the "agony of the University," was that I was going to be Chancellor on leave, and that the "University would be tied to the governorship," etc., etc. That this was a time of crisis, that my leave would be temporary, and that many other university heads in the States were serving in government—all that was ignored. It had to be for the demarche to succeed. Besides, there were involved a number of personal ambitions. I learned gradually that there had been numerous candidates for the chancellorship—their aspirations being related not to ability or even to acceptability so much as to some privately held estimate of worth. All these ambitious individuals might have been scrambling for advantage among themselves ever since the Popular victory in 1940; but all of them could, with the greatest

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3It was also ignored that under the Organic Act the Insular Commissioner of Education is chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University. Since he is a subordinate of the Governor's and a superior officer may presumably guide a lesser one, the University was, in any case, under the Governor's direction. That I would be Chancellor on leave, acting as Governor, would not materially alter the University's relation to the governorship. Besides, what if it did? This was a state university!
enthusiasm, make common cause against me. For the purposes of public appeal it
was also fortunate that I was an outsider; that made the derogation\(^4\) seem somehow
so much fairer.

I ran head on into this campaign quite on my own. For Muñoz, who, after all, had
been responsible in the University matter, was still in the States and I did not have
him for consultation. In any case he could have done nothing, but this I did not at
first understand. Indeed what puzzled me most in the first few weeks was that the
attacks seemed to originate suspiciously close to his headquarters—that is to say,
among his prominent followers. The newspaper was only having to enlarge an
attack which was being fomented by those who, under normal circumstances, would
have been its enemies. This, of course, was a factor it was easy to overlook in trying
to analyze what was going on; it is always hard to keep in mind how irrelevant
ambitions can be to the likelihood of their satisfaction; or how savage a violated
*amor propio* can be on an island whose intellectual clan is small.

As I look back on this month, and read over the notes made at the time, I seem to
have taken it all too seriously, and to have blamed Muñoz, rather than to have
looked after myself as I later learned to do. For to Muñoz, when he returned, it
seemed much less than outrageous that a newspaper should, for instance, suggest
that my purpose was to get the salaries for both offices, and, having suggested it,
talk about it from then on as a fact to be editorialized on and indignantly pointed to
as an outrage which unfitted me for both posts. Actually the governorship
represented a real financial sacrifice—the salary was much lower, there was no
pension arrangement and so on—and everyone knew it quite well. I lived, during
that time, a very retired life at *Jájome* in the hills near Cayey, driving back and forth
daily, so that there was nothing much to comment on; and during the whole time no
reporter ever came near me. But actually a general newspaper of twelve, sixteen,
and more pages managed to devote a considerable proportion of its non-advertising
space to attacks on me nearly every day. These attacks were completely without
relation to reality, completely unrestrained, and shot through with a maliciousness
unique even in my experience, and I had felt the weight of the press at its worst. It
was a crusade in reverse, no less.

A number of the newspaper's employees spent a good part of their time on the
University campus, which, after a week or two, buzzed like an angry hive. The
students were enormously excited—about something or other, none among them
knew quite what. Then, as was to be expected, the newspaper's employees were
joined by the sentimental nationalist as, the comunistas and the falangistas who had,

\(^{\text{4}}\)The Spanish *desestimación* is more accurate to describe this process.
the three of them, no ideology in common but who made use of similar tactics. Perhaps even more important in this were the Republicanos who were glad to use the others for their own purposes. But it was often difficult to separate the various brands of reactionaries. Frequently they were in fact identical. Create a sufficient confusion, excitement, tension—and anything might happen! This was at a time, it will be remembered, when the United States hung on the brink of war. It was not yet quite certain that the President would be able to overcome the opposition of the isolationists, the reactionary churchmen, and the Nazi sympathizers; all of these still hoped that at least we should be kept from outright hostilities. In Puerto Rico, no less than elsewhere, there was this division, made much worse by the civil dissensions of the late Spanish war. There were very strong and active pro-Franco groups, supported by at least a certain number of Spanish priests of the Catholic Church. It was no part of the scheme for the falangistas to admit that they were anti-American any more than the comunistas did, but they took oaths which no American could take, just as the comunistas also did. No democrat, no believer in progressive liberalism, could have anything in common with them. Or they with him. And this was the crowd—they and their newspaper—who saw in me a symbol of all they most hated. I had the reputation of being an American radical, sympathetic to labor, a worker in the cause of the small farmer, a defender of civil liberties—and one of the originators of the New Deal. Not one word of all this could be risked publicly, of course, by that time. What I stood for most Puerto Ricans believed in. I must be destroyed by devious means. My character was attacked, my abilities were questioned, it was insinuated that I was dishonest and dishonorable. And no pains or expense, in Puerto Rico, in Washington or in New York, were spared. Anyone who could be persuaded to attack me was made a hero; anyone who attempted to defend me was buried. No praise reached print. No blame was allowed to pass without a dozen printings.

After this had gone on, with various manifestations, for some time, I confounded the opposition by saying that if the students, by a majority, expressed their desire for it, I would resign the chancellorship. This was a poser; confronted with such a choice, even the comunistas and nacionalistas hesitated; no qualms were felt by the reactionary scions of Republicano families, however, and from then on they had to assume leadership. The climax of the affair was a day-long orgy of oratory in an assembly held with my permission. The little group of activists completely outgeneraled a volunteer group of defenders, being experienced agitators and, as a matter of fact, hardly students at all, but outsiders with only a nominal membership in the University. After my supporters withdrew to a rump meeting on the athletic field, and the passage of their own resolutions, the agitators suddenly discovered that they did not know what to do next. They were seriously divided among
themselves when it came to positive action. It was anticlimactic to settle on resolutions which merely postponed decision until Muñoz could return and be heard. But that was what they did. They were, after all, afraid of the most powerful individual on the island. And many of them suddenly remembered that they were supposed, whatever their secret affiliations, to be Populares. Their exhibitionism might have led them too far. And they had acquired strange bedfellows.

Muñoz attempted to meet the situation finally by an oratorical appeal in an assembly of students held for the purpose. He made a two-hour speech. But what he talked about was democracy, fair play and a chance for the common people of Puerto Rico. Those who had been carrying on the agitation were interested in none of these, no matter what group they belonged to; and he got such unfriendly treatment that it amounted to notice of repudiation.

This was for him a shock. Until this actually happened he had been unwilling to accept my analysis of the situation, since I was a newcomer, and inexperienced in Puerto Rican politics or customs. What happens to others is never so serious, either, as what happens to one’s self. The reception he got at the hands of what he had idealistically considered to be future Puerto Rican leaders thoroughly convinced him that I was right. I never doubted from then on that he would support University reform. There was no way of knowing whether it was a majority of the students who were opposed. No student assembly could be held without its being stampeded by the activists. Large groups were, however, meeting by themselves and expressing the hope that I would overlook the easy acquiescence of any assembly group in claque-made resolutions. There was, they assured me, no more significance in it than a desire not to go to classes and a complementary liking for excitement. Puerto Rican students loved oratory, they said, but it didn’t mean anything. After Muñoz had taken his drubbing, however, he retired from the scene completely baffled. So I finally sent the Trustees my resignation.

This was literally on the eve of my inauguration. My task as Governor would be to defeat the forces of reaction and to rally Puerto Ricans behind the effort into which the nation was going. How was I to do it? The start could hardly have been worse. My duty as the representative of my country in Puerto Rico was to shape civil affairs, if I could, so that military bases, which might soon (before they were ready) have to stand the shock of attack, were not isolated in a generally hostile environment. They ought ideally to be part, to be the bulwark, of a solidly integrated opposition to the Fascist-Nazi threat. Even without the incidents of August-September the handicaps to such an effort were formidable. It seemed impossible now to succeed. These incidents had to be regarded as no more than evidence of grievances, resentments, even hostilities which were buried so superficially that the least provocation
uncovered them. Some of them did not run deep: that is, no deeper than the opposition to the New Deal in the States. It was, this phase of it, the old familiar resentment against the threat to privileges and the widening of the middle class, although, of course, it was held with more conviction in Puerto Rico because the economy was less advanced. But there were more sinister, more violent and dangerous forces at work here which revealed themselves whenever excitement rose and self-restraints loosened. There was reaction which ran back to totalitarian Spain and through Spain to the medieval force-philosophy of the Nazis. It had, until within a matter of months, been an open movement in Puerto Rico, with meetings, flags and all the familiar colored-shirt paraphernalia. It had its seat in certain of the old moneyed families who thought of themselves as aristocratic in the sense of being conservators of the antidemocratic, perhaps royalist, tradition. There were great merchants who were in it up to their necks, and planters, many of whom still honestly thought that indentured servitude was the ideal system of labor.

What had happened at the University was disturbing in another way to which I have already casually referred. The uproar was so successful, really, because to produce it, the extreme left had united with the extreme right. That kind of collaboration occurs only at peculiar historical moments when dissatisfaction with an existing regime is so universal that practically everyone is agreed on its overthrow and the substitution for it of something else, even if that something else is still in dispute. After revolution is accomplished these elements reassume their accustomed attitudes; but for the moment, and purely in opposition to what exists, they make common cause.

I was not so ignorant of history that I could not recognize the signs. I thought I had one chance, and one only, for at least qualified success in what there was to do. That was to persuade one element of this coalition that it was mistaken. The leftists, the moderate independentistas, leaving out the most intransigent, were probably proceeding in this matter purely on momentum. Their ideology created compulsion. This impulse had been weakened by the German attack on Russia. Such of them as were comunistas were bound to support defense efforts and the lend-lease program. They had an alliance with the pro-independence groups in Puerto Rico, but from 21 June the opposition of this group had been weakened by the fact that in effect the United States and Russia were now allies. They had, I thought, simply not learned yet how to co-operate rather than destroy.

In so far, also, as the leftists depended on obrero support, there was the difficulty that I represented not only a New Deal administration which had helped labor to make advances but was actually reputed to be one of the New Dealers who had been
instrumental in shaping policy that way. I was not likely to furnish so good a foil as General Winship had accommodatingly presented.

I had no chance, and sought none, to present such arguments to the leftist leaders. It seemed to me, after consideration, that if I followed a resolutely liberal policy, represented the friendlier —and, I felt, truer—impulses of my country toward Puerto Rico, and presented over and over the issues of the world conflict as I saw them, their position of opposition to me would become untenable. All but a few of those so warped by grievance and sentiment as to have lost all sense of reality, would fall in line. Such a policy was natural anyway, and perhaps my analysis was influenced by this fact. Nevertheless, I felt quite sure I was right.

In all the confusion I was a little comforted by this forecast. I tried also to get Muñoz to underline the fundamentals by more forthright treatment of our mutual enemies. He himself had been enjoying something of a political honeymoon. The opposition had been so pleased to have him avoid the kind of tax increases they had feared in the first legislative session under his control that they had begun to regard him as another of those demagogues who make a big muscle for election purposes but who really mean no harm to those with large possessions. This was, for our mutual purposes, bad. The elite would not long regard him as harmless before the reputation would spread among the agregados and obreros. But the comfort of approval was grateful to his tired soul, worn by the long struggle and by the harassing life a Puerto Rican political leader must live. It was not until I was about to be sworn in that he made his move. He became editorial director, in name at least, of another local newspaper of some size and challenged the one which had been so persistent for the past month in its attacks on me. For some time a signed article appeared daily; but this too gradually petered out in the period of relative peace which followed inauguration.

During these weeks I had been living at Jájome; and on 5 September my wife and son had arrived. The Oriente had become an army transport. I had traveled on her myself in the old days. It was a release of long tension to see her pulling grandly up to her dock, to hear an army band playing her in, and to hear orders and greetings shouted in English. Besides, I could see my small son’s blond head thrust inquiringly out of a porthole while, as I guessed, his mother powdered her nose. If it seemed like a hostile small world to which I was introducing them, we could at least stand together against it now, if that was necessary, or work in and with it if we were allowed. We went right away up to the hills and nothing from then on would seem so hard to take. The indifference to attack which I had to assume was somewhat more genuine. My wife was salty about the business. She thought I had made a tragedy out of farce. Anyway, she said so, and refused to be impressed with politico^
antics or students' egoistic indisciplines. She gave Muñoz what-for, too, and he seemed impressed.

She didn’t like Jájome much. She didn’t object to the house, as any housewife would really have been justified in doing, since it was little more than a caminero’s roadside cottage with a room or two added—it had a kind of closet-kitchen and a 1900 bathroom, Governors never having been allowed funds enough to make a proper home of it—she simply thought it bad for us, under the circumstances, to live high on a mountain, half the time in a cloud, facing a far view and distant from any friend. Of course, she was right about that. We needed most of all to find allies among Puerto Ricans and to build a circle of trust and friendship within which to base ourselves. This staying aloof and taking the thrusts of the ill-intentioned with gloomy resignation was unnatural to both of us and would lead to further trouble. But I hadn’t had the sense to realize it until she arrived.

For Jájome had appealed to my pessimistic mood. Up there I was like a Scotsman on a misty headland or a hermit on the shoulder of the Carpathians. I was reacting as any moderately sensitive mortal would who was catching hell, as he believed, unjustly; and one, moreover, who had to think out each step he was to take into a very uncertain future suddenly grown more significant than he had understood it to be.

Some past Governor had come along the mountain road from Cayey to Guayama, and had thought that as it rose away from Cayey it was very beautiful with its sudden pictures of small valleys in the foreground and massive piles in the distance—a closely shaded road, bordered and overhung with tree, vine and bush, about the best Puerto Rico could furnish in that line. I can imagine that his coach toiled toward the pass and over the ridge very slowly, for the rise is a thousand feet or more in a few kilometers. That part of the journey would, in those days, have run through bordering coffee fincas now mostly dilapidated since the hurricanes of ’28 and ’32 and overgrown, or with the shade trees cut for charcoal and the land gone to desultory uses. And as he got to the ridge and his horses eased themselves of the uphill pull, he would have opened out a vista to the south and west running across coffee forests, pastured slopes, tobacco fields and well-grouped foothills to the Caribbean down around Salinas.

For several kilometers, descending very gradually before it went through the hills again to plunge frankly downward into Guayama, the road ran around the upper part of this deep bowl, just far enough below its top so that the northeast trades swept, heard but unexperienced, over the top. About two kilometers from the ridge he must have pulled up at a caminero’s house. There was a horse trough there. (It is
still there, filled now with flowers.) And doubtless horses and men drank, rested and took the view. He probably inquired, was told that the neighborhood was known as Jájome Alto, and liked the name as well as the view.

I had taken to it myself in the spirit I imagine most of the others had. The frequent gloom was agreeable. I liked the grandeur of the storms, the vast sweep of torn or looming clouds, above, below or all around. General Winship had cared for Jájome and had planted it with flowers; his favorite dog was buried on the hillside too, which, if you knew General Winship, indicated how much he had thought of the place. My wife's rather acrid dissent from withdrawal made me ashamed, I presume, of my reasons for taking to the hills; but I imagine that other Governors have declined into age with Jájome regretted when Santa Catalina\(^5\) was forgot. It will be that way with me.

On the afternoon of 18 September we came down to the palace and slept there. Next morning we were met under the University carillon (from which place I preferred to go to the governorship) by a guard of honor and proceeded to the place of inaugural at the Capitol.

Puerto Ricans might not have been enamored of alien Governors these many years but they did rather cut loose for inaugurals, it being anyway an extra holiday, furnished with a parade. All the employees of the civic institutions customarily turned out—from boy scouts to the Red Cross; and even the political chair-sitters of the San Juan fire department got up energy enough to pilot an old truck jerkily up the avenue. The insular notables sat in a grandstand on the Capitol steps while the new Governor was received by the Puerto Rican who had been Acting Governor since the departure of the last incumbent. He was sworn in by the Chief Justice, made his speech, which was then read in Spanish, and reviewed the parade. That ended the formal proceedings for ordinary folks. But the new Governor and his wife were expected to go, after this morning-long ordeal, to Santa Catalina, where all the officials came to an al fresco luncheon. And in the evening there would be a great reception for island society, held in and out of the palacio. If the weather was fine there would be dancing on the terraced walls of the fortifications which were now an integral part of the gardens. It was a big day any way it was looked at. But we began it full of courage, even if it was the hottest, most breathless time of year.

I had worked out my speech with careful regard to what seemed more and more clearly the task I had to do in the time of national crisis ahead of us—the two or

\(^5\)The palace has two names, Santa Catalina and La Fortaleza, for which there is the historic reason that it was first a fortress and then the viceregal residence.
three years of exposure to a ruthless enemy while we were still unprepared. I had to represent my country’s sympathy for the aspirations of this people, and to show her natural interest in their progress toward political liberty. It was my task also to persuade Puerto Ricans that their stake in the coming struggle was real, that they were not expected merely to support American policy but to find that their own policy, too, was served in the common effort.

It is hard to know what is in the minds of people with whom one did not grow up. With those of one’s home town—the boys with whom games were played and the girls who were danced with—it seems easy to say they will be for this or against that. Even so, political candidates, who are presumably experts in this kind of intuitive sizing-up, often go wrong and lose elections. Here was I, however, not a politician, and in a completely alien environment, expected to make guesses which even at home were being fumbled by experts. What I decided was that I had better not try to be clever. If I did I felt sure these hard-eyed politicians would ambush me in spite of any possible precaution. So I did the one thing, as it turned out, that they could not combat successfully: I adopted a rigid policy of being open, frank—and innocent. During the maneuvering and intrigues of the months ahead I would pretend I could see no self-interest. I would recognize no ulterior motive; I would make no deals, accept no favors and give none; and so far as possible I would have no secrets to be exposed.

I began with my inaugural, the most notable emphasis in which was my hope that more could be done to alleviate poverty at home even while we were preparing for a struggle abroad. I didn’t think, I said, as some people did, that birth control would reduce poverty; I thought it was more reasonable to intensify the exploitation of the island’s resources and so enlarge the sources of employment and income. An educated people enjoying reasonable living standards would make their own accommodations to environment. An ignorant, poverty-ridden and disease-stricken people were naturally reckless about their own or their children’s future. As to political progress, I said, I thought I knew how most Americans felt and there was nothing in which they were less interested than the subjection of others. Their political future was a matter for Puerto Ricans to settle among themselves. I thought a ready American blessing would be extended to their conclusions.

Not many heard this speech. It was made to an outdoor crowd most of whom were interested in the pageant; and not many more heard it when Justice Travieso did it for me in Spanish. But T knew its tone, and even its contents, would get around. I thought it would be approved. But now I was taking the oath from Chief Justice del Toro Cuebas; and soon, flanked by the Admiral and the General, I was reviewing the parade.
On a number of other occasions in the next year I should review parades flanked by Admiral Hoover on one side and General Collins on the other. These appearances, of course, would be the external evidences of what might or might not be internal unity. Until now none of us had known the others. They were both recent in their commands; and here was I just beginning. The times being what they were, I naturally wondered what our relations were going to be. For this day, at least, we appeared in public on a subtropical island, the headquarters of what the Navy had begun to call the Caribbean Sea Frontier and the Army would later designate as the Antilles Department, representatives of our nation. Hoover was a Montana man; Collins was from Texas. Each had had the full orthodox training, the one Annapolis, the other West Point; each had risen to his present command by personal ability. But none of this guaranteed that we should be able to work together. And with what we had ahead of us there seemed to be some question whether we could. We were not likely to agree on economic or social matters. Those were strictly the business neither of an admiral nor of a general; but neither admirals nor generals always recognize that. So I had some doubts. And since I was sure they must be familiar with the bogey which ten years of newspaper attack had made of me it was likely that they too had their doubts.

There were soldiers and sailors in the parade, a few old field pieces, a tank or two, and little else of a military nature. As General Collins told me frankly, there wasn’t much else. That, I said, we should need to talk about further. To which he agreed with such emphasis, before he turned again to the girl scouts passing by, that I said to myself in some dismay that that tone of voice must have meant that we have a more deficient defense than I had thought. That was one phase of governing I hadn’t reckoned on—had never thought of, in fact, having, like all Americans, left that kind of thing to the soldiers and then neglected the Army. I felt more unprepared even than before. But paradoxically, I felt also more in need of authority. I wondered whether the month-long attack on me, which this experienced soldier and this hard sailor had certainly watched with the greatest care, was going to reduce my effectiveness. Were they going to think my prestige sufficiently injured so that they should not feel able to give me the backing I should need? And even if I should have complete and willing support, what could be done without the men, the materials and the installations necessary to modern defense? It would be an empty performance, a bluff incapable of imposing on anyone. Still I saw at once that even if it was no news to the Axis that the island was defenseless, practically speaking, we were not permitted to admit it, certainly not to Puerto Ricans, even if the hollowness of the pretense should be obvious. We could at least be fierce in preventing its public exposure while we worked at the remedy. I thought with anger of the hostile
press and resolved that fake considerations of freedom would not deter me from the most drastic action if its anti-American activities should take this direction.

Meanwhile the parade went on. It was September, it will be recalled, and the sun was hot. But even in September the palms and the bitter almonds may look as though they are freshly painted and the trade wind may swing the casuarinas through a surprising arc. Instead of the formal clothes in which Governors had customarily dressed for such occasions, I had ventured a white suit so that I was not too uncomfortable. Still we had had now about two hours of it, the military men and I, standing more or less at attention, and saluting each group of colors and each head of division. Even if we weren’t exhausted we wanted nothing so much as to sit down somewhere and have a cold drink. I, at least, was not psychologically prepared for it—on the contrary—but nevertheless there happened then, at the tail end of the parade and in the impatience of tiredness, an event of shocking strangeness. After the fancy dress of the paraders, the brassy music, the regimented march, there appeared surging up the avenue, filling it from curb to curb, without music, without order, a great mass of workingmen, laborers from the fields. Many were in rags, barefoot, hatless. They carried the great hoes characteristic of the sugar plantations; they shouted with raised arms. More and more they came, thousands of them, a horde, some with banners which said "Tugwell will do for us what Roosevelt did for America," or "Tugwell is OUR man." Slowly they shuffled by, thousands of them, and went away up the avenue, flinging their arms still, and shouting back over their shoulders; and the crowd shouted with them.

We could go away then and take possession of La Fortaleza. The society doings which went on throughout the rest of the day were, however, tame by contrast. The workers, the powerful, viscid mass of them, suddenly flooding out and overwhelming the neat arrangements for the parade—that was a picture which kept getting between me and everything else. There was a great reception and dance on the lovely terrace that night. But there weren’t any workers there. I wondered where they were, how they had gone back to where they came from, what, for each of them, it was like.
I WOKE EARLY on the morning of 20 September in the big Governor's chamber of La Fortaleza. It was a new experience to sleep in a room seventy by thirty and I looked up at the high dark-beamed ceiling with vague alarm. The succeeding thought was the whimsical one that at least there wouldn't be any danger of claustrophobia! But why was it so hot in a room so big? It was stifling. I simply dripped. When I walked out to one of the big terraces looking onto the harbor, the air was fresh and cool — delightful. It ought to be possible to do something about that, to get some of that cool air inside. I did not realize then that I was up against four hundred years of Northerners' misunderstanding of the subtropics and a W.P.A. reconstruction job on La Fortaleza, costly enough, which had made matters worse by shutting out the prevailing breeze. Somewhat later we should in despair begin to sleep outdoors; and the perfect freshness there would be still another new experience. We spread a canvas on the wide flat roof and under it made a screened chamber for protection from mosquitoes, of which there are not many, but some, in San Juan, thus escaping from the mosquiteros so much used in the West Indies.

A curious change was taking place as my governorship began. The center of my interest for many months past—the problem of land tenure—was now becoming a minor and incidental one, retreating to the area of administration. That is to say, the policy was fixed. That was true too, I realized, of housing, of sanitation, of provision for social security. What was necessary was to stop arguing further about their desirability and to make progress toward their accomplishment. I became excited about this line of reasoning. Was it not also true of Puerto Rican participation in the great venture of diplomacy now under way? No; there was work to do there. We had to fight the Falange for one thing, and the falangista thinking among the "better

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1Characteristically, even the better houses are not screened, since screening is said to shut out the air; but why that is not true of netting drawn close about the bed it is hard to say. Of course, the poorer folk—and a good many of those who were better off too—shut themselves in, sealing their houses against the night air. This is obviously a survival from the days when there either was no netting or when it could not be afforded. But like other West Indian customs its rationale has disappeared and the thing itself has survived into an age when it is no longer necessary. The Virgin Islanders believe, similarly, that large fish are poisonous, which is traceable to prerefrigeration spoilage of anything not eaten at one sitting. But even that belief has not had consequences so important as the fear of air at night. It must have taken hundreds of years for the reasoning about the fever named for the bad air to establish itself. It could not be expected to disappear at once. The work of Walter Reed and his colleagues has certainly not penetrated the strongholds of popular psychology even yet. I have had dignified judges warn me solemnly against outdoor sleeping in the tropics. And sometimes I have wondered a little myself, since my chronically annoying sinuses have been worse in Puerto Rico than in most other climates to which they have been exposed. But on the whole it would be a hard thing to go back to steam-heated houses or apartments even with the customary open windows.
element." But we also had to convince the great mass of Puerto Ricans that democracy meant something to them which was vital and intimate. It would have to be done by deed and word—by finding a way to implement the Atlantic Charter and to resume progress toward political freedom, as well as by the improvement which it could be hoped would come soon from an enlargement of social services. I did not see that clearly yet. Independence was a trap; statehood was foreclosed. But some way must be found.

My own job in this respect was confined to Puerto Rico. It was just as pressing—perhaps more so—in the British possessions; and this was so even when regarded from the point of view of American interests, not those of the British or even of the people there. For we had committed our defense, by now, to certain localities, and work on the bases, after a bad start, was gathering momentum. My larger suggestions for tackling these problems on a Caribbean-wide scale had died somewhere, probably in the State Department. The slower way of the International Commission was indicated. I would work with Charles at that as I could. But Puerto Rico was my own responsibility now.

I must prepare for the mounting crisis, so that when it broke there could be no doubt of Puerto Rican loyalty even though the strain on it should be very great. That last seemed not unlikely. We were going to be caught in war long before we were ready anywhere, but especially on these newly established frontiers. We might be driven in on ourselves. If that happened Puerto Rican loyalty would be beyond price. Of course, if we had not earned it in forty years it could hardly be created overnight, so I hoped for time, but I never really believed I had any, and I resolved on emergency measures at once. In doing this I had to face the certainty of vicious opposition. The whole falangista crowd and their allies among the reactionaries would not only fight me here, but would also fight me at home. I knew that they would not be recognized for what they were in the States, where there was an incredible ignorance about such matters. They could count on being taken for plain businessmen who were fighting for what would be widely regarded as their rights. I thought, however, that I could count absolutely on Mr. Ickes and the President and I resolved to act swiftly.

If all this figuring seems somewhat cold-blooded, it must be said that it ran in the direction too of my own inclination to try for betterment of the situation among the exploited and to bring about a resumption of political progress. What might have happened if it had seemed to me that a different policy was called for, I did not even explore. I can see now, as I look back, that there might have been precipitated a real personal difficulty; but as it was, the policy seemed to me clearly to be the one of greatest utility to the nation as well as to Puerto Rico. Since I had no doubts, and
since I expected an ordeal, what would happen thereafter would have to be accepted as part of a duty to be done. It was a small one compared with others’ duties in that time.

How would it be with Muñoz? I had this to count on: he was with us on the issue of Democracy versus Fascism. He had made a speech on the Fourth of July which I had on my writing table. I studied it again. Its eloquence was fittingly Iberian and wholly sincere. In part it was a warning to men everywhere that small dissatisfactions with democracy ought not to betray them into courses of action dangerous to democracy itself. He dealt with capitalism—was that the most insidious enemy of democracy in the West? He thought not; capitalism could be controlled. He dwelt somewhat longer on what he vividly called "cheap politics," meaning the privileges and perquisites, the schemings and self-aggrandizements to which the elite devote themselves. He asked for more selflessness and more regard to the public interest.

And here, of course, he was speaking directly to his Populares, and especially to the minor leaders who had shown these weaknesses. The people do not vote officials into power for these reasons, he said, and the external aggressions are too serious now for us to tolerate sabotage from within. He may have been talking to his own Puerto Rican followers but what he said applied with even greater force elsewhere.

He widened his view. To be a slave, he said, is easy; to be free is difficult. The practice of freedom is so difficult that the Nazis find great popular response for a program which blatantly proposes to abolish it. No one as yet has dared, he noted, to make such a suggestion in the Western Hemisphere. There have been dictators; but all of them have professed to respect democratic principles. That men still have a whole hemisphere of the world in which they do not shrink from the hardships of freedom, where they do not long for the opiate of slavery, seemed to him a very significant thing. But too much must not be taken for granted; as we combated the organized forces of nazism from without we must extirpate the saboteurs within.

The Fourth of July was more than a date sacred just to the freemen of the United States. It was symbolic also for all these other peoples of the hemisphere who were devoted to the principles we celebrated on that day. It was the day of America:

When the hour of midnight strikes tonight, the Fourth of July, symbol of the North, shall meet the Fifth of July, the date on which the liberation of the South was begun in Venezuela; and it shall be as if those two dates should strike their hands, and the heart of the one should be close to the heart of the other, and that it should be as only one date. It is the date of America and around it are grouped also other dates that belong to the whole of America: 25 May in the
Argentina; 7 September in Brazil; 20 May in Cuba; 27 September in Santo Domingo; 16 September in Mexico; 14 July in Canada; 1 January in Haiti; 15 September in the countries of Central America—with all the symbolic dates of America as a whole.

All those dates, different in the calendar, are only one in the spirit and purpose of America. On all those dates the word of democratic responsibility should be heard throughout America as a word of unity in the defense of the realizations and potentialities of democracy.

That was all right. Muñoz and Muñoz' people were wholly with us. Trouble was not going to come from those who, if something happened, would actually be called on to fight. Puerto Rico was like the States in one respect—it seemed easier to send the nation's sons out to die than to sacrifice the nation's businesses for the same cause. I suppose it has always been so. But when this determination is met in its crudest form at the beginning of a war it is not only sickening but appalling. It could be seen even this early that there was going to be an issue of this sort; its viciousness was, however, not yet revealed. This was the reason, I think, that there was a group of expatriates, mostly lawyers, who represented absentee interests, and of whom at first I took little account. They served the concerns they represented with an enthusiasm which carried them into activities which, if I actually represented my country as Governor—and this they could not quite bring themselves to admit—were just short of treasonable. They would oppose every effort of mine to secure the food supply, stabilize prices and living conditions, establish industrial peace, and convince the Puerto Ricans of American political decency. There would appear to be no limit, as we shall see, at which they would willingly stop. They would, at the extreme, try to involve me in controversies with the military. They would encourage the falangistas to believe that America was really sympathetic to them rather than to Puerto Rican liberals, and insure them a warmer reception in Washington than any anti-falangista would ever get. They would present themselves, too, as patriots because they noisily bought bonds, for instance, and served on entertainment committees for service men, although they fought desperately against any increase in taxes to be used for relief, and resisted arbitration of strikes even in food-production industries and in transportation. They would turn out to be, on the whole, as difficult as any group with whom I should have to deal. But as yet they had not disclosed themselves.

For the moment I thought the most dangerous group was the same one which had attacked my two immediate predecessors. From certain signs already manifest—such as their subterranean part in the University affair—I thought the Republicanos would refuse any compromise. I was prepared to go a certain way if it would
accomplish the purpose of keeping them quiet for the duration: that I could justify as a contribution to peace at home while we fought abroad. It was to be suspected, however, that they would not accept this. They would demand more than could be granted. The moneyed reactionaries, the Spanish elite, to a man, and especially, to a woman, were their supporters. They had to give what was demanded—and that was the destruction of democracy, American or any other. But at the moment I represented all they most hated and feared.

About this I was correct, except that, again, I was to have new revelations of depth beyond depth of unprincipled opposition. It might have been thought that our verging upon and then entering the war would have modified the actions if not the hatreds of those who were caught in the flood of this Puerto Rican New Deal. On the contrary war seemed to intensify both. I should come as close, soon, as I ever should, in a long life without deviation from the practices of civil liberty, to taking measures which were not in that book. It might have been done under the implied war powers of the Governor. Several hundred perhaps of these falangistas might have been put away for the duration; and perhaps such a course would have been to the interest of both Puerto Rico and the United States. But I could never quite bring myself to acting, thus, I suppose, justifying all the dictators were saying about democratic softness. Perhaps I should have had difficulty in keeping them there; they had sympathizers in the States, powerful ones too, who obscured their real purposes for reasons of their own. And even the F.B.I. took too long in realizing that the Falange and not the comunistas were the practical enemies we had to fight in our community.

Still it was my job to do. There were formidable handicaps. I had powerful potential enemies who were poised for attack. I had a weak governmental machine to work through and an executive office emasculated by legislative attrition. And still it was my job to do. I got myself dressed on this first day and went at it.

There was no more danger of claustrophobia in my office than in that chamber where I had wakened. It was long, rather narrow, with a vaulted roof, crystal chandeliers, and mahogany window-doors which folded back. It was, in fact, the old Spanish throne room; and the reconstruction of a few years before had rather emphasized than minimized its genuinely regal atmosphere. The Spanish Governors had been Viceroyos, usually lieutenant generals of the Army; they were, by transubstantiation, the person of the King; theoretically, also, they were above politics. This room expressed that theory in the Spanish manner just as the luxurious country houses of the British Governors expressed the corollary theory of their Empire. At the entrance there was a flaring star in the marble floor for the first prostration on entering the Presence; and just in front of the desk I was to use,
another star which indicated where the petitioner might come to rest. I realized
suddenly that I was doing business on the spot where the throne ought to be; and
sure enough, back of me were the symbols.

I have not discovered who it was—perhaps General Brooke, the first American
military governor—who had the sense to go right on using the old Spanish
Governor’s flag. But there it was, the silver Lamb on the scarlet Book, bearing a flag
with cross and banner; the initials F and I for Ferdinand and Isabella; the crowns
and yoke and arrows for Castile and Leon, the hereditary kingdoms of Isabella under
whose patronage Columbus sailed; and, all around, the devices from the coats of
arms of the various kingdoms under Spanish rule in the sixteenth century. The
device read: *Joannes est nomen ejus* from the decree of 8 November 1511.²

I was impressed and hoped I could live up to it. But I couldn’t help wondering
whether the theory represented by this minor magnificence and these surviving
symbols of authority had not come to be an unrealistic one, toward the last anyway,
when the old Empire had lost its former administrative efficiency and when it had
broken the colonists’ loyalties by exploitation at the demand of home interests.
Elasticity had saved the British Empire; but the Spanish had always made their
concessions a shade late, instead of, as the British had, a shade soon. The
*Autonomous Charter*, for instance, in 1897, ought, with any luck, to have kept Puerto
Rico in the Empire. Perhaps it might have, if Miles had not been ambitious to rival in
Puerto Rico the achievements of Shatter in Cuba. But the Americans, if they had little
enough excuse for landing in 1898, would not have possessed the shadow of one if
the *Charter* had been conferred a few years previously. Its grant of freedoms and its
economic arrangements were more liberal than any the Americans had brought
themselves to concede even forty-three years later—as Puerto Ricans had pointed
out to me on several occasions.

The first days of a governorship are necessarily devoted to receiving delegations
and individuals, to becoming acquainted with customs and routine, and to deciding
on immediately necessary administrative changes. But these are more demanding
physically than intellectually and I had time to consider our own theory and to savor
its emptiness. I thought as I went through this process that the scorn of Spanish
weakness and cruelty which the war of 1898 had left in the minds of all Americans
of my age was unjustified. Their military and their colonial bureaucracy were

²There is an antiquarian mystery in the way in which names somehow got themselves transposed. As
can be seen from the device on the flag, the name of the island was supposed to be San Juan
(Bautista) and of the city Puerto Rico. Columbus conferred the first on his second voyage when he
landed on the western shore for water; and Ponce de León the second when he opened out the
harbor on an exploratory voyage down the coast in 1508.
perhaps undermined by corruption. But their hold on Puerto Rico was only less
tenuous than ours had become in a matter of four decades. They at least had held on
ten times as long.

The newspaper which had been so savage during my month at the University was
giving me a respite. That it was only an interval I had no doubt; but even this gave
me a chance to convey several impressions to Puerto Ricans generally as to my
attitudes and to do it without the persistent and unprincipled misrepresentation
which had been that journal's habit. In the ten weeks between my inauguration and
the attack on Pearl Harbor I was able to indicate that through me the United States
intended to use its power and resources to improve the condition of workers and
farmers regardless of opposition from their oppressors. And that the Government
was going to become an improved instrument in the people's service.

At an early press conference, in an effort to embarrass me, a stock question was
asked: what was my attitude toward independence? I said that as an American I was
for it because Americans did not believe that any people ought to be subject to
others; but as a Puerto Rican—if I might put myself in that position—I should be
against it because of economic reasons if there were no others. It was an answer
which won me wide tolerance among the more intransigent independentistas and
even seemed to satisfy the reactionaries whose program called for statehood. This
was a fortunate inspiration. Other Governors had felt that they had to preach loyalty
to the United States without recognizing the reasons for disaffection or inspecting
the sources of loyalty to see whether they—and others who determined our
policies—were earning it. This was one question I sought further opportunities to
discuss and explore and I always had luck with it. I insisted on the more liberal
American attitude—that Puerto Ricans ought to determine their own status, that
American interests were narrow, relating mostly to defense. And defense was as
easily made secure in Puerto Rico, short of possession, as in islands which were
British, or Dutch or were Independent. I asserted repeatedly that if the United States
followed its self-interest it would insist on independence. For with independence
there would be no further responsibility, no more expense, no more competition for
mainland sugar producers. "If Puerto Ricans so much as whisper a wish for
separation," I said, "they will get it with disconcerting suddenness." However, I did
not personally believe in it for Puerto Rico. How, outside our tariff and preference
system, and without our assistance, however whimsical and spasmodic, were half
the people of Puerto Rico going to live at all? I thought they could not, even if the
levels of life were reduced to those, say, of Haiti.

In this way what had been for General Winship, mostly, but also for others, the
thorniest issue of their governorships, became in mine no issue at all. Independence
became a specter rather than an aspiration. There remained the sentimentalists; but since they had no opposition and few followers, they became a political liability to any party. Unfortunately Muñoz had many of them among his local leaders so that he would frequently be forced to prevent or minimize outbreaks of independentista fireworks, not because they were frowned on by Federal authority, but because it was perfectly clear that if he did not do it he would lose the next election. The people knew where their benefits originated and they would not support irresponsible políticos who put them in jeopardy. Independence would come up again; but for a year or two it was dead.

It was an immense relief to have this go well and as I wanted it, and to see how liberalism really works better than repression. But I had different luck with my other political problems. I was needled for an answer to the question whether I would "recognize" the Coalición, recognition being assumed to carry the right to dictate my nominations to government posts. I did not say publicly that I was not going to follow the established custom of allowing political dictation. It would be found out soon enough. I sought to put off an answer to the plain question whether the Coalition would be recognized. First on Muñoz’ advice I repeated stumblingly a phrase from a popular song Yo llegué ahora mismo which meant that I myself had only just got here. It caused a laugh. But this I knew was a life-and-death matter to the Republicanos and their reactionary backers. I would not be allowed to evade them long. As it turned out they would give me about a month. Then they would begin the attacks which would intensify into fury later and spread as widely as their funds could carry—which was pretty wide, and involved, eventually and with enthusiasm, a good deal of the American press.

I never would answer that question. But after my first few appointments I had no need to answer. And then there was Muñoz to deal with. There turned up right away a need to replace the head of the State Insurance Fund. This was a difficult position to fill. It obviously required a trained economist. Muñoz suggested a party hack. I appointed a Professor of Economics from the University. And Muñoz was unhappy. So were all the party leaders. I had already made up my mind, however, that if I must rely on Muñoz he must also rely on me; for that reason I thought I could take some chances he was unwilling to take. It embarrassed him with some of his local leaders who had no interest in theory but did have a consuming determination to control all the jobs in their vicinity, and at the least a desperate need to exhibit continuing influence on the party and on the Government. Now he was going to have to pay for the persistent legislative attritions on the executive which had gone on for

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3Mr. Rafael Cordero, afterward the first Puerto Rican Auditor.
years. He either had to see that my appointees were confirmed by a reluctant Senate or risk an open break with me. I did not know then, what I learned later, that not many Puerto Ricans would take an appointment without first asking Muñoz’ permission. I had had luck, this time, in finding a courageous independent. That luck would not hold. This was a dilemma for Muñoz as well as for me; and he would temporize with it until grave trouble would occur somewhat later. For the moment, and until he could make up his mind that support of him did not guarantee competence for technical positions, I even kept two Republicanos in the Cabinet—the Commissioners of Health and of Agriculture and Commerce, much to the disgust of all good Populares.

So I held off, for the time being, the showdown which was inevitable sooner or later. Meanwhile, besides the active attempts to get started a large program of sanitation and housing, the cost of living was creating a problem which simply had to be dealt with. Employment was still holding up, but the cost of necessities had doubled within the year. These were the months during which the President and Mr. Henderson were trying for stabilization under an executive order against the opposition of my old friends Messrs. O’Neal, Smith, Holden, Gauss, et al. The farm bloc wanted higher prices no matter what happened to the rest of the economy. The Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply—known as O.P.A.C.S.—was doing what it could while the Congress hemmed and hawed over the measure which, much later, became the bill which established the Office of Price Administration—O.P.A.

The pressure of continuous price increases was terrific. Even men with employment were unable to provide their families with necessities by now, and the expected civil disturbances were appearing. The labor movement in Puerto Rico was disorganized, undisciplined and poorly led. Expressions of discontent were, because of this, more violent and more unfocused. It was hard to find anyone with whom to deal because no one was authorized to speak. Or, if he claimed to have authorization, it was of a political sort, perhaps only because he had made a speech to a crowd of disaffected workers and had been applauded. If he attempted to bargain and reached a conclusion, he would be repudiated with complete irresponsibility. At any one time there were hundreds of strikes going on, mostly small, mostly undirected, mostly for unformulated demands, and often on military projects. The source of this obviously lay in the rising cost of necessities.

This was a dangerous situation for a new Governor. The military might turn out to be what military men sometimes are in labor disputes, which would be embarrassing, for the employers were often involved in the opposition to me which was sure to become focused before long. They might, in this way, enlist the Army
and Navy in their campaign. The military contractors, too, large absentee firms, were not too easy to deal with. And naturally they had the ear of the commanders.

It soon began to be plain, too, that I had made a mistake in appointing Mr. Benigno Fernández García as Commissioner of Labor. I had taken him on Muñoz’ recommendation, mostly, but also because I admired him. We had, in fact, become friends. He was a lawyer and had served a term as Attorney General. It was he, indeed, who, in spite of General Winship, had begun the first of the 500-acre cases. This indicated his courage. He was greatly respected and he had the added qualification, from my point of view, that he was in no way connected with the A. F. of L. group or with the more radical crowd which claimed (without reason, because its leaders could collect few dues and so could not make the contributions necessary for a charter) to be affiliated with the C.I.O. The one was thought to be a stooge union, suspiciously supported by employers, particularly the sugar and power interests; the other had a taint of communism.

It appeared that for some reason or other the head of the A. F. of L. group had expected to become Commissioner of Labor. His personal dignidad was injured; and besides, Mr. Fernández García turned out to be so favorable to the more radical group that he might as well have been one of its members. What hurt the A. F. of L. head most, however, was the fact that his members were leaving him. To have had a collective agreement with the employers in the sugar industry which had gone on from year to year with little revision, while the cost of living went up month after month, had alienated his following. By thousands the workers were joining the more radical groups whose leaders were at any rate making a row about their grievances rather than trying to explain them away.

Mr. Fernández García hated the reactionaries so much and felt so kindly toward anyone who fought them that he soon had his Department peppered with the most radical Populares, suspected communists many of them, and as little susceptible to governmental discipline as communists usually are. They were, in fact, completely out of hand. Much of their time was spent in soap-boxing. It was claimed by the employers that they were "fomenting" strikes; and actually they were. However much these were justified, it was scarcely an activity in which employees of the Government ought to engage. Mr. Fernández García was the decentest and kindest of men and he could believe no wrong of anyone—except perhaps of an employer. But even so he became appalled at what was going on. I could not get him to do anything about it, however, and his whole Department became a source of embarrassment. Somehow I had to get back to the only tenable governmental position in labor disputes, which was, of course, the strictest neutrality. I had to consider how this could be done.
Still more important, however, the basic grievance had to be mitigated. Unless the growing disparity between wages and living costs could be stopped, other measures would be useless. Several methods of attacking the problem suggested themselves but none offered much relief. An agency might be set up to make bulk purchases and to cut distribution costs. Rice on the world market was several cents a pound less than it was on the American market; there was a tariff which protected Louisiana and California rice growers. An insular government agency could at least reduce the price by the amount of the tariff. The tariff yields on goods imported into Puerto Rico are given by the United States to the insular treasury. If the amounts thus given were used to reduce the price, Puerto Rico could, in effect, be put on the world market. The same device could be used for other commodities, though none were so important in the customary Puerto Rican diet. This, of course, would annoy the Congressional representatives from the rice-growing states and it should therefore be resorted to only as an emergency measure. There was also the fact, to become important later, that the only considerable rice surpluses were in the Far East. When the insular agency should be ready to operate, these would no longer be available. That, however, could not be foreseen in October of 1941; and with the rapidly rising price and the resulting unrest it seemed possible that the device might be needed within a few months.

There was the suggestion, too, that a supply agency might fix prices. The difficulty with that was obvious. None of the price of staple foods such as rice, beans, dried fish, flour, lard, etc. were fixed on Puerto Rican markets. They were imported. To fix a price below the American wholesale level plus the costs of carriage and distribution, together with importers' and distributors' profits, would cause them to stop business. That would be disastrous unless the supply agency was prepared to do the importing. The most delicately adjusted instrument in the Western economy is the trader's sense of probable profit. He scares easily and makes loud noises when scared. He has no more sense of duty than a cat. He therefore could not be appealed to or disciplined. If anything at all was begun he would have to be wholly supplanted.

The only chance of relief, after all, it seemed to me, outside of bulk-buying of foreign supplies, lay in the hope that the hesitating Congress would pass Mr. Henderson's enabling act and that its provisions would halt the rise of wholesale prices in the States. The difficulty with that, again, was that the very things which bulked largest in Puerto Rican living might be exempted altogether from control. These were farm products—food—and the farm bloc was putting up a stiff and ruthless fight with a view to their exemption—or to such a definition of "parity" as would have the same result.
With all this in view, on 28 October I called the special session of the legislature suggested in my inaugural and asked it to enact a measure providing for a Supplies Administrator who would be authorized to fix prices, if that seemed feasible, or to procure and import supplies if they could be found. The legislature acceded, though its members balked at giving a Governor's appointees such power as I asked. They provided for a Commission whose members must be confirmed by the Senate, thereby assuring themselves the control of any jobs there might be.4

There were other measures asked for. I followed up another commitment by asking for the insularization of all water-supplying systems. This touched off Mr. Bolivar Pagán, the Resident Commissioner in Washington, as though a button had been pushed. His screams rose to the vaulted dome of the House. The employees who were turning a percentage of their pay into his party funds might be released from this obligation; he distinctly did not want to lose these funds. But the screams, when they became coherent enough to distinguish, cited far nobler principles than political survival—those of home rule for municipalities, for instance! These citations interested fellow dwellers in Washington, none of whom thought to inquire about water-borne diseases and the infant death rate, directly traceable to the incompetence of his political employees; or about the graft extracted from the building and operation of the municipal systems which made deficit enterprises out of potentially profitable services.

In all, that legislative session passed forty-three bills—exactly what had been requested. This result was not accomplished without political maneuvering. The Senate majority of one held by the Populares was useful; but in the lower house there was a deficiency of three which had to be overcome by collaboration. Such collaboration comes high and this was no exception. Whatever had to be paid I paid, bargaining as shrewdly as I could for the lowest price. This proved not so difficult as

4 Mlle. Eve Curie, in her Journey Among Warriors (Doubleday, 1943), mentions visiting the Capitol one night while this session of the legislature was meeting. She was, as she says, able to understand "little of the discussions in Spanish between the white-clad Senators; we gathered only that they had to do with the regulation of prices." This was on 10 November 1941 and it is interesting to note that as we struggled "to regulate prices," Mlle. Curie was making the first exploratory journey in a Pan American plane across the African route which was to develop so rapidly in the months to follow. Pan American, at that time, was briefed for the task by the Government but obviously expected to develop the trans-Atlantic, trans-Africa, trans-Asia route as a company monopoly. Later, the operations, to Mr. Trippe's disgust, would be taken over by the Army Transport Command. This route would be of great importance in the first years of the war in supplying the African, the Russian and the Indian fronts. That the first flight was just one month before Pearl Harbor shows the general state of our defenses. And that there should have been aboard a young technician from the University of California, who, in spite of taking part in this operation, was, as he said, doing so only "because it was a good opportunity" shows the pre-Pearl Harbor state of mind perfectly. He told Mlle. Curie that as far as politics was concerned, he simply could not see why the United States Government was "muddling into this war against the will of the people, when America was not menaced."
I had feared, for the *Liberales*, being more to the right than the Populares, had a large supply of professional and technical men who could not stomach the reactionary corruption of the Republicanos but who were not radicals and who had little sympathy for a certain section of Muñoz’ crowd however much they might respect him as an individual. I found that I could make more appointments from this group than Muñoz could approve, in fact, and it became a matter of controversy between us.

Controversies with Muñoz, however, were a kind of technical difference of opinion. We were in fundamental agreement. I was more radical in an economic sense than he, perhaps because of my training and special knowledge. He never seemed to see much beyond the immediate political desirability of what I thought was a mistaken approach to the land problem—the fractionalization of sugar lands. He did not want governmental control over business, largely because it did not seem important, not because he did not want to help consumers achieve stabilization and so on. He would take no real interest, either, in improving the Civil Service, in Planning, in better budgeting, in careful provision of statistical information and the like, all of which seemed to me part of the necessary administrative preparation for our Puerto Rican New Deal. He did not object and he even assisted in getting them established—would, in fact, struggle casually with reluctant followers as I insisted on such a program. But he always had a patient tolerance about it which conveyed his feeling that he was indulging me in such matters so that in the real business of politics I would be more amenable. He never felt that I played fair about it either. He provided my administrative toys; but I was always bucking his political judgment—and on appointments I was hopeless. He would become serious about this later on and undertake to teach me a lesson. I protested that the weakness, incompetence, nepotism and amicis of the insular Government was the one thing which could frustrate all he hoped to do for his people. I preached and preached about it. He acquiesced, and, I have no doubt, sincerely; but he continued to regard other matters as more important.

I had another kind of experience with the *Coalición* which came to a head during the special session. On 25 September the three leaders—Pagán, Iriarte and Balseiro—had called on me and demanded "recognition." I had not then the sophistication which I rapidly acquired in the next few weeks and I kept looking for some other meaning in the word than jobs. But there was none. Their proposition was that I should allow them to tell me whom to appoint so that they could keep what they already had—a heavily Coalicionista government service. I suggested mildly that with Popular control of the legislature, I should not be able to get confirmation for
Coalicionistas. They then made the suggestion that if confirmation should be withheld, I might simply reappoint the same people after the session was over.

This might be done permanently since the legislature met only once a year. The preposterousness of such a program was expected to be overcome in my eyes by the spectacle of the troubles I should have if I did not accede.

It was not too difficult to put them off, though Mr. Balseiro purpled a little above the collar and had to be restrained by his colleagues. He seemed to have a genuine, rather personal, animus. Things went along until, about a month later, when the special session was about to meet, they came again. Meanwhile the press, always their willing collaborator, had been suggesting from time to time that I was evasive. They were being pushed by their local henchmen too. And they were very insistent. So I talked frankly. I said I had no prejudice against Republicanos which would prevent my appointing one if he were competent; and also that there was no objection to suggestions for appointment to governmental jobs; on the contrary they would be received gladly and considered seriously. But, if they expected me to take orders from them while they apportioned governmental plums to suit themselves, they were going to be disappointed. I was going, I said, to try to improve the governmental service. I told them, further, that I thought them very unwise to press me in this way. If I had to make a choice, I should have to choose the Populares because that party had control of the Senate, which, after all, did the confirming. If, however, I was not pressed to choose, I could often appoint Republicanos and bargain for their confirmation. I stressed the national crisis, trying to turn their minds to larger matters than jobs, and said that I hoped they would consider what would be the result of a radical attitude on their part. They professed, I pointed out, to be the pro-American party in Puerto Rico; they favored statehood, for instance; I thought this was a good chance to show that patriotism about which they were so voluble. If they did show it they would find me suitably grateful. But they must not ask the impossible. It was up to them to lead their local henchmen, not to be pushed by them into sharp differences with me which would cause a break.

Mr. Iriarte, I invited to come again. This was immediately after the passage, in the special session, of the Supply Commission measure for which the Coalicionistas had voted on my plea that it was a non-political defense measure. I thanked him for the support, not so much for myself, but for the United States; and he seemed to receive my thanks in the way they were meant. I hoped that we might go on in the same way. I should not ask, I said, a political truce; that is, I should not resent opposition to any measure with the faintest partisan tinge. But the crisis was now so near that I felt justified in demanding general support for all defense measures. His attitude in this instance seemed a good beginning and I was grateful. Nevertheless, on the very
next day, led by Mr. Balseiro, the Republicano Central Committee declared war on me. It began by refusing permission to any of its members or its officials to come to La Fortaleza on social occasions. So far as the Republicanos were concerned I was to be outlawed.

Meanwhile the large newspaper had recovered from its short, if fulsome, attack of good will. Looking around for a plan of attack on me and on United States policy in general, it found the ideal solution for its problem in what it called the Plan Caribe. During the next few weeks and months a typical campaign was built up out of absolutely nothing. It resembled in technique the performance of the month before, centering on the chancellorship. The pattern was, indeed, rather strictly followed so that I began to understand the classic course of this kind of thing—and to be less disturbed, naturally, because I did understand. But I had not yet found any way of defending myself.

It was really amazing to see how all Puerto Rico joined in, once the thing was rolling well, and how everyone enjoyed what everyone must have known was completely artificial and farcical. It began as a diversion from attacks which Muñoz was at last making on our mutual enemies through the smaller paper of which he had become "director." For some weeks he persevered in preparing a daily diatribe which took the general line that his opponents were reactionaries and falangista sympathizers; and that their opposition to me was because I was the enemy of all they stood for. Their counterattack on him was an accusation, at first, that he was making war on the sugar industry and so jeopardizing the profits of farmers and the wages of workers. This is dynamite in a sugar island; and it moved Muñoz to make unwise controversial replies. It was to support this fancy that they invented the Plan Caribe. This was a good bogey; it seemed, by innuendo, although its outlines were always vague, to be a conspiracy to bring all the Caribbean islands into a confederation which would jeopardize Puerto Rican preferences in the sugar market. The others would be admitted, in other words, on equal terms. As the campaign progressed, and my immunity wore thin, they got around to hints that I was in it with the others, and that all of us were to profit from the affair. By this time it had become the Plan Taussig, thus inferring the same relationships Mr. Crawford had threatened to expose somewhat earlier. Puerto Rico in this process was to lose her superior status and be reduced to the level—economically and politically—of a British crown colony. There were also delicate and guarded hints that "white" Puerto Rico would be a subordinate member in a "black" organization—this being a play on the Negro preponderance in the British islands.

The already announced Caribbean Office of the State Department was held to be significant and the traditional suspicions of Puerto Ricans concerning that
Department were elaborated on. It had begun to get about too that there was to be an Anglo-American Commission. The paper claimed this to be confirmation of all its suspicions. Civic groups passed resolutions, impassioned but uniform speeches were instigated, which went much beyond the newspaper’s hints, and which then could be quoted; and prominent citizens pompously protested. Some of these actually came to see me, to present their opposition in person. What were they protesting? I asked. They were flabbergasted to realize that they had nothing to go on. They had no facts, yet they were convinced there were facts. And they continued to beg me to withdraw. They said the scheme must be stopped. They even sent civic delegations to Washington. Speeches were then made in the Congress. The Congressional Record was burdened with quotations, statements and speeches. The full circle was then run. I began to get inquiries from the people in Washington who were supposed to be conspiring. What was I up to down there? Actually, I was unable to overcome the general disbelief among my colleagues that it was pure invention. They thought either that I was part of what was going on or that there actually was something under their noses, in their own Departments, which was being put over on them.

By this time all Puerto Rico, and all that part of Washington which had any interest in Puerto Rico, was in a complete uproar. The wire services used hundreds of words, sometimes thousands, daily; there was hourly pressure on me to make statements; the overseas telephone was busy. In a word, the whole affair was a tremendous success. Confusion had been created, loyalty had been shaken, suspicion had been cast, Puerto Rico seemed to be in a dangerous state of unrest—and by all groups I was believed to be somehow at the center of it. There must be fire to create so much smoke. The ultimate absurdity was reached, however, when Muñoz came to see me one day and demanded to know whether I was not up to something of which he was ignorant!

All this entertainment went on at a level considerably above the comprehension of the common folk of Puerto Rico. They may have thought it vaguely exciting too, but what interested them far more was something more intimate. It still seems strange that some ill-intentioned opponent was not smart enough to connect the supposed conspiracy with the dangerously rising cost of living, especially of food. For in Puerto Rico, where rent is not a great item, 80 to 90 per cent of a family’s total expenditures are for food. I had other reasons for wanting to do something about that, of course, too, and having secured the Supply Commission from the legislature, I departed for Washington to see whether something could be done there.

It was about this time that one of the first signs of reaction to the unprincipled opposition began to be visible. The Puerto Ricans—mostly younger University
people, but also partly lawyers and doctors—who were both progressive in the American sense and very much against the falangistas and their like, began to show their colors. They began first by writing to the papers; but, because of unfair treatment, they had to find other means. A group of them began and supported for some two years, with money and time, a daily radio hour devoted to explaining and defending the cause we were working for. It was a heartening performance, for which I was extremely grateful. It was a group among whom I found numerous personal friends of the warmest sort.

JULY FOURTH is a date around which Americans of all sorts tend to orient themselves. December seventh became another in the year of which this account is written. Going to Washington in November, I was no more conscious than most others that we should be confronted with an outburst of violence within the next two weeks. Like others I expected it and yet, strange as it seems to say both things at once, I was taken by surprise. Even the President, with all his inside knowledge, seems to have been incredulous of the final, fatal fact. As I examine the casual notes of my daily doings, with their meager record of thoughts as well, it is clear that I wrote about an almost immediate break. But this knowledge, with me as with others, was below the level of consciousness and I was utterly confounded by the event—much more so, of course, because of its savage treachery. Perhaps a declaration of war by Japan would have been accepted as expected. As it was, the Pearl Harbor attack found me incredulous at first and only later indignant.

Years before I had noted the steady deterioration in our relations with Japan. I had been opposed to the Stimson-Hoover policy back in 1930; and had thought that the British were right, even though their policy had an outward look of cowardice; and that we were wrong because only by force could our view be implemented. Our policy led to war; that was always plain—unless we should withdraw before we were utterly committed. When Mr. Roosevelt supported Mr. Stimson’s policy and began, even before his inauguration, to shape a similar course with respect to Japan and China, I spoke out vigorously. It seemed quite possible that China could take care of her own interests as against Japan, as she had always taken care of ambitious conquerors; and I felt that the Japanese Pacific ended thousands of miles west of Pearl Harbor. I saw no necessary conflict then. This led to disapproval of defense works at Guam and to the opinion that we ought to withdraw from the Philippines—in a military way—at once. Even the evidences of Japanese devotion to medieval ideas, the rise of the militarists, and the decline of civil control seemed to be largely
the result of Western provocation. We refused them face. Toward them our liberalism was not even pretense: we gave them implacable hostility, supercilious superiority; and no encouragement for those among them who might have been our friends.

What might have happened if, back when her Manchukuo adventure had begun, we had taken a different attitude there will always be unsatisfactory speculation. It may be that by then it was already too late. Perhaps California and her fear of competition had already been allowed to shape such a policy of insult and exclusion that subsequent events were unavoidable. Perhaps the strong liberal elements in Japan had already lost their influence and the totalitarians had gained the strategic hold in school, in home, in government which they needed for their purpose. My notes show that I did not think so down to the middle thirties. They also show that Mr. Roosevelt did think so. When I began to change they do not reveal exactly; but it was somewhere about the time I left the Government in 1936. During the next year I made extended stays in California and Hawaii. I had changed by then and had ceased to look backward at what might have been. I anticipated that Japanese low standards would furnish our high-pay workers and our high-profit manufacturers a competition which would result in wide fear and hatred. No trade arrangement to avoid this seemed any longer possible. At the same time, inconsistently but actually, our general attitude of superiority seemed to strengthen. To talk about "cleaning out the monkeys" seemed not to be fantastic in any company, certainly not among those who were instructed by the press.

Mr. William Herridge and I, back in 1933-36, used to talk about this at great length.71 It may have been he who helped to persuade me that things had gone too far for reversal. We agreed finally, at any rate, that conflict was inevitable and that our side—meaning Canada and the United States—was in great danger from overconfidence and underpreparation. We also agreed that Japanese trade aggression and her growing imperialism had by now gone too far to be checked in any way except by force.

During the months before Pearl Harbor I had been too actively at work in Puerto Rico to do more than glance at the international scene. There was a great darkness over Europe and the Mediterranean where our unacknowledged ally, Britain, was all but perishing from Axis blows. The Pacific crisis did not seem so dark. Yet if I had really studied my own notes in those months I should have seen that Pearl Harbor—or something like it—Impended:

71He was then Canadian Minister in Washington and one of my closest friends.
29 November. Washington: Talking with Henry Wallace today we went back over our many former talks about the Japanese problem. I urged consideration in the present situation of a way to save face. Kurusu is here for final parley and the Germans are backing him up with a savage drive on Moscow. Also there is a big battle in Libya. I said it looked to me as though we had not given the Japanese any way to climb down. In a technical sense, we were two years too early for war and a way must be found to postpone actual hostilities just as long as possible.

2 December, Washington: Interesting visit Friday with Harry Hopkins in the Naval Hospital. He told me at length of his trip to Russia and England—how he went without much instruction, found our military attaches there (like the Army here) determined not to believe in Russian ability to resist. He forced the issue after a talk with Stalin and a look around, and secured a change in attaches. The President believed him—had in fact, already had grave suspicions of army advice. In this way real support for Russia was begun. But it was, he said, a constant struggle with the State Department as well as with the Army and with the businessmen who had lately come into government.

The news this morning is that the Russians are attacking again both at Moscow and at Rostov. They seem even to have taken Rostov in counterattacks and to be chasing the Nazis toward Taganrog. How magnificently men fight for a deep belief! I wonder—can’t help wondering—if we have anything like that in our democracy. We seem terribly divided now; but perhaps we shall find a purpose and be welded to it soon. For now the whole nation is breathlessly awaiting the Japanese answer to what must have been an ultimatum the other day. How badly they misunderstand us! They have sought to back up Kurusu with bluster and with vast movements of troops into Indo-China. But I do not think the President will allow the Burma Road to be cut. That would end China’s resistance and open Russia’s flank. Events here may draw Americans together as the anti-democrats have been but by a strong nationalism rather than totalitarianism. On the other hand we are not being realistic in our timing. We are putting on pressure while we are unready and leaving the Japanese nothing for face-saving.
4 December. New York: Several busy days in New York. Conferences on the purchase of the Puerto Rico Railway, Light and Power Company, etc. But preoccupied with the Japanese crisis. Apparently the climax is here. To all intents and purposes we are now at war—a war of nerves and economics if not of arms.

7 December. En route Washington-Miami: Able to catch late morning plane by cutting short several negotiations but felt I must get back to my post. The news today is that the President has sent a personal note to the Emperor. This must be the last move in the game. The Japanese are moving huge convoys toward the south. Whether there will be a "declaration" is not clear. It does not seem to be the contemporary method.

Dinner last night at LeCron's. Fleming, Baldwin and others —old friends—there. After a two-hour exchange of experiences with Congress (Beany has just been having his annual budget hearings) and talk of confusion and infiltration of business interests into the executive agencies I suddenly realized with horror that we might have been talking about France of a year ago. Congressmen blackmail executive agencies for favors; each agency struggles more for place against others than to do its job; there is no discipline; no unity; no purpose. I was assailed by an abysmal depression. I am at least glad to get away from Washington but fearful as I never was before for my country's safety.

Later, same day: Late in the afternoon we landed at Jacksonville. I stepped out for a drink and to feel the Florida warmth —glad to see the palms again. There was a stir of excitement. Some stranger told me the Japanese were bombing the Philippines; another shouted that Pearl Harbor was being shelled— "The bastards," he said, "are committing suicide!"

We are back in the plane now drilling south over a twilit seashore. What, I wonder, is going on in Puerto Rico?

If, I say, I had believed what was actually put into these notes, my unpreparedness for Pearl Harbor would have been far less. Like others raised in the pacific and sporting traditions of the West, of course, I was unable to anticipate attack without declaration. Yet why? Hitler should have readied us for that, too. And had not the Japanese done it before at Port Arthur? The sudden eruption of violence from the long-simmering depths, nevertheless, seemed to be something out of the
Nibelungenlied; it was a kind of thing which had happened in the misty past when men were half beasts, but not in the actual, machine-furnished and streamlined world where the sun of reason shone—and not to us—to Poles, or Czechs or Russians, but not to us! If I had gone about my preparations in the preceding weeks in a kind of dull dread, it was not in anticipation of such an outbreak, then, but rather of an approach to honorable warfare on the classical model. It was coming too fast, of course. In the safe hinterland it could not be known how really unprepared we were. But we knew in Puerto Rico.

Still, it had been in earnestness and hope that I had pursued my three main missions: funds for housing and sanitation; controls to stop the rising cost of living; and negotiations for the purchase of the island’s remaining private power companies. All these had seemed to go well. I thought housing construction on a really large scale might be begun within a matter of weeks after I returned, so far had planning progressed and so definite were the financial arrangements. As to the cost of living there was equal reason to be pleased. My personal acquaintance with Mr. Leon Henderson opened all the doors in O.P.A.C.S. and Messrs. Galbraith, Ashby, Roe, Harris and others of his assistants thought it possible actually to reduce the price of rice and beans and possibly also of dried fish, which came from Canada, through emergency reductions of the tariff under the President’s extraordinary powers, fat pork by government purchase (Surplus Marketing Administration) and so on. We learned the kind of justifying memoranda which were needed and worked hard at their preparation.

As to the power companies, the largest of the remaining private concerns owned the distribution system in San Juan, "the cream of the market," and a steam (fuel oil) generating plant as well as two hydro projects. One of these had been the subject of acrimonious litigation, having been completed eleven years previously with an agreement of return to the insular Government with which the company, at the end of the stated term, simply refused to comply and in which refusal they were, on one excuse or another, protected by the courts. But Puerto Rico was a public power area. The legislature, even when controlled by the Coalicionistas, had reaffirmed again and again the purpose to own all the power and to distribute it publicly. The Canadian corporation (it was owned by the Beaverbrook interests) had had a good thing in the San Juan operation and had no intention whatever of giving it up. This was made clear in our New York conversations; but the intimations were polite, running in terms of price and of valuation bases which we could not accept. Mr. Antonio Luchetti had lived with the public power system of Puerto Rico most of his life; and he was determined to establish the efficiencies of consolidation and integration during his active career. I was glad to assist. We were not wholly
refused, in fact, and we gave way enough to insure future conversations—indeed a representative of the company was to follow us almost at once to San Juan. But we left thinking really that we should not be saved the tedium of expropriation.

In the negotiations with the power company we were joined by Mr. Benjamín Thoron of Interior’s Power Division who was assigned to this by Mr. Abe Fortas, the Director; by now, also, I was beginning to acquire efficient assistance in other matters. Two old friends and aides had joined me—Mr. Max Egloff and Mr. F. P. Bartlett—as "co-ordinators" in the Office of the Governor. And I had discovered an exceptionally able Puerto Rican in Mr. Teodoro Moscoso, whose enormous energy was being used to get things started. It was at this time that I was able to persuade the National Resources Planning Board that it should have a Caribbean Office, with headquarters in San Juan, and that Mr. Bartlett ought to be its Director. His long training in public administration and planning fitted him especially for that assignment. In preparation for establishing this office and for working out a Planning Act to be submitted to the legislature, the National Board had already furnished us the services of a distinguished consultant, Mr. Alfred Bettman. He had already begun the draft of a measure. The Board also consented, at this time, to send us three American planners for a kind of recognizance survey: Mr. Tracy B. Augur, Mr. Nelson Peets and Mr. Hale Walker. Their memorandum would lay the basis for a master plan of Puerto Rico.

During this week too, Mr. Thomas MacDonald of the Public Roads Administration went somewhat further in encouraging me to think that a West Indies Highway was neither fantastic nor distant. We had discussed it earlier and had thought it feasible. It involved ferries for three passages—Florida-Cuba, Cuba-Haiti, and Santo Domingo-Puerto Rico. But it traversed, lengthwise, very populous islands and terminated at Roosevelt Roads at the east end of Puerto Rico, which, it being still before Pearl Harbor, was conceived as a mighty fleet anchorage and complete naval base, as large as any under our flag. In peace, we thought, the highway would be a tourist attraction as well as a commercial asset; and in war it ought to evade the worst of the danger from the submarine blockade. We lingered over the maps, projecting termini and routes, discussing costs, time schedules, and the necessary international consents. It was an exciting idea.

I had also, now that I was in Washington, to deal with the Plan Caribe with which I was confronted on all sides and from every point of view. I begged Taussig, Welles and finally, the President, to reconsider my appointment as a member of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission; I had not wanted to be a member in the first place, and was more and more certain that I ought to be allowed to withdraw; failing this I suggested a clearer statement of purpose which I could use to indicate
that those in Puerto Rico who were genuinely affected would in no way be injured. Aside from that, I had to tell innumerable skeptical questioners that the Plan was a fiction; this was so obviously and impolitely disbelieved that finally it seemed better to look mysterious and suggest inability to comment. Not all of my questioners were hostile; many thought it obvious by now that something drastic should be done in the Caribbean and hoped that changes were in preparation. But they were not. The Plan Caribe of the Puerto Rican press was a conspiracy to injure that island’s interests for private profit. What had been intended as a political attack on Muñoz and me had, by the time it reached Washington, begun to make more sense. It looked somewhat like the suggestion in my earlier memorandum to the President—a league or federation, financed by the United States, whose main purpose was to develop the area economically, to raise living standards, and cure the social sores which plagued the people there. In this there was no threat to Puerto Rican interests. People in Washington, instead of charging me with conspiracy, were inclined to credit me with a good idea. Neither having any foundation, I was equally embarrassed by both.

As to the inclusion of all Caribbean countries, if we were actually going ahead with the Commission, I had an interesting conversation with Mr. Welles. There were adequate reasons for not at once including the French islands, though none that I could see for not making definite provision for their future adherence; there was no reason for keeping out the Dutch; and even less for excluding the independent nations—especially the insular ones, Santo Domingo, Haiti and Cuba. For not agreeing, Mr. Welles had two arguments. One was that Britain and the United States would appear to be in a conspiracy against the smaller nations, perhaps even to swallow them; the other was that it had always been our Pan-American policy to prevent regional groupings and that this would run contrary to that. This seemed to me a very different matter and I said so, intimating that all the arguments given me sounded, to be perfectly honest, phony. I wondered whether this actually would not turn out to be a British-United States deal; and whether we should not be sorry, later, to have joined in a plan to bolster the British influence in the Caribbean when ours was the primary interest and ought to be forwarded more in co-operation with the other nations than with the British. Charles’ answer to this, when I raised the question with him, was that the British islands were where we had our bases. About this I could be caustic. That was not a military decision; or, if it was, it was a poor one. We should find it equally necessary to have bases on the independent islands and on those belonging to the French and the Dutch. Otherwise we should have great gaps in our defenses. It looked to me as though the British had done pretty well in the whole affair; and as though we had played the innocent role as usual.
I smoked into the White House one day and told the President about my embarrassments, my suspicions and my proposals: the first, that I be left out, he rejected summarily; the second, which I had put to Mr. Welles and secured his consent to asking Mr. Roosevelt's agreement, was that Puerto Rico be omitted temporarily, leaving the question of inclusion to the legislature there. I promised to submit it fairly and promptly; at which time the whole matter could be discussed openly and I be relieved of conspiratorial suspicions. But on this, too, the President turned me down cold. He refused to take the opposition seriously, characterizing it as another political trick which would soon be forgot. He then invented on the spot the idea of asking Cuba, Santo Domingo and Haiti to join on an "observation" basis. This I was to take to Welles for his reaction and then bring back for more discussion.

This was another embarrassment. I had agreed with Mr. Welles to get a yes-or-no answer to the question of Puerto Rican exclusion from the Commission's area of reference; here I was carrying back to him a counterproposal from Mr. Roosevelt. With the simplest intentions, I was in danger of getting into complicated difficulties all around. Mr. Welles might legitimately resent my carrying him such a message; he would certainly think that I pressed this solution on the President against his wishes. I consulted Mr. DuBois (who had been announced as head of the Caribbean Office of the Department of State) and Charles. Both definitely thought I was in trouble. So I decided to with-draw, telling Welles, asking him to believe I had not suggested the "observation" idea, and saying frankly that I was going back to Puerto Rico without discussing the matter further with anyone. If he wanted to go to the President with it he could. But I was through. He laughed, and we parted on good terms, but still in disagreement.

I did not go back to the President. Not only was I discouraged about the Caribbean matter, I also had scruples about using his time. He never refused to see me and he was generous in discussing all kinds of affairs when I did see him; but there was a limit even to his buoyancy and reserve. I had sometimes said to myself that the time he spent with me would be spent with someone anyway, not in relaxation, and it was perhaps less a waste to talk to me than some of the others, if I did say it myself. But there had to be an end somewhere. Someone had to go easy on him. I was not going to get him deeper into this controversy when I could see that it was going to be futile anyway. I kept thinking of what must be on his mind too. Mr. Hull was closeted daily with Kurusu and Nomura. It looked as though war and peace were being weighed in the mind of that Hudson Valley Dutch patrician. I at least would not be responsible for any more diversions.

So it was that, having done what I could to insure food supplies and reduce their prices; and apparently having persuaded the proper officials to give us a large
housing program, I decided on 6 December to leave next morning. There were
things left undone; but I surmised that would always be so. And I had a strong hunch
that I ought to get back.

When I arrived in Miami, aghast at what I had heard on the way, M-Day measures
had not yet been taken and I was able, during the night, to talk with my wife and
with Commissioner Gallardo, who in my absence was Acting Governor, by overseas
phone. I had found that Pan American officials would not send me through on the
eight; and what interruptions there might be to service in the days following it was
hard to predict, although they promised passage for the ninth. I thought of asking
the Army for a plane; but a vivid picture of the possible confusion at this moment
prevented. I conveyed what instructions I could at long distance—complete
blackout, police surveillance of the aliens and activists on a list we had already
prepared, and the civil defense measures we had listed. I also sent assurance of
complete confidence in General Collins and his men. Twice on the eighth I was again
able to communicate. Everything was quiet, a quiet of terrible tension, my wife said,
but nevertheless without outward sign. The prepared measures had all been taken.
The blackout was complete and there had been no alerts.

That night, and the next day, with its night, seemed to prove the elasticity of time.
The hours stretched out endlessly ahead. None of them, as they succeeded one
another, registered gain; what remained, until departure, merely appeared to be
longer. There was, nevertheless, a light interlude; and I seem to have had wit enough
to do some shopping between visits to the Pan American office on Flagler Street. The
interlude was furnished by Mr. Walter Winchell, who was stopping at the same
hotel. He was sympathetic at my frantic concern and undertook to entertain me. It
was a Sunday evening, and his idea of entertainment was to take me with him to the
studio for his weekly broadcast. Mr. Al Jolson was there too. My objections were
overcome by the studio manager, who promised my overseas call more quickly
there than at the hotel. He was right, too; and I talked to my wife from his office.
These people were a new sort to me but they were very kind and I felt grateful. Next
evening, too, Mr. Winchell took me out and gave me dinner at a place which was
famous for its stone crabs. Even at this distance and in spite of my then anxiety I can
recall that they were good. There was some cheer. We had not yet begun to hear
how extensive the destruction at Pearl Harbor had been; and there was some sense
of relief from long expectancy. Mr. Winchell, Mr. Jolson and the others took the view
of most Americans—we should clean up these officious little upstarts in a hurry, The
yellow peril was about to be liquidated. They had asked for it, Mr. Winchell said, and
boy, will they get it! I allowed myself to be a little persuaded. Mr. Jolson's two lovely
blond companions were suitably and superficially affable about ordinary matters,
and Mr. Winchell and I, going home early, supported each other with optimistic predictions.

The sight of the telephone in my room dispelled my optimism, however, and, after talking again with my wife, I sat long on a Miami roof looking out at the luminous sea over the rustling palms and thought of what life would be like for us in the coming months. I hoped I should succeed in what I had to do. But what with the bad start and the news, which would soon get around among the people, of our military defenselessness, it was impossible to hope for much. Our enemies within had too much to work with.

During that Monday I had left the radio reluctantly: it was apparent, however, on my first trip to the Pan American office that it was unnecessary to stay in any one place. Every fruit-juice stand, every store, every barbershop had its radio going continuously—not that much came out except incoherence. The commentators were sweating out multitudes of words, mostly calculated to cover their embarrassment, evidently, that the Japs had registered a scoop. Some of them were indiscreet, if anyone had taken them seriously, in presenting speculation as fact; and their military comment was altogether too unrestrained. There was one break, however. I was in a barbershop having my hair cut when the President's speech to the Congress came in. He was asking, I realized, for a declaration of war. However superfluous this was, it made me—and the other customers, as it was easy to see—profoundly conscious of our traditions and institutions. It could be seen in faces and heard in muttered approval. It was a matter of pride to belong to a people who could not have brought themselves, whatever the provocation, to the act of international treachery of which we had been the victims. A wave of gratitude for this swept over all of us as he spoke, an infinitely finer impulse than that physical braggadocio which had so distorted our Japanese relations for many years. As his words ended—not words at all, I remember feeling, which were suitable for a great moment in history, but rather wooden and commonplace, showing great fatigue—where were Sherwood, MacLeish and Company?—everyone in the shop got to his feet, lather, aprons, and all, and stood unashamedly with spasmodic swallowings as the anthem was played. None of us felt it strange; all of us felt—as the barber said, going on with his job on my hair—that this was one war everyone wanted. He hoped, middle-aged man of family as he was, that there was something he could do.

Great moments overtake one in curious places, having no regard for congruity. I could wish that I had heard the President’s address from closer by; I should like to have been in the Hall, at least, where he committed us finally to the war made inevitable by the policy he had chosen so long ago to pursue. That I had thought it unwise in the beginning made no difference. It had not been my choice; but we were
in it now and had to come out at the other end successful at whatever cost to any of us. That I should be overtaken thus by historic words in a barbershop indicated my present place in things, of course, and registered a failure somewhere back in the past.

I thought I was no farther along, in a way, than I had been twenty-three years before when another momentous point in time had caught me on my way to a barbershop in Paris and had been partly celebrated there. That was the armistice of 1918. The barbershop was one of those men’s and women’s places which were common in Paris before they were in the rest of the world. It faced on the Place du Theatre Francais. I was in an armchair, the sort used by French barbers at considerably less convenience to themselves and their customers than the special kind used in America. They do not swivel; and, since there were no mirrors, a commotion behind me grew noticeably loud before I turned to see what was going on. The great guns on the outer fortifications had stopped. It was known now for sure that the awaited armistice had come. The proprietor had discovered among those present several members of the Grand Opera Company, evidently old clients, and amid embraces and mutual congratulations, a song was starting. Finally, accepting the role of maestro, the proprietor led us all in the roof-raising marching song of the Republic, born so many years ago among the Marseillais troops coming north to save Paris. High above the chorus soared the Grand Opera tenors and far below it, floating it solidly, a magnificent basso profundo. We sang, I should say, for half an hour or more, the songs soon getting beyond my knowledge out into the Provinces, but obviously coming out of the heart of France, inundating differences, swelling with the sweet release of peace and victory.

Early—before daylight—on the ninth I was out and on my way to the airport at Dinner Key. The taxi driver’s radio was going full blast. In the midst of a reading of morning news originating in San Francisco, there was a wailing shriek and the broadcast was cut off—it was an alert! What seemed to be happening on the Western Frontier might be happening on the Eastern Frontier, too. It seemed possible that Pearl Harbor had been reduced and that the Bay region was actually being attacked. Was there a concerted scheme for simultaneous movement on the Canal? It was with this question in all our minds that the shipload of us, solemn Americans, flew southeastward from Miami. But the Caribbean was green-blue and placid, the characteristic thunder-heads boiled up on the horizon, and if there was trouble ahead it was not apparent in transit.

Around the airport, on the plane, and wherever we stopped the whisper grew: Where was the Navy on Sunday? Where is it now? For it was beginning to filter through that "the bastards" had not committed suicide. They had, it seemed, done
terrible damage and got away almost unhurt; they had had their way with our defenses everywhere in the Pacific from Pearl Harbor to Manila; and, last night, carrier-based planes appeared to have been over many places on the Coast. Where was the Navy? Most Americans realized how the Army had been neglected and that it was far from ready for any test. But we had all of us thought of the Navy as vigilant, efficient, unbeatable. I had heard army men thank God fervently for the other service. Had the instrument in which we had so much pride let us down completely? There was a cold fear in American hearts that day that it was so. If there was no Navy there was nothing. We were wide open.
FOR SEVERAL MONTHS we had been having practice blackouts and had become more proficient, perhaps, than continental communities—at least so visitors said. But that of 9 December was perfect, absolutely perfect. The complete compliance with regulations indicated that the war was now a serious matter for all Puerto Ricans. Just for the moment, also, there was an outpouring of loyal professions so great that even the leading Socialista and Republicano políticos felt impelled to suggest a truce in their war on me. They broke the party prohibition and called at La Fortaleza. This they said, reasonably enough, was a time to forget differences and to cooperate. I thought so and received them gravely. I soon found, however, that their notion of co-operation was peculiarly one-sided and wholly political. They thought their local party committees should be given the responsibility for civil defense; the Populares were not to be trusted; everyone knew they were comunistas, independentistas, and so on—but not falangistas, I suggested, after being subjected to hours of this specious pressure. Obviously they were intending to make a good thing out of the war. They thought, too, that I ought now to give up the queer conviction that their self-chosen political juntas were unfit to be decisive organs in the community. Let them tell me whom to appoint and they would promise an end to the persecutions. I might be a great wartime Governor, creating unity and leading Puerto Ricans in support of the national effort. To my suggestion that they come to some mutual arrangement with Muñoz they reacted violently. He was a minority demagogue. They were the substantial people, the permanent dependence of the United States in Puerto Rico. They were known loyalists; their platform called for statehood; this was the time when that attitude ought to be rewarded. If it were rewarded it could be further used to my benefit as well as theirs.

A good part of the precious days just after 7 December were spent in this fruitless negotiation. I wanted to win them over and, for unity, I would have paid anything except the betrayal they required. But that was the price. I was to reverse the verdict of the election; I was to support the profiteers, the Chamber of Commerce, the Spanish merchants. I was to ignore the falangista disloyalties. I was also to do nothing to check the rising cost of living—if that in any way affected the importers who carried on the trade in necessities.

But there were other activities than those having to do with party quarrels. We had to prepare the fearful body of the island for attack. There were few resources, but if effort could at all suffice we meant not to spare that. I was, however, handicapped by another mistake I had made in selection. Just after my inauguration Mr. La Guardia had appointed me, as he had other Governors in the states and territories, to be the head of civil defense for the area. At that time I already had a Committee at work
and for its chairman I had chosen Mr. Jaime Annexy; I delegated further authority to him under the La Guardia authorizations. My reason for doing it was simply that, on acquaintance, I had judged him capable. There was the added reason, however, that this was one of the few posts at the sole disposal of the Governor, without confirmation, and could therefore be given to a non-Popular without public wrangling. It had become almost a policy with me to give these jobs to the minority and, of course, I had hoped it would satisfy their claims. As I pointed out there would be a good many positions of this kind in an emergency.

It was soon quite evident, however, that something drastic would have to be done to the organization if public co-operation was to be got and the necessary preparation for disaster achieved. In the pressure of the moment it seemed best to go on working through Mr. Annexy and giving much of my own time as well. Since an executive was needed, and since there was one available in Colonel Orbeta, Chief of Police, I transferred him to civil defense. This again was partly to settle another controversy, for Colonel Orbeta, as General Winship's Chief of Police, was regarded with revulsion by all Muñoz' followers. It was a reputation he did not deserve. He had done no more than follow orders. The police were perhaps mostly Republicano: but it could at least be claimed that most of them were handsome. It was said that Colonel Orbeta lined up his candidates and chose them for their looks. It seemed to be a system which could be defended. It had been noticed that travelers complimented the insular police as often as they deplored the insular slums. And judged by the less romantic items of policemanship they had been not unsatisfactory.

The first thing I had been asked to do, almost, as Governor, however, was to remove Colonel Orbeta. This was only partly because the Populares wanted to dictate new appointments, although that was also true. It was also because so many of Muñoz' followers had been independentistas in the old demonstration days and had in person felt the heavy hand of the law. They wanted a symbol of renewed liberty to agitate when and as they pleased. This I could understand, but also I wanted it known that if the bomb throwers had any idea that they could resume their activities they were going to get as hot a reception as ever. What I did at first about this was to have a joint press conference with the Chief, say that I had confidence in him and in the force, but also say that the policy was henceforth to be one of protection for the traditional American liberties equally with property. There were strikes and evidently there were going to be more; it must be understood that these were not illegal and that strikers were not lawbreakers; they would be protected in picketing, speechmaking, organizing—everything, in fact, except disorder, the
invasion of property, or the use of force. These would not be tolerated and would be ruthlessly punished.

The Populares were, however, unhappy; and they made all the trouble they could. It was apparent that if the added appropriations for the police which would be necessary in wartime were to be secured I should have to yield on the Chief. His transfer to civil defense was intended to achieve this without administering a rebuke which would be undeserved. But it was bad for civil defense. Mr. Annexy agreed to it, as I should have seen, altogether too willingly. Now I had, as war got under way, a civil defense organization not perhaps actually distrusted by the people but at any rate under suspicion and without the ability to enlist wide cooperation. Inconsistently enough, the press would shortly undertake a campaign against the organization, another of its sustained if oblique attacks, but with rather more reason in this instance, as I should presently acknowledge by appointing a Popular as Director. This, however, would not be until a little later. And it too would be received with yells of Republicano rage.

What had to be done was not mysterious. Anyone who had read the news from Britain in 1940—41 knew what the current air raids were like and the measures necessary to protection. The streets had to be kept clear, especially at night; windows had to be boarded or taped; shelters had to be provided if possible; water and electric supplies had to be given protection and a large stock of repair parts accumulated; safe casualty stations had to be established with medical supplies as well as stretchers, ambulances, etc.; and, perhaps most important of all, the fire services had to be developed into emergency control, rescue and demolition squads. All this simply must be bound together by volunteer public participation.

In some of this we did well; in some of it we did badly. The handicaps, of course, were great. I have said that the Populares were sullen; but this was not so deplorable in San Juan, the chief air-raid hazard, because it was a city which the Coalition had carried even in the Popular sweep of 1940. For this the bureaucratic vote was largely responsible. Most of the governmental employees were Coalitionist as. I thought even the common folk of San Juan would follow a Republicano in civil defense. If my civil defense policy was at first mistaken, there was at least this excuse. But as the days passed it was evident that no organization was taking shape; and this was serious, considering the lack of materials. For fire protection, for instance, the San Juan city government had a number of miscellaneous party workers sitting around fire houses languidly wiping off equipment which Would hardly extinguish a bonfire; and my information from British cities was that the heart of its protective work was in the fire service. It would have been better if we had had none, since what we had was not only incompetent and unequipped but
was fiercely and loudly defended by the politicos for whom the firemen really labored at the tasks which are assigned to heelers. And war modified this relationship not one iota. There began then a long struggle with the politicians to create an insular fire service; but that was going to take time. Meanwhile, except for certain pieces of apparatus belonging to Army, Navy and Coast Guard, we were helpless. This was not quite literally true because a port-protection committee had been at work for months; and it had insisted on self-protection by the private interests on the water front. At this time, however, the committee's requirements had not yet been met and the hazard of vast oil and gasoline storages in the middle of town still existed. In the long run the large tanks were surrounded by protective walls and other precautions were taken. But if they had been bombed or shelled in these first war months the whole water front of San Juan would have been deluged in a river of fire.

But the great hazard lay in the conformation of the peninsula on which the city had been built. Running out into the sea rather laterally as it did, and being really an island, since it was separated from the mainland by a channel, there were peculiar hazards for the population down at the end. And it was a population of some seventy thousand. Down there, also, was army headquarters as well as the commercial center of the island. Any bombardment from the air or from a submarine out at sea would make sense only if it caused damage in our only large city. It was like a man with his heart outside his body. Instead of being in the center of the island geographically, the administrative and service center was actually on an outer projection. It asked to be attacked. To initiate disaster it would only be necessary to destroy or injure the bridges to the mainland. A few shells or bombs would do that. A few more would destroy the gasoline and oil storages and set fire to the water front. By that time the population in panic, cut off from attempted evacuation, and menaced by flaming streams of oil and gasoline, would have disrupted every service and made impossible even the Army's management of its defenses. Seventy thousand people would jam the two or three exit streets to the bridges and a holocaust would result.

Recrimination was of no use at that stage. But Puerto Ricans would have been thoroughly justified in accusing the Army and Navy of making the city a target. There was no excuse for having established headquarters on that exposed peninsula in the sea.

It would be unfair to say that it was done with a view to peacetime comforts for the officers; but certainly when I had pointed out in August that they ought not to commit themselves further to this obvious strategic mistake, and even when my suggestion was backed by the President, the advice was rejected in a chilly
communication from the Secretary of War which conveyed the impression quite successfully that lay advice was not wanted. This situation had been made worse by establishing the Naval Air Station at Isla Grande, thus thrusting another thumb out into the harbor within shelling distance of the sea and almost exactly in the center of the metropolitan area—the bull’s-eye of the enemy target.

That these were stubbornly unintelligent selections, persisted in at extravagant expense (the entire area of the Naval Air Station was built on a deep jelly of mud), it was no use to point out at that late date. If, however, a disaster occurred which disrupted military operations, the blame would lie originally with unintelligent officers. I knew well enough, and so, of course, did the Puerto Rican civilians, that the Army would not take that into account when trouble arrived. For their own purposes they would then take over the whole area and expect the population to evacuate. We went to work on plans for this and for country billeting at once; but I prayed they would not have to be used under attack. If we had some hours' notice we could get people out. But why, on the other hand, should an enemy give us notice? In those weeks—and months—we had no radars and hardly any means for detecting submarines. Shelling or bombing was possible at any moment of the day or night. A net across the harbor mouth would be set within a few months. But everyone knew that deep water offshore would permit a submarine to approach well within easy range of some 250,000 civilian residents, the Army and Navy headquarters, the Naval Air Station, and the whole insular equipment of central banks, warehouses, offices, etc. What the Army would want to do to restore order in a population frightened by shelling, and with its way out to the countryside cut off, I shuddered to contemplate.

But so did General Collins—and that was a help. We were getting along; and it was an immense relief to find that it was possible to work with him. There had been, before him, a succession of problem-commanders. Part of Mr. Swope’s despair had been the difficulties made for him in this way. There had been a tendency to despise the civil life of the island and to expect much while yielding little. General Collins was a man of warmth and sympathy. He sacrificed nothing of his duty, and was active in the Army’s interest; but what he asked was asked reasonably. He had his own problems, not all of which I could appreciate but which I always tried to help him with when I could. The basic difficulty was, of course, that he was unprepared for attack if it should come.

The lack of materials for defense was characteristic of all branches: aircraft (and ground facilities), anti-aircraft guns, coast artillery, patrol craft, detection devices, and, of course, small arms of all sorts. The infantry conception was correct: the mobile force, ready to move toward any invasion point, held in the island’s interior.
There were gradually to be worked out, also, the inner and outer aircraft and small ship patrols, with listening and anti-aircraft outposts on available offshore (often uninhabited) islands. But at first we were without any of this. A carrier task force, such as soon became a familiar feature of Pacific warfare, could have reduced Puerto Rico, occupied it with marines and outflanked all our half-finished installations to the southeast, so threatening directly the Canal and even the entrances to the Gulf of Mexico. Puerto Rico was large enough to become a strongly held enemy position. There were times—and this was the first of them—when it seemed quite a feasible enemy objective within a matter of weeks. Colonel, later General, Thomas R. Phillips, then Chief of Staff of the old Puerto Rican Department of the Army, described to me one day, all too vividly, the successive steps by which this could be done. And if he could conceive it, it was obvious that the German staff would not be less perceptive.¹

So we waited, those first days and weeks, under the luminous night sky of the Caribbean what the world holocaust should reveal. The practice blackouts before 7 December I had observed always from the roof of La Fortaleza. Northeastward the old city rises toward the hill on which the Casa Blanca and the Church of San Jose are the crowning heights. On that horizon a coconut palm spread its fronds behind and to one side of the dome on the old Bishop’s palace, a dramatically lovely finish to a picturesque scene. Most of the ancient rubble-walled houses in this neighborhood, so rosy under the blue-silk sky, are actually slums now, and worse slums too than El Fanguito out in the marshes. For these have extensive inner courts where the sweetening sun never penetrates and where humanity lives in unimaginable damp filth. But, like the harbor towns around the Mediterranean which old San Juan so much resembles, it is undeniably beautiful in ensemble, whatever it conceals within.

La Fortaleza being at the center of this half bowl draws all the evening sounds from this slum quarter. On these nights, as the darkness came down, the lights did not appear at all. When we had practiced at war it had seemed dramatic to watch them disappear. The street lights would go first, being turned off at the power station, then apartments would be darkened so that blocks of blackness struck the

¹It was one of the compensations of life in Puerto Rico to live with many of the colleagues of those days; but none was more important to me personally than Tom Phillips. He was a strategist and had written a good deal and somewhat acridly in criticism of our Army’s backward conception of its essential task and the means conceived for its execution. The old school of generals had not liked it and he had been more or less exiled in Puerto Rico, which was hard luck for him but good luck for me. He did not waste any emotion feeling sorry for himself; but I watched many less valuable men promoted faster than he and given more responsible tasks with some indignation although I had enough to do without interfering in army politics. I did protest several times in Washington but with no effect that I could see. Such promotions as came to him belatedly were obviously grudged.
accommodating sight. But there would always be a lagging light or two, toward which the unsatisfied eye was drawn. The whole neighborhood, however, joined in hunts for the missing roomer who had departed without snapping his switch or the storekeeper, gone for the night, who had left one light at the back of his premises. With all this done to the accompaniment of confused and noisy advice and perhaps even breaking in—rather ashamedly—by police, the looker from the roof of La Fortaleza could switch attention to the far borders of the bay, to Rio Piedras, Guaynabo, Cataño and Sabana Seca; and perhaps could still see glimmers from far up in the hills beyond.

But the practice days were over and the serious ones had begun. There were no laggards now to speak of; and when one appeared the extinguishing was savagely administered. There was no street illumination. We rapidly protected a few lights so that they shone safely downward and used white paint on our curbs for a guide in the blackness, but that was a little later. Just at first the whole island cowered through the night with all its activities suspended. If there were sick, they died doctorless. The garbage, such as the city did collect, had to be disposed of during the day. The movies and the cabarets were closed. (We dealt summarily and disgustedly with a protesting delegation of theater managers on 10 December who thought they should be allowed their illumination.)

In the midst of darkness there were alerts. But these now did not indicate anything to be done by the population. They were simply honest warnings from jittery outposts who had heard what had happened at Pearl Harbor and were reacting to every suggestion of a strange approach from out at sea. When one of these occurred I, as well as the military staffs and commanders, rushed through the black and narrow streets, with siren going, to Operations Headquarters and waited there for the reports to come in. At that time we were accommodated for that purpose in the Naval Communications Center which had, during the last year, been made bombproof. There all of us who had responsibility gathered to take what measures were available to us when we should know what we had to meet. I went there because I felt myself responsible for participation in what might impend as well as for civil protection in case of operations. There I was in direct touch with the police, the civil defense, the Red Cross and all the other emergency agencies. The military people were glad to have me there, I think, so that I might know the completeness of their devotion to the task. To that I could always testify—and often did.

We had gone further than that. On 9 December I had called Admiral Hoover and General Collins to La Fortaleza and had suggested that during the period of crisis we might have a daily meeting, the three of us, for exchange of confidences. I pointed out the lack of this in Hawaii and its consequences. I thought that, as Governor, I was
entitled to complete military information and that each of them was entitled to what
the other had and what I, too, could get from Washington and elsewhere. I had no
intention, as they knew, of giving military advice. On the other hand, I did not
hesitate to ask searching questions as to their plans and dispositions.

The arrangement worked without controversy and to our great mutual advantage.
In effect we were an emergency junta, meeting daily. There was as little distinction
as possible between what was a military and what a civil decision. I discussed policy
problems with them on the ground that these affected morale. They told me (and
each other) all their intentions and I took the necessary civil actions to assist. They
were interested but never made any political suggestions; I was interested but
never made any military ones. One thing at least was secure: the divisiveness at
Honolulu did not exist in Puerto Rico.

After 20 December this was not so important. As of that date unity of command was
imposed and Admiral Hoover became the military chief. The decision was obviously
a general one—that sea frontiers were a navy responsibility in which the Army’s
part was subordinate. Unfortunately this created some problems while solving
others. There had been question before of actual command in case of attack and this
question became more difficult if it was kept in mind that, if it came, it would not
necessarily be a mere raid or a sporadic shelling. It might be directed generally at
the Caribbean, in which event there would be the usual diversions and feints with
the concentration unfocused until the last moment. The whole arc of islands would
be a unit to the enemy—necessarily. The problem would be the rapid establishment
of an adequate base first to hold off attacks from others of our strong places and
then to carry out operations against them. It was obviously an amphibious problem,
not merely a job for planes. As such it would require large naval forces for
protection and for landings. We could see that nothing more than a raid could be
mounted until Britain had been conquered and Rommel had reached Suez. But
neither of these seemed unlikely within a measurable time, and there were already a
swarm of Nazi agents at Dakar and at other West African ports. It would have been
fatuous to suppose that their presence was not a preparation for movement in our
direction.

There were some other worries. In the enthusiasm over the British deal our
negotiators and planners had somewhat neglected the independent islands which
were far more important, being larger and therefore more adequate as potential
bases; also they were closer to our vulnerable spots. The essential of air-amphibious
warfare is that large bases which can be supplied and protected should be
established at those distances apart which can be covered with fighter-bombers.
What lies between can be disregarded if patrol work is faithfully carried out. For
more hours are needed to land and set up a striking force than are needed to call the fighters for the interruption of such an attempt. With bases in Trinidad and Puerto Rico, those in Antigua, St Lucia and so on were tactical luxuries. But we were, at that moment, vulnerable in Santo Domingo, Haiti or Cuba. True, Borinquen Field, on the northwest corner of Puerto Rico, might be expected, with a little stretching, to cover the whole island of Hispaniola which is divided between Haiti and Santo Domingo; and we had a naval establishment at Guantánamo in southeast Cuba. Still these were hardly adequate.

There was, however, a more serious worry. The French possessions—Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Martin, St. Bartholomew (with their lesser surrounding islands in the Central Caribbean), and French Guiana on the shoulder of South America, were sinister nicks in our shield. Martinique and Guadeloupe are of the order of size of Puerto Rico and lie within sight of several British possessions in the Leeward group. When our bases should be finished, and equipped for patrol as well as fighter sorties, these islands could not be used as enemy bases. In these early days—and for months thereafter—we were not so far along. We had no fighters; and our patrol coverage was pathetically limited. The present danger was very great. For Vichy France seemed to be trying to prove, under Laval, that she had real usefulness to her conquerors. And how could this be better done than by offering the new masters facilities in the Caribbean? There began shortly the long inept negotiations between our representatives and the French Governor, Admiral Robert, dominated by Mr. Hull’s policy of starving the people while offering protection (at least) to Admiral Robert. The front for these negotiations would be Admiral Hoover, after some preliminary talk by Admiral Home. There would, for about two years, be goings back and forth; there would be mysterious stays in our midst of Mr. Samuel Reber of the Department of State who never would think it necessary to apprise me of his presence or his mission. And nothing would happen. Not until the crisis should be past and the threat would have vanished from our sea would the negotiations succeed. Not the negotiations, in fact, but the British Eighth Army in Africa would force Robert out of his nest. Meanwhile there were a dozen ships standing in the Martinique and Guadeloupe roadsteads, some old, some new, even a few tankers, all capable of service and working for our enemies because they were idle, and because they forced us to maintain extensive patrol and guard forces which could well have been used elsewhere. In the first few weeks, as Admiral Hoover knew very well—as, in fact, he advised the Government—a decisive attitude, a naval landing—all planned—would have removed the threat once for all and have secured the use of that little fleet.² When we had wasted that time, the ships had been prepared for

²Along time later a port officer in New Orleans told me of running across some forgotten cases on a pier marked for “The American Expeditionary Forces in Martinique.”
scuttling and we could be bluffed into holding off. Robert would serve the Nazis well. But it would be our indecision, delays, ineptnesses which would make it possible for him to succeed.

In the Martinique business, it will be recalled, we started out lion-fashion and were soon disclosed as lambs. It was one of the famous Hull attempts at appeasement by finesse, the more finesse because entrusted to the Navy—with an "adviser" from the State Department:

20 December. Admiral Home was here yesterday and was courteous enough to call and tell me of his mission in our midst. He was returning from Martinique. For some time the situation there has been a subject in the daily talks among Hoover, Collins and myself. Immediately after 7 December, Hoover begged frantically for more force, lest the two formidable French ships there (the others are either older, smaller or are merchant ships) slip out as raiders. It looked at the moment as though Vichy had joined Germany outright or was about to do so. Home of the General Board was to be sent down, Hoover was told, with an ultimatum: immobilize or be sunk. And he was to be backed up by a task force of sufficient strength.

But suddenly the State Department decided to believe that Vichy's assurances to Leahy were sufficient. The ships would under no circumstances be allowed to fall into German hands, etc., etc. So Home's mission was reversed. It was his job now to reassure the Governor, which he did.

Hoover thinks, as do Collins and Phillips, that the Vichy attitude is a fake. I gathered that Home thought so too. The Vichy protestations were to prevent us from carrying out immobilization. And if the Nazis come this way during the next few weeks or months the resistance in Martinique will be like that in Thailand—a few hours of "token defense."

The justification, we must suppose, is that Mr. Hull believes Vichy to be a useful listening post on the continent. Or even that we may influence their policy—which hardly seems likely with the Nazis in Paris. The whole world is undoubtedly a chessboard at the moment on which a play anywhere is felt everywhere else. But for Caribbean safety this is a risky move—and I cannot see beyond our waters at the moment. These islands could so easily be stepping stones!
This duty for which Admiral Hoover knew himself unfitted was an unnecessary burden on a man already carrying a heavy load of work and responsibility. He had to get together a headquarters staff of adequate size as we passed from peace to war and as he assumed general military command of our frontier. A joint operations center had to be devised, and constantly changing defense requirements had to be met by flexible accommodation. All this had to be planned and carried out as we watched the skies and seas for enemy approaches and later as the submarines were fought off. It had to be done, too, under harassing administrative circumstances. For when Admiral Hoover became commander, not all the Army’s tangle was straightened out. It was the army conception that our islands were a shield for the Canal. The command had therefore been centered in Panamá. But General Andrews (and later General Brett) had no control over the Navy; and now a navy man had been given supreme authority on the frontier, much of which stretched over the Panamá command. There was also the equivocal position of an ambitious and expanding air force. Also the army engineers, so important in our civil life, since they were absorbing vast stretches of our property and employing scores of thousands of our people, were responsible directly to Washington. General Collins, in whose Department the work was being done, had only a courtesy relationship with the District Engineer.

Altogether it was a difficult administrative situation, requiring obvious revision, and, meanwhile, infinite tact. Persuasiveness and tact were two qualities which were not prominent in Admiral Hoover’s make-up. He had others but not those. There was no doubt in my mind that our defenses were being actively and expertly managed within the limitations of scarce materiel, unfinished defense works and untrained men. But the best Hoover and Collins could do was sufficing only because we were immune—because what was happening in Europe and Africa was gradually turning the German offensive into retreat.

During the weeks after Pearl Harbor and until about the first of the year when the position slowly defined itself, so relieving the hourly dread of attack, the tension among the people built itself toward something of a climax. This was reflected in and accentuated by the press, on which no wartime restrictions had yet been imposed. There was no guide but whatever sense of decency and responsibility there might be. But of this there was none. The opportunity for creating more confusion, more insecurity, more suggestion that America was incapable of resisting the aggression which had been invited, was exploited to the limit. Danger was headlined mercilessly; it was like the beating of a great drum day after day in Spanish and in English. A people, frightened by undefined forces, expected air attacks, shelling from the sea, landings on our shores by night and every disaster
known to war. Workers in my office and in the army offices suddenly broke down into hysteria. Rumors ran through the streets like darting flames. University students deserted the campus, public school teachers suddenly dismissed classes because of fantastic tales, telling the children to run home; and from these centers fear spread everywhere. There arose an insistent and senseless demand for air-raid shelters.³

Fools, cranks and cowards had to be suffered, petted, listened to and pacified. Sometimes it seemed to me that I had to do it all, which was an illusion because by now my helpers had taken over much of the burden. It seemed, about a week after Pearl Harbor, to be getting away from us. We thought we should have to resort to measures none of us wanted to use. On 11 December, Germany declared war. The alliance between Franco and Germany influenced the reception of this news in Puerto Rico. Those—and there were among them, it is to be kept in mind, many of the elite—who until now had been active falangistas were faced with the consequences of their alliance. In a real sense they could expect us now to regard them as enemies. They turned a bleak regard on the probability of life in concentration camps. But when it came actually to deciding we did not see clearly how they could injure our interests more than they already had unless we were attacked and they had a chance to become an active fifth column. That assignment, it was thought by my army friends, would be more likely to fall on clerical sympathizers than on the Puerto Rican citizens of good family. These were thought to be too soft and fearful to cause active damage. Then too those who had been publicly known as Falange leaders went quickly to work to build up their other alliances with influential individuals who were not under suspicion and with their sycophants among the American lawyers and businessmen who stood by them because the relationship was extremely profitable. In the end those who had taken the oaths of the Falange—including one to destroy the United States Government in Puerto Rico—would not only get off free but would find much profit in the war. They used as their front commercial organizations which would find active sympathizers in Washington departments and in the Congress—innocent ones, of course, who believed their complaints of injury—and in the end would pass from a period of cowering in their great establishments to gradual recovery of the offensive spirit. We should find them actively attacking us within a matter of months.

At the moment, frightened by a knowledge of some of their best families' sins against democracy, hammered by a yellow press, yammered at by marble-eyed

³I gave way finally on this at the politicians' insistence and hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent to provide useless holes in the ground to abate this public hysteria—and later more hundreds of thousands to fill them up.
rumor carriers, the common folk of Puerto Rico began to lose their own balance. Ordinarily the obrero and the jíbaro, like workers and farmers elsewhere, have a simple daily round and simple thoughts. The common Puerto Rican is not, as may be imagined, much given to philosophizing. He is never entirely free of hunger—even when he has his belly full of exactly what he wants, its lack of nutritional values betrays him. Nor do the influences from outside make a deep impression unless they seem to threaten his next meal or his actual safety. Larger conceptions of social security, of liberty, of democracy and the like are unimaginable luxuries and quite beyond his own program of food, women, work and sleep. There was never much danger of loss of control in the slums. But the middle class, the government workers, the storekeepers and the professional men felt the full force, now of the influences they had allowed to be built up. They were, in this moment, betrayed by their press, their upper class, by some, at least, of their clergy. And they were close to panic on their small island—like cornered animals with no place to turn.

For suddenly they were aware that they inhabited an island and that their bridge of ships had disappeared. I myself, my helpers, both Puerto Rican and American, and the responsible officers of the Army and Navy, felt in those days a deep sense of pity, in the full press of crowding duties, for a people so ridden by fear and so bereft of sustaining loyalties. Many of them felt none of that emotional attachment to country and flag which sustained us and even stiffened us to a certain exhilaration when danger seemed to impend. These separatists—and there were many, as I have tried to say, among the intellectuals and among the minor political leaders—had no more sense of security than the suddenly bereft falangistas. Some few of them were excited by the thought of further fishing in troubled waters. But most of them seemed to feel that we ought to become savages too and begin our war with revenge on those who had snapped and whined so annoyingly at Uncle Sam's heels for years. They too would be surprised, as they never fail to be, at our forbearance.

For I decided—sustained by General Collins willingly and by Admiral Hoover indifferently—to see it through on strictly liberal lines. I would not recognize old disloyalties. I would use my own influence against the press. We would try frankness and hard work against confusion-makers and inciters to a hysteria which existed just below the apparent normality of daily life. There came a day when the streets hummed with rumor, when alerts succeeded each other closely, when the press in four-inch heads, and the loud-speakers in excited tones, shouted about enemy planes and prowling submarines. I gathered together a number of my closest collaborators and talked to them earnestly. They went out to exhort others with influence wherever they could be found. The hours of tension wore out and the night of blackout came. Next day, under a bright sun, people woke to realize that
since the night had gone without incident, perhaps we should after all escape. The
radio commentators, appealed to, began to combat the fear policy of the press; and
calming notices began to predominate. Interest gradually rose again in local politics,
in the *chismes* of ordinary life, in making love and making money.

That was the worst. And we had carried it off without losing our own heads. We
must be forgiven for thinking, as we went into quieter weeks, that somewhere there
must be written down a little credit for prevailing in this way. We were, like all
leaders, somewhat surprised that our arrangements had actually succeeded in their
purpose, perhaps, but not at all inclined, even on this side of the battle, to minimize
the crisis we had survived. We are still not inclined to minimize it. And we are still
thankful that measures we should have hated to take were, even if by a small
margin, avoided. I am still capable of shuddering at the thought of police clattering
into newspaper offices and radio stations, and of dignified—even if malicious—old
men behind the high wires of concentration camps. And Muñoz, perhaps, trying to
convince a Governor, suddenly become militant rather than sympathetic, that many
of his countrymen ought to be given a liberty of which they had been deprived.
THE BATTLE against civilian disintegration in Puerto Rico had to be fought without outside help. We had to improvise. There were no precedents; and Washington had somehow receded to the distance of another planet; for weeks we had no more intercourse or communication than we might have had with Mars or Jupiter. Immediately on my return I had framed pleas for orders and for aid. In those days I could still cable or write the President and now I took advantage of my privilege. It had been my habit to write him occasionally news of what we were doing, describing the state of the crops, the look of the forests, the feeling of the people, and perhaps a problem or two on which he could help. This was apart from more formal reporting to the Secretary of the Interior and on the theory that I was a Presidential representative and not an employee of the Division of Territories. That was the relationship to his Governors which the President himself had encouraged. It was, of course, derived from the British theory that Governors are part of the person of the Sovereign; at any rate it existed and was acknowledged. For he always answered.

On the day after my return I sent off a cable and followed it with a letter. We were, I reminded him, far out in the sea and subject, if not to attack, at least to blockade. Judging from experience in the last war it could be expected to be established at once. We had no more than normal peacetime reserves of food, building materials, medicines and so on. I urged an immediate allocation from his own funds with which stock piles for three months’ consumption might be set up. Similar and more detailed requests were sent to Interior.

The President thought of Puerto Rico. On 8 December—the day after Pearl Harbor—he asked for a report of our situation. We sent back reassurances: we were blacked out; we had substantial unity; what could be done with the materiel we had was being carried out. But the answer to my plea for reserves evidently got into the toils of the Budget. For instead of an immediate allocation to be used by me at once and without restriction, it was decided to recommend to the Congress that a sum be appropriated—fifteen millions—for creating a stock pile. We thus set out on the tragic history of the fifteen millions which, during our most critical time, did not come to any substantial use, and which caused the only difference—if even this could be called that—I ever had with Mr. Ickes. But the year ran out and we went through our crisis of fear before we heard from anyone in Washington.

On 13 December there occurred an incident which illustrates the state of mind in the Army. It contrasts less with the prevalent civil hysteria than might be expected. It was two in the morning when El Morro’s sirens went. Before I could leave La
Fortaleza the General’s aide (at that time, his son, Lawton) called and asked me to stay at my end of the phone while he relayed some information from his father who was receiving it on other lines. He went on to say that they had been notified by the Commandant at Borinquen Field of an enemy landing "in force" at several places on the western end of the island. They were now receiving detail and he wanted me to have it as he made his dispositions. I held on for some twenty minutes—in the complete darkness of the patio and with the police stirring restlessly—when by some switchboard crossing I suddenly began to hear the conversation between General Collins and the Commandant at Borinquen.

This officer was saying that there was trouble at sea, just off Borinquen—apparently enemy ships—and that they were being bombed by his planes. Unknown small boats had also approached the vicinity of the oil tanks in Mayagüez. They had been challenged and fired on. They had, the Commandant said, returned fire. The whole west end of the island was in an uproar with numerous reports from outposts of mysterious ships, landing boats, even enemy troops ashore. He was deluged with them, he said, and concluded that a large movement was being made. General Collins was skeptical after listening to some fifteen minutes of this and demanded more exact information. Until he had it, the Commandant was not to report again.

I broke in then and told the General I had heard the conversation so that he needn’t repeat it to me. "Good God," he said, "if you heard it any number of other people could have—won't we have a panic?" I didn't know, I said, but obviously we had better get some facts rapidly and stop the gathering rumors. "That damned —— at Borinquen talks like an amateur," said the General. "By God, he is, come to think of it. He's one of these new air-force kids. I don't think there's anything to the whole business." He called me again in a little while and said he was calling off the alert. He was satisfied it was all imagination. It was, too. But it turned out, as we investigated next day, that a Lykes Line freighter had been bombed and machine-gunned at sea; and that the enemy landing was a regular Saturday night trip of the G.C.C. boys on Mona Island to Mayagüez. And they were a boatload of scared boys! Luckily none was wounded. Next day too the General had the signal lads busy and thenceforth we had invulnerable phone connections between his headquarters and my office.

Aside from this incident there were numerous cases of sentry fever. The Puerto Rican boys, especially, being just off the fincas, and not, at this time, the best educated,\(^1\) seemed inclined to shoot first and investigate later. One shot had killed a

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\(^1\)The reason for this being that since a small contingent of Puerto Ricans was being taken for the Army, it was done by volunteering rather than through Selective Service. The Army, in those early days of the war—this was changed later—was therefore getting merely unemployed young men.
civilian just under the General’s high window in the Casa Blanca. This man first had insisted on admittance at the gate to escort his wife, a cook in one of the headquarter houses, home after her day’s work. Being repulsed by the sentry, he had tried to climb a wall. After that more restraints were imposed. There was also the occasion of the mysterious alert. After all of us had gathered at the bombproof at four in the morning and were checking the routines, the General had to admit that, in some mysterious way, the alert had been all a mistake—neither for practice nor because of a real suspicion. He confessed to me a few days later that a certain major, being in charge, had nodded; whereupon in his dreams he had heard a siren—automatically he had touched off the real alarm. What happened to that major, I never heard. By that time I myself was a casualty. Rushing for the stairs in the blackness I had slipped at the top and had landed heavily on that part of the anatomy known as the coccyx. I rather shamefacedly went around for weeks with an air cushion, glaring at the police who placed it for me with care as I started off on emergency missions. Not one of them ever ventured a grin—but I noticed that they avoided my eye. I hated that cushion; but the injury was painful and persistent, and for months I could not be without it.

Gradually our procedures smoothed out. We agreed to centralize the originating of alerts in the Army as well as the management of reporting. When information was sufficient to establish enemy approach, the Admiral would, of course, command military operations and I would be responsible for civil order and safety with such help from the military as seemed necessary. We lacked a combined operations headquarters. One would eventually be established far underground in the old fortifications but would not be in use until late in 1942. Meanwhile there was only the naval radio station, of which one room was cleared out. There some twenty of us gathered when an alarm was given, rushing from wherever we happened to be—often rather tired and bedraggled. There were sometimes several alerts in the course of a night. The last of them, toward morning, would find all of us dead for sleep, moving like men in a dream. To test the blackout we used to climb an outside ladder to the roof. A forgotten light far across the bay would call out bitter discouraged curses. On one such night the whole Naval Air Station was minutes late in turning off its lights. The quarter-deck language we heard then commanded respectful admiration even from the army colonels. In the early days we had no real reporting system such as was developed later. If a message came from a hundred miles away we could only hold our breaths for a new import or for the time to elapse which would have been required for bombers to reach San Juan.

One time Admiral Hoover tested the signal system by sending a squadron of planes from Antigua, warning our batteries, such as there were, not to fire. Somehow a
cruiser in the harbor was not warned. Luckily its commander thought a real attack unlikely too and waited, as perhaps he should not have done in wartime, for signaled queries to be answered. But those planes had a narrow escape. There were other incidents, many of them, natural to an accommodation of the kind we were making. There were planes not so lucky in escaping. It was many months before we could feel any confidence at all that we should make a good showing in case of attack or even in detecting enemy approach. In the long run there would be a sense of futility in our tense readiness; but not during 1942. The whole year was to be one long struggle for preparation: to establish radars on the mountaintops and on the most remote of rocky islets; to build up a communication system which would withstand abuse and interference; to perfect a scheme for civilian behavior under stress; to install coast artillery and anti-aircraft weapons; to recruit and train Puerto Rican officers and men; to maintain harmony among ourselves and morale among the people.

Then came our greatest struggle. The submarines invaded our sea and, through the Navy's most disastrous failure, we were made helpless against their attack. Why this was so, I do not even yet know. The attack was in all respects like that of 1917-18. There was nothing mysterious about the detection devices or the defenses needed. But we were sheep to their wolf. For more than a year they would roam at will through the Caribbean passages and along our shores, obviously well informed, sinking everything. And from a normal shipping tonnage of more than a hundred thousand each month we should be reduced by ten and twenty thousand tons to one single furtive arrival of seven thousand tons in the next September, the lowest month of the war.

It was a slow and agonizing attrition. We sat helpless on our island while ship after ship coming to us with food, medicines, fire equipment, munitions, and all the other necessities was sunk. Our losses gradually came to exceed survivals. Our hospitals were filled with rescued passengers and seamen; our warehouses were gradually emptied of food; it became a far from unusual thing to appeal for a special plane-load of urgent cargo from the mainland: chlorine for the water-supply system; insulin and sulfa drugs; repair parts for some essential machine. But food was the worst of the worries. We could hardly get 30,000 tons of it a month by plane, as we reluctantly concluded after long figuring —even if we had the planes!

In odd moments I wondered how our neighbor islands were faring; their situation might well be as bad as ours. We had the special problem of a population density which at once made a large volume of food necessary and reduced the possibility of growing enough of it at home. They had the difficulties of distance—being more remote from the mainland—and of having been longer under the pressure of war so
that their reserves were probably even more depleted than ours. We serviced the American Virgins. Throughout the crisis all our plans included a sufficiency for their needs; and in fact these islands probably suffered less than any of the Antilles. Those worst off, I thought, would lie between the Virgins and Trinidad, including some small Dutch islands—St. Eustatius, St. Martin (which was half French) and Saba—and the French possessions. On none, however, was the density of population so great, except Barbados, which as it turned out had done the best job of all in converting to food production.

We ourselves were up against great difficulties. And from the very first I had no illusions of easy success. I knew what I should have to do; and much as I dreaded it, I went to work. First I must try for a stock pile before we were completely blockaded; second, I must try desperately to increase food-growing at home, even, if necessary, at the expense of cane; third, I must use all possible measures of conservation, guard against profiteering, and prevent hoarding by those with funds at the expense of those whose incomes were low; and I must keep as much tonnage coming our way as could possibly be managed and see that a minimum of it was used for non-essentials.

In the first effort to secure the stock pile, the conditions seemed to necessitate governmental action. I could see no reason why private importers and merchants should create reserves on which they would risk spoilage and price changes as well as loss of interest on the enlarged investment, and I could not see how they could even if they would! It was with this in mind that I had asked the President for emergency funds two days after Pearl Harbor. I thought that these could be allocated to me, as a Presidential agent, and that I could set up the reserve through the Food and Supplies Commission—which, by now, was organized and operating. Communications with Washington were so poor during the next two months that I had difficulty in following up this recommendation except by writing and cabling again and again to the Secretary and to the President. Until late in December when I had a letter from Mr. Roosevelt, I was not sure anything could be done. Then, when I was sure, it was clear to me that it was going to be done wrong. I would protest but without result.

My second effort must be to find out if I could what our tonnage allowance was going to be and try to fit sugar production as well as food imports to that allowance. I should begin that effort by pointing out that if we had any at all left of that national pride we had been making so much of lately our dependents could not be left to starve. Even if we had no feeling of noblesse, we must remember that the world looked to us for Puerto Rican protection. I forgot in this that the legislative branch of our government is not, in any real sense, national, but that its members represent
localities. This results in a peculiar view of national responsibilities which might almost be described as no view at all. More political approval can always be gained by denouncing outsiders than by offering to help them—especially if that means the least hint of sacrifice in some home district. Now all America was frightened and the first impulse of Congressmen was to hoard for self-protection, not to look outside for sacrifices. During the worst of our crisis begging for help would be useless. The President understood what must be done and he tried to send us relief. Others were too busy, too much engaged in interagency struggles, or too unsympathetic to give us any effective attention.

Not until the summer of ’42 would even a beginning be made toward estimating the cargo allowance necessary to Puerto Rico’s very life and toward making the adjustments necessary to this allowance. Meanwhile, during this precious half year, I had to watch, with what patience I could, business going on as usual. Or, rather, better than usual! For there at once began a race to fill cargo space with the most profitable, not the most necessary goods. Again and again, during these months, in urging control as our shipping disappeared I should cite flagrant instances of misconduct. Enough luxuries would be imported, while Washington waited, to carry the well-to-do through the war with practically no privation. But we should be without rice, the daily food of our people, for nearly three months. The shipping companies were as evasive as the importers. It would be almost impossible to learn the content of cargoes, say nothing of controlling them. It would be more and more maddening to watch the time pass with nothing done. If we had acted in December-January we might have built reserves even with the tonnage we received. But also we might have enlarged vastly our insular food-growing. There had been such an effort already started—it was called the Plan de Siembras—and it needed only to be revised and increased in scale. What was necessary was to furnish seed and fertilizers and to guarantee that the resulting crops would be as profitable as the sugar cane to which our agricultores were more accustomed. If this guaranteed market was provided and if we were told authoritatively what part of the tonnage for moving sugar would be taken away, farmers—and even the sugar corporations—would, we thought, turn to food production. As it would turn out, the estimates of outgoing tonnage, when I should get them, would be ignored by those whose policies they affected. And the Farmers’ Association (front for the sugar producers and roughly corresponding to that better-known American phenomenon, the California Farmers’ Association) would never accept the suggestion of conversion from cane to food. It was their feeling that it was dangerous for it to get abroad that food could be raised in Puerto Rico. Cane was more profitable for them and their most earnest attention had always been given to lobbying for higher quotas on the ground that no other crop could be grown. Puerto Rico, they
contended, would starve without a high tonnage of food imports. Incidentally a high tonnage of imports would provide cargo space for their outgoing sugar, thus making restriction unnecessary.

Even before I had suggested this rearrangement, they had anticipated it and had begun their campaign to prevent it. The heaviest weapons I could produce would be ineffectual. This resistance would be completely successful. They resorted to any and all weapons. Combining with the importers, they put on an impressive show for Congress on which the ineffable Mr. Bolivar Pagán rode like a happy ship on a wave shouting "down with Tugwell"; they talked long and loudly about "socialism" at first, then realizing the inappropriateness of this, about "fascism," unabashedly attributing these affiliations to me. Cried Mr. Pagán on the floor of the House, "Tugwell is a Quisling, betraying Puerto Rico." Several hundred newspapers liked that, and editorialized on the strength of it. "Remove Tugwell" became the focus of the movement, and the Republicans cocked an eye, always interested in embarrassing the President.

But they were not so interested as the Southern Democrats. I have described how Senator McKellar swiped at me about land tenure. The poll-tax legislators, it seemed, all felt the same way. Representing, as many of them did, a limited constituency from which most workers and tenants were shut out, they lost no opportunity to express their faithfulness to constituent landlords. They already had old scores against me. I had not only initiated the Resettlement movement which sought to make independent men out of subservient tenants, but also I had led the old fight in the A.A.A. for sharing benefit payments between landlords and croppers; beyond that I had won a small concession on the wages of farm labor. I was a minor menace to their system and they were glad to cooperate in proving that I was a socialist, a crackpot, a Quisling, a Hitler, a waster of funds, an inefficient administrator, and so on—inconsistent, perhaps, much of it, but earnestly reiterated. I could expect more of the same. During these early months the liaison was perfected between the Puerto Rican press, the Farmers' Association, the A. F. of L. in Puerto Rico, the Resident Commissioner, Mr. O'Neal's Government-supported farm lobby, the reactionary Democrats and the (rather amused) Republicans. Sometimes it seemed to me that very large cannon were aimed at a very small mouse. But at the same time it seemed incredible that all of them might miss.

I could not forget, as this struggle got under way, that I had to do what I could to conserve what we had and to see that it was fairly shared. To do that we need not ask the permission of the Congress—or so I thought at first. But, although we had anticipated this need, and had set up an Insular Food and Supplies Commission, the Congress was at last backing reluctantly into a price-control and supply bill in
Washington and if that were passed it would supersede our own efforts. Ought we to set up a large organization and risk its probable clash with a similar Federal agency? After much discussion and communication with Mr. Henderson and his people it seemed best not to proceed. They were definite in their advice against it. So we waited. The wait was discouraging, for O.P.A. would fail us badly. Still there seemed to be no alternative, since Mr. Henderson always promised us prompt enforcement, and his people warned us against invading their field. I explained to him how much faster than elsewhere our costs of living had risen; and how rapidly the dangers of submarine blockade were deepening. Ocean transportation rates had been advanced already by enormous percentages and heavy insurance bonuses had been imposed. More of the same was obviously coming. These increases were added to prices already staggering. To my argument that these were war risks and ought not to be borne by the poor consumers of Puerto Rico I could get no reply. The disorganization in Washington was still so prevalent that it was impossible to find out whom to approach on such matters and who had the final say—and I was by no means inexperienced in finding my way about in the capital. This latter difficulty applied not only to matters of supply, prices, and shipping, at that time, but to others as well. One of the more important was to be the controls imposed by the War Production Board which will always, to me, serve as an illustration of governmental obstructiveness and incompetence. If the matters involved had not been so vital to Puerto Rico I should have had some personal amusement in watching their development because for years the burden of repeated reactionary attacks on me—presumably to please the businessmen—had centered in the practical incompetence of "professors." It had always been necessary for the press and the pressure lobbyists who disliked me to keep up that fiction. That it was particularly annoying to my overorderly nature they may or may not have known—anyway it was mercilessly harped on, regardless of fact. I felt, and those who were closest to it also felt, in a kind of injured way, that we did a tremendous administrative job with the vast amorphous agencies we put together in the Resettlement Administration, straightening out many inherited tangles and literally bringing order into chaos. I thought too that I had administratively improved the old Department of Agriculture; certainly I had worked hard enough at the task. These efforts of mine were, however, accompanied by a steady and increasing repetition of charges that I was an incompetent manager. It was easy to see that policies were deliberately misinterpreted so that their execution could be shown to be inefficient and even that this was a favorite device, but nevertheless it seemed to feed a demand and I had no defense. Take, for instance, the subsistence homestead policy. I had always dissented from that. But when it failed and Mr. M. L. Wilson ran away from its consequences, the President transferred it to me for straightening out. It was at once fathered on me as one of the "college-professor schemes" I had tried to get the
Government into permanently. We did much in Resettlement to rescue these projects from their hopeless situation; but we were nevertheless blamed for their invention and their inevitable failure.

I still believe that the administrative group I assembled for Resettlement has never been equaled in the Federal Government. Mr. C. B. Baldwin, who, after an interval, succeeded to my position as head of the organization, was noted by now as one of the Government's most skilled administrators. He had been in charge of organization for me. Yet Senator Taft, in his speech on my confirmation, was still repeating that I was "one of the worst administrators who ever lived." If I was, then one of the really best administrators who ever lived got his training in a strange school.

I refer to this old—and, as I feel, unjustified—criticism merely for the contrast with the War Production Board, which, excepting perhaps the city of San Juan, reached the highest standard for governmental inefficiency I had ever observed. We should, almost at once, have to begin the exasperating business of dealing with an organization which neither knew where it was going nor, if it was going there, why. And not knowing any of that, no policies could either be announced or discovered. I thought, in my first dealings with it, that, like the War Shipping Administration, it was being run more or less for and by the private concerns it was supposed to control and to turn to the uses of war. That, reprehensible as it might be, would at least have been understandable; if it were a principle it could be understood and sometimes circumvented in operation. But although there were an infinite number of cited instances in which private interests were served, that frequently did not seem to explain what happened. Nothing but the most complete confusion of mind and purpose would explain that—as though not human creatures at all but some mindless race were running the affair. But these were businessmen, not "college professors"!

Let me cite a few only of numerous instances. About the time of which I write there issued an order stopping the use of molasses for the manufacture of rum. This was obviously a publicity coup. It sounded fine in the early days of war to issue an order like that. But the facts were that if Puerto Rican molasses—about one third of it—were not made into rum it would not be made into anything. It would, in fact, be wasted. The scarcest things on the seven seas even then were tankers. As it turned out, some fifty million gallons of Puerto Rican molasses would be run into ditches before the year was out, anyway. If this order had stood, the amount would have increased by some twenty millions. The rum-distilling equipment was already in existence and so did not require any new critical materials. Apart from the fact that the rum tax made up about one half of our insular revenues at a time when the
most extraordinary demands on government were obviously about to be made, there was the incidental fact that the making of rum was a source of badly needed employment. For anyone could see that with shipping cut off, an island without war industries was going to have an unprecedented rise in the number of those who were idle and without income. The first materials to be excluded from scarce shipping would be bulky building materials and other similar products on which our employment depended. It took several months and the most strenuous work of myself, Egloff, Moscoso and others to secure a modification of this order. The whole thing was afterward quietly abandoned but not until it had done enormous irresponsible damage.

Another illustration of the efficiency with which the businessmen in W.P.B. conducted their affairs will be a little displaced in time, for it had to do with a hurricane reserve. Along in the spring, as I watched the lumber and other materials disappear from our warehouses I began to wonder what would happen if we should have a typical West Indian storm. One might come at any time after 1 June. And the most necessary material for recovery from it—even preparation for it by boarding up—was cheap lumber and nails. I began to request a shipload of lumber, nails and roofing paper to be put into a hurricane stock pile. After months of "consideration" and within measurable distance of the supposed season for storms, I had a letter from some business executive describing in moving language the hurricane risk, from his own experience—but nevertheless denying the request. Meanwhile much more than I had asked as a reserve had arrived for private accounts and gone into reserve to be sold at the fortune-making rates which always prevail at such times in Puerto Rico. Everyone knows of a dozen comfortable fortunes made by importers just after hurricanes. At the same time, the hurricane loans made by the relief commission after the 1928 storm have mostly had to be forgiven. They were largely used, of course, to build those fortunes—a nice transfer of public funds to private uses. Evidently the War Production Board favored that system.

But perhaps most exasperating of all was the prohibition against any building, private or public, of more than $500 in value—in other words, everything—without a special permit. This was an order designed to turn the nation's energies into war production and useful in a situation where materials might be misused and where an actual man-power shortage could be forecast. In Puerto Rico we had no war industries. But we did have a few local materials which might be used for giving employment to those now misemployed by the building industry and other customary occupations. The effect of war in Puerto Rico was obviously just the reverse of that on the continent: instead of a man-power shortage, we were going to have practically universal unemployment. And none of the materials we happened
to have could be used in the States—there was no way to get them there!
Nevertheless the general order to stop all construction was rigorously applied to
Puerto Rico.
Scores of thousands were losing their jobs every day. Such industries as we had
were closed for lack of raw materials and none were expected to come in. There was
real danger of riotous protests. Naturally I undertook to have the order changed.
There was no representative of the Board in Puerto Rico and the effect of the order
was total. There was no machinery for exception. It was so obviously inapplicable to
our circumstances that my first efforts were to have Puerto Rico excluded. What
ensued was that, seventy-nine days after my letter making the request was sent, I
received an answer from Mr. Esty Foster, of a hitherto unknown New York office of
the Board, saying that prompt attention would be given requests for exception but it
was not considered that Puerto Rico should be exempted! Prompt attention! When
the answer to a letter required seventy-nine days! I stamped up and down my high-
domed office and cursed the businessmen’s red tape and inefficiency. But that order
was never modified. We protested. This failing, we struggled. We spent innumerable
hours, days and weeks in filling out useless forms. We waited while men starved for
work. And often our requests were denied when we had asked for permission to use
only what we could dig out of the Puerto Rican ground or cut out of her remaining
forests. If the Board could have been burned in effigy it would have been the most
popular ceremony ever held in our island. I myself would have danced about the
flames.

Added to our other troubles during that December of ’41 was the prospect of
trouble at the beginning of the zafra—the cane-cutting—in January. There is some
trouble every year as the cutting begins and bargains have to be made for the
season’s wage. The workers have been idle since the previous June; they have run
up what debts the storekeepers will allow and have perhaps been on short rations
for some time. Their family responsibilities urge them toward securing the income
they need and the employers, knowing this, tend to delay the beginning in the
interest of greater docility on the part of the men. This tactic is fiercely resented and
January is consequently a month in which disorder may be expected. In 1941 the
usual differences were accentuated by cruel rises in the cost of living and by the
defection of most cane workers from the A. F. of L. to the less disciplined and more
aggressive new group which called itself the Confederación General de Trabajadores.
Interunion troubles always accentuate any dispute which may be latent. We were
aware that even where the C.G.T. did not operate, new and almost spontaneous
groups were forming with local—and, of course, temporary—leadership. The old A.
F. of L. union—with its collective bargaining contract—appeared merely to be
keeping the lid on in the interest of the employers. Its lack of aggressive action in the workers' interest, and the fact that its head seemed interested only in abusing the Government—which for the first time in Puerto Rico the workers considered to be their own—caused such wholesale desertion that it had a greatly reduced membership. The employers did not readily adjust themselves to this new situation. They turned on the Government too, feeling that the contract which had made a stooge of the A. F. of L. ought somehow to be enforced by the police. This situation had not yet come to its crisis, and would not for a few more weeks, but it could be seen to be boiling up.

In the case of what would very likely amount to a general strike, I knew well enough what my attitude would have to be, but I began to wonder about that of my military colleagues. For with a war going on, a strike, even one in the cane fields which could scarcely be said to affect the course of the war, would make them restless. And trouble might well spread to jobs in which they had a more direct interest. I thought General Collins would leave it to me—not that he was particularly sympathetic to labor but that he felt me to be competent, aside from the fact that he was the kind of soldier who believes the supersession of civil authority to be a matter of last resort. I could not feel so sure that Admiral Hoover would take the same attitude. For one thing he had some extremely interested Puerto Ricans about him as naval officers—they had been in the Reserve and were now on active duty. Some of them actually had proprietary interests, some were former lawyers; and his public-relations officer—as I had to complain—was still serving the Puerto Rican Trade Council by sending a periodical report to the Washington office. This was clearly not an activity in which a naval officer ought to be engaged, and since practically all his reports contained critical references to my administration, much in the manner of the press, I objected. The Admiral acted promptly. Nevertheless he made no secret of belonging to the strong-arm-treatment school of labor attitudes. This natural bent, together with his associations in the service, together, also, with the fact that the contractors on the naval construction jobs were being pushed hard by him, made me apprehensive. We might, at best, find ourselves in dispute as to policy; we might, at worst, come to a break in which he would demand the imposition of martial law.

It was at this time that I first began to study martial law and its possible application to our situation. There was not only the contingency of labor troubles which might amount, in certain circumstances, to a state of emergency; but there was also the possibility of an attack which might create an ungovernable panic on our crowded island so that defense measures could not be carried out. We were beginning to learn in detail what had happened in Hawaii in a similar situation. The Governor had been as unprepared for civil control as I should have been under similar
circumstances and when the commanding military officer had laid a form on his desk declaring martial law he apparently had not waited to call in his legal advisers. He had signed. But what he had signed was a formula got up by the War Department in Washington. It said clearly that all his civil functions were surrendered to the military until the military should be pleased to hand them back. It dawned on me that doubtless General Collins had a similar form in his desk and was under orders to require my signature in case it seemed necessary.

2 I began to inquire and found that the Interior Department officials were fiercely resentful at what had happened in Hawaii. They had not been consulted—either before or after. In view of this I asked for clear instructions. It would be a good while before I should have them, since there was a sizzling controversy about the whole matter in Washington. But meanwhile I let General Collins know that he need not plan to lay a similar order before me, because I should not sign it. He resisted, as he was under orders to do; but, of course, we could not settle it, and throughout our worst troubles it remained a matter of controversy. It seemed to me that I lacked power to surrender any civil function not essential to the restoration of order in case of attack, riot or revolt. All I could do was to call on the military for assistance, a matter which was clearly anticipated in the Organic Act and defined there. I still would remain Governor. What the Army had done in Hawaii was to set up another Governor; and he had carried on all the functions of government from garbage disposal to civil trials. This was an absurd blowing up of military prerogative and was done out of a sense of overimportance among the armchair generals. There wasn’t going to be any such taking over in Puerto Rico unless La Fortaleza was surrounded and the insular police together with the State Guard suppressed. I didn’t contemplate starting a battle with military headquarters; but I warned General Collins that I would not sign away any powers I had and if he got them he would have to take them by a show of force. We had become good friends, the kind who like to be together and who have confidence in each other’s capacity; but neither of us ever gave an inch and both of us hoped that, if we needed it, the decision would be made in Washington. But that did not help me much in facing the critical months just ahead.

Toward the end of the month there was one item of good news: the quantities of medical supplies I had authorized to be ordered were on their way to us; so that

2It was one of the more annoying injustices of the newspaper campaign against me that this issue of martial law should have been twisted to make it appear that I was the one who was seeking to have it established. This probably came about because I asked the Attorney General for his opinion as to my rights in the matter. He may either have concluded I was about to establish martial law and told the press, or he may not have concluded it but let my query leak so that the most harmful conclusion would be drawn. The campaign of misrepresentation about this matter went on for months. I, of course, could make no public statement and neither could General Collins.
even if civil defense continued to fail us we should be ready, in that respect, for trouble. I was, however, having a row with the Red Cross which continued through the emergency period. Its officials flatly refused to maintain any reserves of hospital supplies, emergency feeding equipment, and so on in Puerto Rico. They contended with exasperating and thoroughly unjustified complacency that they would be prepared to meet any disaster but that they could move only after it had occurred. I protested that we were far out in the sea and blockaded. Had they never heard of submarines? Also why had they considered it necessary to maintain a number of complete field hospitals in Hawaii—a fact which they evidently thought was unknown to us? So the argument went. But there was no comfort in it. They did nothing to relieve our minds. And presently they took my chief of police for their insular director—after I had begged his services from the Army and had broken him in to his job. He was a competent official who would sit out the rest of the war in comparative uselessness.

Our doubtful Christmas present for 1941 was one which came directly to us from the President, although I could not believe it at the time. On 21 December, Sunday, I ventured as far away as the south coast to visit the defense council in Ponce. When I got back to La Fortaleza late that night Admiral Hoover was trying to reach me. He had a flat order to evacuate all military dependents. This was really too much! When this got out, the civilian morale we had worked so hard to restore after the crisis of the week before would be shattered. I could imagine what might happen when it sank into people's minds that the Army and Navy thought Puerto Rico unsafe for the wives and children of army officers. For that would be the entirely justifiable interpretation. They could not, of course, appreciate in Washington the difficulties I was having in restoring confidence, hiding weaknesses, putting up a front of cheerful ordinariness. But both Collins and Hoover knew; they regarded the order as a disaster for me as well as for themselves and begged me to act quickly. I telephoned Secretary Ickes and sent off a cable to General Watson. These messages I followed with a letter to the President. Someone had forgot, I said, that Puerto Rico was American territory and that Puerto Rican families were as precious as those of army or navy men. If there were to be evacuation because of the risk of attack we should be accused of discrimination and of saving Continentals first.

The immediate problem for me was the general notice of danger; but it was almost as important that United States citizens in Puerto Rico should be treated like those

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3We got no civil defense materials until our crisis was over and then we had great difficulty in disposing of them.
4A good deal later—really after there was much chance that we might need them—they equipped their local establishment with six field hospitals.
elsewhere. There was also the fact, I pointed out, that most of the Army in Puerto Rico was Puerto Rican. This was their home and that of their families. To what place would they be evacuated? It would be a couple of weeks before I should have any answer at all: then it would be a chilly note from the President saying that it was his own order that families should leave and that it must be done at once. He had pretty obviously reacted simply and indignantly to the slovenly situation so tragically disclosed in Hawaii. And he had forgot about the Puerto Ricans in the Army. But naturally my protests were stopped. Somehow or other we should keep it quiet for a while and eventually it would be modified to except Puerto Rican families. Also I should get, by roundabout channels, the explanation that the President considered Pearl Harbor to be partly the result of soft family life in Hawaii. The officers there were simply too comfortable to have been on the job as they should have been. There was not to be any more of it in the island outposts. I urged that this explanation be made rather than to permit the inference of immediate danger which Puerto Rican civilians were sure to draw. But nothing was done: and we were not permitted to explain.

It was a tough Christmas. I had little reason to be satisfied with anything we had done; and I had every reason to dread the future. Nevertheless we put the best face on it we could find. Young David Bartlett and our Tyler hung their stockings improbably but with the hopeful imagination of the young on a tropical porch; we had a hemlock tree, one of the last shipment we should have for the duration, to remind us of winter in western New York; carols were sung in the patio; and we had in many of our friends for Christmas dinner. But by that time I was flat on my back. A cold I had brought back from the North had not been improved by the kind of month December had turned out to be. My lateral sinuses, as usual, had become involved and my navy doctor friends had taken to puncturing them daily. This was to go on, more or less, for the whole year to come, culminating in a downright pneumonia later, and, even more annoying, a chronic allergic rhinitis. After Christmas, with the island besieged, with panic incipient, with workers and employers clawing at each other, with the newspapers trying for new reaches of fear and defamation daily, I simply passed out for some ten days— nature’s provision, perhaps. But very definitely for that length of time I slid off into indifference.

One day, as I was getting better in the hospital Muñoz came to see me and we talked of larger matters than we were forced to discuss most of the time those days. I found I had forgot, almost, that I was dealing after all with a statesman, so close to politics we were forced to keep in daily exchange. His grasp of the world situation was comprehensive; his judgment about what might happen good. I awoke to a curious
paradox; which I should be convinced was past. This professional politician was far better at other, more general, more generous, things than he was at politics.

As the curious sub-tropical winter developed, and I looked out at the stretches of half-finished air-station, I thought myself not unlucky in my associates and even in the work I had to do.
WHEN I GOT AROUND AGAIN after my illness there was not much fight left in my system. My daily sinus treatments were pretty severe—so severe that after each of them I had to come home and lie down for a couple of hours, sometimes for the rest of the day. In spite of this, perhaps partly because of it, there was no letup. The press seemed to think I was groggy and needed only another wallop or two for the knockout which had become an obvious obsession. The abuse invented hitherto was mild compared with what was produced now. Aside from this, but furnishing fuel for the fire, there were other occurrences: the sugar strike was going on, the longshoremen had walked out, and work on the naval air base was several times interrupted—leaderless stoppages which were almost impossible to handle. Besides this, I became convinced that because of lethargy in San Juan, civil defense would have to be reorganized. Soon I relieved the Coalicionista committee and appointed Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern, who had been the Popular candidate for Resident Commissioner. My theory was that civil defense had to be a people’s movement or—in Puerto Rico—it would be nothing. The committee chosen by Mr. Annexy had been composed of professional políticos, mostly Coalicionistas, who seemed to have the confidence of no one but themselves.

I was facing my first legislative session on 10 February and there were arrangements to be made in advance as well as a message to be written. In spite of the pressure of current events, it was necessary to formulate a program now, if we could, and maneuver it into law. I had done some feverish thinking about it during my illness—for the first time, really, since my inauguration—and I found, surprisingly, when I got around, that it was fairly clear in my mind. I had had rather casual conversations with Muñoz and others; but almost at once we now reached agreement on most measures. There were changes needed to modernize the Government and make it effective for the enlarged tasks it would have to carry out. About this I was emphatic, having Muñoz’s reluctance to overcome. But it seemed a vital preliminary to any further undertaking. After discussion we agreed that industrialization was necessary and should center in a bank and a development company. Puerto Ricans were ready for this and it had indeed been suggested by a number of different individuals; I was a little reluctant to undertake so much in wartime, but Muñoz insisted and we decided to make at least a beginning. Then there were advances to be made—such as were within insular competence and ability—into social security. And there were, of course, emergency measures which had to be taken—the supply organization had to be revised; civil defense had to have legislative backing, we had to set up a State Guard, and transportation and communications breakdowns, growing more acute, had to be met.
The preparatory task for the heroic legislative program which would come out of this session could never have been got through without the loyal assistance I had already learned to lean on in the University troubles, of Mr. James Curry, counsel for the Water Resources Authority, and, of course, Bartlett, Moscoso, Egloff, Sánchez and the others who rallied round and took even my hints to be the device on their banners for the day. Ill as I was, with this help the second genuinely creative period of my public life was written on the law books and in the institutions of Puerto Rico before the end of the year. Nineteen hundred and forty-two will, in local history, be regarded as at once one of the most disastrous and one of the most fruitful of years. Of the whole program only one item would fail altogether—the políticos among the Populares would not accept a revision of the civil-service law which would have established a merit system. Every fiber of their beings revolted. And they would not modernize the police for a continental Governor to manage. Moreover, Muñoz would not feel that he could help in this governmental change. But all else would be done after a fashion—that is to say, be begun—and we should then have to defend our creation.

This last—our defense—would be as hard a task as any and would last far into the future. The job we did in 1942 was made easier by a miraculous concurrence of favoring circumstances. It looked from the outside as though we were sufficiently busy struggling against the blockade with its creeping threat of starvation. But the truth was that the ever present reminder that we existed at the war lords’ convenience established the requisite humility; and it noticeably dampened local differences. Not that the old enemies yielded anything. The commercial organizations, except the retailers, would make a record of almost traitorous hostility; the press would hammer daily at this or that, wherever a nerve was exposed; the sugar lawyers would come up from their underground at strategic times and places for a treacherous blow. But it may be that the very violence of this opposition drew the rest of us closer together and lent force to Muñoz´ pleas for momentary discipline among his unruly local leaders. I think now that it must have been so.

7 January. Getting on my feet with plenty of troubles and hardly the energy to handle them.

Orders stopping sale of tires and automobiles not so hard to enforce. But we have a senseless one now stopping the use of molasses for rum. I shall have to fight it, since half our revenues are involved.
Manila has fallen but Corregidor holds out. Collins shows me how the campaign has followed faithfully staff plans made twenty and more years ago. To read the papers one would think that MacArthur had improvised it all.

It begins to seem that we are somehow strong enough to hold in the Atlantic. Puerto Ricans are losing their panicky fear of momentary attack from air and sea. The President spoke yesterday of an expeditionary force to Britain, thus making the United Kingdom, along with the Atlantic islands and West Africa, an advanced base for our operations—a new role for the mighty British, but great stuff locally. It strengthens my hand and keeps the falangistas underground. The far Pacific seems lost. But we are given a breathing spell here. Unless and until Hitler takes England and North Africa, he can't advance his thrust into this central American sea. We may have a sporadic raid, as things are, but nothing more. That might, of course, make a rubble heap of San Juan, and I am not excused from preparation.¹

9 January. Yesterday organized Institute of Tropical Agriculture. Beginning work on legislative projects and laboring with the unsatisfactory budget of Fitzsimmons. There is one thing about governmental work in Puerto Rico: everything remains to be done. There is no recruitment or personnel selection worth talking of; no planning, no budgeting, no inspection or investigation service, no assessments for benefit, not even any basic surveys and maps. Bartlett is setting up a district office of the National Resources Planning Board which should be a big help. We are disappointed with the Bettman draft of the Planning Act—too elaborate and costly for Puerto Rico. We must revise and simplify it ourselves. Curry is at work on draft of laws for new Authorities for transportation, communications, water and sewer systems, and a credit institution to be linked to a company for development. If we can't get Federal help, although Haiti (and others) can, perhaps it can be done without. I fear only the incompetence and stupidity of government—which Muñoz, even, will not take seriously, say nothing of the políticos who really seem to believe in it.

¹Just at this time Mr. A. J. Liebling was getting home from Europe. His observation of the current scene—and his feeling about it—in The Road Back to Paris (pp. 205-6)—express a kind of dogged feeling most of us had at that time:

"Pearl Harbor had left slight trace on the public mind, it seemed to a man coming off a boat in mid-January of 1942, but it had closed the second phase of the war. The first had ended with the disaster of the Pétain armistice. The second had been a negative success because our side had avoided collapse. The third, however unpromising it might start, however long it might last, was bound to end in the defeat of the fascist powers. . . ."

That phase, as we got our second wind, was just beginning—in Puerto Rico, as elsewhere. We knew, against all probability, perhaps, that we should win.
15 January. Still having painful and exhausting sinus treatments, mitigated only by finding real friends among the naval doctors. I dread my daily treatment; but the fun of seeing all the docs is almost worth it.

Incredible attacks in the press and on the radio.

Reorganizing civil defense today to get it into the people's hands, if possible, and away from the "better element."

17 January. It seems that I tore it by putting in a Popular as Director of Civil Defense. It violated the custom that a political party which wins in a locality gets all the gravy there.

19 January. Violent Coalición and press reaction over civilian defense. A committee of políticos is being sent to Washington. All the political disturbance has finally had a military reaction. Hoover half threatened today to "establish order." I can imagine the pressure on him. I really think Collins may have saved us from a crisis by suggesting that civilian defense accept "technical advice" from the Army. I think Hoover was on the verge of demanding martial law. Well as he must know me by now, if he reads the press or listens to the radio he must look at me twice on his daily visits to see if it's the same individual. He hasn't yet learned to discount the liars hereabouts.

20 January. The Coalición is in a perfect lather of rage and their newspaper foams with nastiness. They have now set up a "Committee of National Defense"—quite high-sounding for políticos out for jobs. I recall what someone said of a broker retiring from Wall Street at an early age—he found himself becoming scrupulous and that put him at such a disadvantage that he was retiring to escape ruin. Perhaps I shall be ruined.

Singapore going; which about marks the end of a century of imperialism. I long to know, but cannot at this distance, the grand strategy formulated during Churchill's visit to Washington.

22 January, Bartlett, back from Washington, reports that there is a new category of "evacuation housing" which may have some hope for us. I find it hard to give up for the whole duration my design for eliminating the slums. This is true, also, of much else. The question whether we can get on at all with the program we conceived in peace torments me as I write my message to the legislature. The need here will be greater. But I dread the Congressional indifference and the unwillingness of administrative agencies to seem to be doing any ordinary task however necessary. They cannot understand—or find it inconvenient to admit as they go to the
Congress for appropriations—that they are doing anything but vital war work. Unemployment is deepening here and will get worse if we are blockaded.

27 January, Have finally got Father Haas here to mediate the sugar strike. I have reason to be proud of the police; and I think we shall get through this trouble without being either Cossack or soft. Probably neither side will like it.

28 January. The Coamo has landed seventy-eight new survivors. These are from the Lady Hawkins, torpedoed off Hatteras. I was pretty disgusted with Hoover for refusing to take twenty-eight of them into the Naval Hospital. They were British seamen (all but five). I called Collins and he said, "By God, send 'em up here." And they are all comfortable in El Morro hospital now.

MacArthur holds out on Bataan; but Singapore is as good as gone. The Australians and the Chinese are audibly sore because no help is coming to them. The Chinese all but threaten to withdraw. Churchill yesterday made a conciliatory but pessimistic speech and set up a Dominions War Council. He is in trouble at home just the same in spite of ovations in the U.S. The Laborites know him. I hope we shall learn before it is too late.

29 January. Pagán announces, with the co-operation of some hundreds of newspapers and the A.P., that I am a Quisling. Referring, of course, to throwing his henchmen out of civil defense.

It is announced that American troops have arrived in Ireland—pretty good, at that. Marshall must be doing his job.

A hearty letter from Harold Ickes expressing complete confidence. But the attacks keep up and I can't help wondering if I am an embarrassment.

3 February. Message fairly complete. Newspaper attacks continue. Malice seems to feed on and sustain itself.

First serious strike incident. Several men killed at Guayama, allegedly by a sugar superintendent and his men. But Father Haas has worked out a compromise. I am to set up the Minimum Wage Board already authorized by legislation but which I have delayed in setting up, hoping for amendments. My appointments to it are purely ministerial, which represents an attrition on the governorship to which Swope, under Popular pressure, agreed. Muñoz will consent to later amendments.

It seems, however, that although the leaders agreed to let this Board decide, the C.G.T. leaders cannot deliver. A big meeting yesterday refused resumption of work
unless I would call in the producers, get a guarantee of raises, etc. I refused, of course. And we seem to be back where we were, with a prospect of more violence.

I have talked with Muñoz and told him that unless he gets the strikers to go to work and allow grievances to be settled in an orderly way, I shall resign. I know that the agitation is kept up by his local leaders. If he has no discipline we may as well know it. I have staked everything on fairness, openness, and protection for all interests. If I am not to be trusted, I would rather quit now.

4 February. Finished message. But affairs are so confused in Washington that several vital issues could not be discussed intelligently. Even now, with the war two months old, I cannot find out what part of the cost of food storage (if we ever get any), medical supplies, civil defense materials, State Guard arms, quarters, pay, etc., is going to be borne by the Federal Government and what part I should request from the legislature. Interior appears to be merely sitting on the fifteen millions I’d counted on. It was allocated to the Secretary and I’m afraid it’s fallen into Swope’s hands. He may smother it. I begin to wonder if business interests here are not preventing action.

I have sent another urgent wire to Ickes demanding action.

Red Gross man here who pompously indicates that if we have trouble they will step in "to furnish the brains" for an emergency organization. His idea of co-operation seems to be to steal the police chief I got from the Army. And I can’t get any commitment on actual storage of supplies on the island.

The strike is still on. Yesterday I called in certain of the producers. I’m sorry to have had a nasty exchange with a couple of their lawyers. They will be vindictive. The managers and I found it possible to talk sense. They agreed, in fact, to abide by the Minimum Wage Board’s decisions, on the basis of which I am issuing a public appeal to the strikers.

6 February. Now, after my appeal to the strikers, the producers repudiate their agreement to abide by the decision of the Minimum Wage Board. This comes of admitting lawyers to conversations among principals.

Of course, the Governor of Puerto Rico ought not to get into labor disputes at all. I am forced into it by the desperate need for settlement. Hoover, for instance, is obviously restless. Today the longshoremen went out. Father Haas had hardly left before all his work was repudiated. And the situation is worse than ever.
Later. The C.G.T. has evidently responded to Muñoz’ appeal. They have voted to abide by the Minimum Wage Board decisions. But now I am on the spot because of the producers’ treachery.

Cabling urgently for a professional conciliator. Also, I have sent more appeals to Ickes to come across with the help promised by the President and authorized by Congress. Up to now I have not had a cent of aid from any source—Red Cross, Civil Defense, Interior, or any other.

Everything is going badly for our side. The Japanese are pressing India. Singapore goes. The grand strategy seems clearly now for the Japs and the Nazis to meet in mid-India. Only the tough Russians make any headway and they are slowed down. Too little and too late runs like a refrain through everything. Anyway we seem to have a new—and single—production head now and I hear that one shipping head is imminent. Maybe now we shall be able to get some answers.

10 February. Legislative session begins today. Yesterday the Coalicionistas issued another intemperate denunciation of me. In spite of all the row, I had a nice letter from the President yesterday. Mr. Bolivar Pagán would not enjoy its references to him; but then he can hardly have enjoyed the recent going over the President gave him either, as the letter indicates. "Muñoz," says the President, "is a better Puerto Rican leader than Pagán" . . . who "is wholly political."

It will be seen that the troubles of a wartime Governor in Puerto Rico did not come from any uncertainty about what to do or how to do it—these were so plain as to be inevitable—but rather from inability to find out whether Washington would approve and assist. Being faced with daily decisions and not being able to get directions from those who make the larger policies into which those decisions fit is a nerve-wearing process, but one which seems to be familiar to all provincial officials. I have found British Governors, experienced as they are, almost neurotic, sometimes, from this cause. The decisions have to be made because events will not wait. My experience was that they were at least as likely to be disapproved as approved. This came largely in my case from the fact that the business group in Puerto Rico who were determined to make a good thing out of the war had powerful friends and connections in Washington and I never knew how they were going to succeed in undermining or actually reversing me there. There is always an appeasement tendency in Washington which has to be reckoned with; there is also the inclination to feel that those out in the field manage things less well than home officials could do it, not having intimate and current knowledge of policy. Washington, besides, never hears any good, only bad; and the impulse to be suspicious of distant officials is almost insuperable. Home offices never like trouble.
of any kind. The view there tends to be that a field official is successful if he is never heard of—which accounts largely for the mediocrity of administrators and for the lack of courage in opposing local forces strong enough to have influence in Washington. This involves a sacrifice of the plain exploited folk; but they never reach beyond the island with their complaints.

It was not true that Mr. Ickes expected me to become the perfect appeaser. But my problems now seldom got any serious attention from him, since they naturally had to share his working day with a thousand others. My troubles centered largely in Mr. Swope, strangely enough, who soon began to exhibit an active hostility in spite of the fact that he owed his present appointment to my intervention. This was partly because I pushed him; and he did not like being pushed. It was also because, as he judged the situation, I was rapidly accumulating an opposition which would result in my removal. Naturally he did not want to be the supporter of someone who was marked for execution; much better, he seemed to feel, to be one of those who cooperated with what was going to happen anyway than to be one of those who opposed and lost.

I knew well enough who was writing the incredibly indifferent, even hostile, letters I began to receive about this time from the Secretary. I was hotly determined to get action. Mr. Ickes seemed to be telling me to keep quiet and stop bothering him. When he got around to it I would be told what had been decided. But I knew this was not so. He signed hundreds of letters a day written by numerous subordinates. These were some of them. Once in a while I had a very different kind of one which, in its sharp and intimate interest, told me how he really felt. And once in a while he turned loose on our mutual enemies. He used his press conference on 11 February as one of these occasions; he attacked the Coalicionistas with that combination of wit and cutting criticism he knew so well how to use. The result was a furious reaction. The onslaught on both of us in the press was amazing even for Puerto Rico. But in succeeding days there was some letup and I wrote to tell him of it, and to report some detail—a letter for his eyes, not those of his subordinates.

The fight was going on in spite of everything. I needed no more than to know that both he and the President were with me. The rest I could take care of—even uncertain support in the Department. This last was hard to have to undergo but we were learning that we should have to fight everywhere and that there was not going to be any friendly territory, not even any, it seemed, which was neutral. As we worked in Puerto Rico it was a constant source of weakness that we were aware of hostility in the Division of Territories. Mr. Swope was either naïve about the Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce or so constituted that he was unable to believe that the interests of business could run against those of the public. The importers and the
sugar lobbyists were as welcome as ever in his office after they began their war on me. I could recognize the slick sheen of their influence in the letters which seemed to be the Secretary’s because he signed them. But there was worse coming—in the unlikely shape of a Mr. Paul Gordon.

It is not pleasant to make the admission that I had many coworkers in these months who detested me for what I represented, who worked hard to defeat all my plans, and who did not hesitate to use the press, the opposition in the Congress, or any other means they could find to further their purpose of displacing me. It is not pleasant but it is nevertheless true. There were times when I fell into the despondent certainty that so general an opposition could only originate in some failure of mine or some irreparable fault of personality. Partly because of this and partly because I saw nothing else to do immediately, I tried faithfully to work with each of these nominal collaborators in turn. For reasons which can be understood at this distance but which were hard to credit currently, it proved to be impossible. These individuals, it is now clear, were on the other side in a struggle which for them was more important than any other. I was a menace to their objectives; and they chose to make it a me-or-you kind of fight. Fortunately only one of them would survive the year. And he would not last through the next. This was not because I could not have worked with them but because they insisted on making it that kind of issue. The list included Mr. Malcolm, the Attorney General; Mr. Fitzsimmons, the Auditor; Mr. Baker, the Director of the W.P.A. in Puerto Rico; Mr. Mead of O.P.A.; Mr. Frisbie, Chairman of the Department of Agriculture’s co-ordinating committee in Puerto Rico which called itself the "War Board"; Mr. Brown of the Agricultural Marketing Administration; and Mr. Hadley, the Regional Forester. These were among the most ardent workers in the cause. There were others; but I shall not name them because they seem only to have been chair-warmer, or subordinates, whose fault, aside from not possessing any feeling for the public interest, was a pathetic attempt to line up with those who were going to win.

This crowd never seemed to have any doubt that they were on the winning side. For this they had the reason that they were allied with the forces which always had prevailed in Puerto Rico. To suggest that they might fail must have seemed to them the equivalent of intimating that the trade winds might cease and the earth turn in reverse. Their opposition was carried on almost contemptuously; they scarcely bothered to conceal at first, and later did not attempt to conceal at all, their alliances and conspiracies. Such superb confidence could only come, of course, from active support among the "better element" and constant assurances from Federal officials who were their superiors in Washington that something was always about to happen. Then, too, it is always intoxicating to be made much of by the press. For
now the newspaper campaign began to turn on "revelations" —that is, supposedly inside information of a damaging sort. Day after day small items appeared which were personally derogatory to me and my close associates—even, at the worst, my family—insinuations of the most reprehensible conduct. Besides this there was a calculated succession of semiofficial items having to do with differences of judgment between myself and other officials in which I was inevitably shown to be arbitrary, arrogant, mistaken and incompetent. This kind of thing originated in the offices of the Attorney General, the Auditor and the Chairman of the Agricultural "War Board." And the press in return pictured these, and other officials who would co-operate, as the true friends of Puerto Rico engaged in courageous opposition to a tyrannous, capricious and extravagant Governor, hinting subtly that one of them might soon be called to high duties and so rewarded for his struggle against odds. There is nothing new about this impulse in the Puerto Rican press. Continental Governors had been fair game for this kind of insinuation ever since the occupied island had discovered our incredible adherence to a range of principles which included, among others, freedom of the press—a strange vagary for conquerors to maintain! What was new was the flagrant and provocative way in which my official subordinates defied all administrative decencies and so lent themselves to a delighted set of persecutors. Their contempt for me was as complete as their confidence. And if they did not derive most of their assurance from the knowledge of similar sentiments in the Division of Territories and in the Congress they would have to be set down as suffering from suicidal compulsion. For after a while the situation became intolerable—so intolerable as to be visible even in distant wartime Washington.

It was hard to bear this cross in wartime and with a reform movement dependent on my co-operation. I naturally took steps to be relieved of it. These consisted merely in the most careful and temperate reporting of the situation, which was a slow process but, I felt, a sound one. I might have gone to Washington at any time and created an issue. On the other hand I should have had to explain why the conspiracy was so general, and I was not quite certain myself that I was not somewhat responsible. Mr. Ickes and Mr. Roosevelt had not yet understood the line-up of forces in Puerto Rico and the alliances which had taken shape—which was not strange when I myself was not yet sure that the conspiracy was as well defined as it appeared. Time had to be allowed for events to make their own argument. And perhaps I had not been sufficiently diligent in reporting or persuasive in arguing.

This happened slowly, as it must. Meanwhile I went my way. But we were in real trouble now—not the kind we had been borrowing because of a power and strategy we attributed to Germany, and which, as we can see now, was an exaggeration, but a palpable danger which, moreover, we had no means of combating: the submarines
were all about us. We were not going to be invaded; but we were going to be nearly starved; and we might be seriously attacked. At this time resources for patrol were still so meager as to be almost non-existent. The army and navy commands had not been organized effectively, as they would be later, to cover the whole of the Antilles; and the air force was still in the nebulous state from which it would not emerge for some time to come. There were no convoys in our part of the world and individual ships were presenting themselves as easy targets in the passages between the islands where they must converge for transit. By the middle of March it had made individual movement so hazardous as to reduce our tonnage by more than half; by June all such movements would have been stopped. We were already partially paralyzed. Still the Navy had no visible plans for relief. The patrols would be enlarged, we were told; but we knew of no small-boat program such as seemed to us necessary to meet the menace; and the planes for air reconnaissance were still lacking.

The authority of the submarine in our sea was to be complete for the next ten months. But it must be understood that we could not see then a terminal point at ten months in the future. The coming weeks, each of them ages long, stretched out ahead in unrelieved vistas; we had the sensation of slow strangulation about which we could do nothing. What was most distressing was the Navy’s hesitation and uncertainty. Pearl Harbor had shaken our faith more, no doubt, than was warranted. But the sudden lessons of that disaster were clear even to laymen—and we could not see that they had been learned. Admiral Hoover seemed in all respects typical. When the news came that the Prince of Wales and the Repulse had been sunk by aerial bombing, he declared flatly that such a thing was impossible. I argued in an amateur way that it was not only possible but should have been expected. In fact, being an amateur, and so not having much perspective in military matters, I could not appreciate then, as I learned to do later under Tom Phillips’ guidance, the alternate ascendancy of offense and defense which seems to be the rule. The large capital ship appeared to be obsolete—had been for some time. Within a matter of months I should be amazed to hear Admiral Hoover betray his reversal on this question by remarking that battleships were a handicap because they existed only to be elaborately protected. I thought he—and other navy men—might have arrived at this conclusion more rapidly, especially those who, like him, wore the golden wings of flight-training and had had experience in carriers. Later it appeared that this was too simple a view of heavy-armored craft when adequately gunned.

It was to be expected, of course, that the good brains of the Navy had not been paralyzed and that somewhere in the Washington bureaus the plans were being made and the blueprints drawn for proper opposition to our enemy. But it was
difficult to maintain confidence in Puerto Rico in the spring of ’42, with ships sinking all around and their survivors landing in hundreds, with food, medical and industrial supplies becoming scarce, with no knowledge of actual corrective measures reaching us from any source, and with no obvious reason for trusting that the problems were being solved. Pearl Harbor had for the time being undermined our faith.

And then there was an attack on Aruba. It was an impressive event. At least six tankers were sunk and serious damage was done to shore installations. We had then to consider not as theoretically possible, but as immediately likely, an attempt to destroy the command center at San Juan which could so easily be shelled from the sea, and which had been built up, by incredible folly, within the largest center of population in the Caribbean. On 21 February we thought the attack had arrived. It was Saturday and I had been clearing my desk preparatory to a journey across the island to inspect defense arrangements on the south coast. General Collins called just as I was leaving to say that there were submarines—an undetermined number, but more than one—off the harbor and that our evacuation arrangements had better be rushed. We were, as a matter of fact, far from ready for such an emergency. But facing the thing had a bracing effect. The news spread. It was taken in a new spirit. It was almost, then, what it became quite definitely later on, defiant, as much as to say that we were ready and let it come! I myself was kept from that feeling by the picture of panic in that old rubble-walled town which had painted itself so vividly on my imagination. But I was profoundly grateful to see how, in spite of press and politics, the people had shored their minds against danger.

We had a bad twenty-four hours while planes and small boats hunted and waited. In the end the threat was lifted—there were no more contacts; and the sun came up on a glittering Sunday morning with breeze fresh and foliage seeming newly waxed. By that time our defense was as ready as we could make it, with hundreds of police from the rural districts brought into town, commercial delivery cars and trucks adapted for ambulances, casualty stations ready—in fact all done that we could do. We had had good practice and many a tired defense worker, who had suddenly become a surprised specialist in demolition, bomb removal, incendiary extinction, emergency water-system repair, evacuation, feeding, casualty removal, and all the dozens of jobs we should have been faced with when the first shell or bomb fell, went home a little disappointed and anticlimactic. Anyway we were getting ready—both in materiel and morale.

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2The great Dutch refining center off the Venezuelan coast, four hundred miles south of us.
After a few more of these crises I myself stopped worrying about being ready. We had made every preparation it was humanly possible to make. Not one measure which seemed feasible had been neglected. Civil defense was in capable hands; and if disaster came we should have to suffer it as best we could. It was during March, April and later that the new radar system was being installed. It would not, of course, be completed for a year or more: neither would our coast artillery or anti-aircraft installations. But the first units began then to be used. This was the system which actually provided a warning of the Pearl Harbor attack but which untrained officers could not credit. Our men did not propose to be caught in this way, and since communications were more in a state of fearful suspense lest the enemy intercept them than active because we needed information, we had many false alarms. Unannounced aircraft plunged into our area; unaccountable noises were interpreted as approaching planes. There were nights when we had three or four alerts. Admiral Hoover was naturally reluctant to discourage vigilance. He finally did warn the radar lads that they had better improve, but there was risk of injustice in that since no radar could distinguish the nationality of a distant craft.

We got used to it. But, more remarkably, so did the people in our cities. With constant drill, which turned out always, so far as they knew, to be nothing but drill, they learned to go un-excitedly into the routine of the alert. And there was not much tension—unless it lasted too long. If the matter could be cleared within the usual thirty- to forty-minute period we had used in our prewar blackouts, hysteria did not rise. Traffic stopped; people went inside, herded by our growing corps of civil defense guards with their homemade arm bands and their shrill whistles, and sat out the period. There was not much of the continental custom of providing blackout curtains and making everything snug within. It was too hot. Puerto Ricans merely put out all the lights and struck up a tertulia. But they were letter-perfect in that. And even so captious a critic as the Admiral could seldom find any fault.

I could really, by March, forget all this; that is, I need no longer worry about it. But other troubles were multiplying. The conspiracy gathered momentum; and now it could feed on a real fear—at worst of starvation, at best of deprivation. And it has to be admitted that those who faced the possibility of starvation behaved better than many of those who only expected to be deprived of a few semiluxuries. It is true that most Puerto Ricans never knew how really close we were to the exhaustion of food stocks. Still, they must have been able to guess what the situation was even in the spring months; and by fall we should have a betraying exhaustion of rice and of beans, the foods all islanders eat every day—poor and rich, they want rice and

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3A kind of conversational orgy. The word gets it’s meaning from the Latin love of talk, but also from an earlier dearth of other resources for amusement.
beans first, and only afterward whatever else is available! Next, of course, bacalao (dried fish) which is the poor man’s substitute for meat and is used for flavoring the rice. These three are the favored ingredients of the daily dish eaten by nine-tenths of the workers in Puerto Rico as many times a day as they can be afforded. We should fail to keep up the supply of rice for several months; of dried fish we should have a chronic shortage with black-market prices; of beans we should have periodic shortages when prices would triple and unpleasant incidents occur. Into a struggle with the forces which boil up in profiteering times I had to plunge whether I wanted to or not. It was the clearest duty I ever had in Puerto Rico—and, in the nature of things, the most risky.

The Francophiles were back on their feet again, fairly sure now that no penalties were going to be exacted. Those of them who had complex financial transactions involving exchange between Spain and the United States would be subject to certain oversight, but there would be almost no restriction; and, what concerned them most, there would be no personal penalties. They must have been well aware that the F.B.I. was now taking a somewhat belated survey of the situation and modifying its former concentration on our pretentious little band of comunistas. But on the other hand, it soon became clear that an appeasement policy was to be followed by the Department of State which would penetrate other agencies. This went to lengths which were difficult to understand as helpful in support of any conceivable policy our Government might have, even to persecution of those singularly pure-spirited lads in Puerto Rico (as in the United States) who had thought it their duty to fight on the loyalist side against Franco. This last was the most unforgivable feature of a program which had grave repercussions on our island. For those who were thus released from responsibility for disloyalty and assistance to violent reaction, even those who had sworn the oaths, were now apparently required only to make a surface change: they must not hang out Franco flags or publicly proclaim their adhesion to the Falange. But they were hardly in bad enough odor even to be driven underground; they made only a nominal secret of their affiliations.

From frightened and furtive wonder as to what their punishment might be, this whole group rapidly became a militant opposition to liberal change in Puerto Rico. And here they found an outlet for their stifled hates and secret fears. For they were given every reason to believe that the most energetic attack on me would be regarded with favor among those who were beginning to have the upper hand in the States and were being so conspicuously appeased. And now I was to be reminded* again of the affiliations of many American newspaper publishers. A succession of special correspondents would, during the next six months, be sent to Puerto Rico with definite instructions (of which they made no secret): they were to write smear
stories about me and the work I was presumed to have sponsored—much of which had begun, of course, before I came but was, anyway, as they said, "Tugwellian."

It was evident about this time, also—as I shall have to relate in some detail—that there was a wide acceptance of this poison in the States among the Republicans, the Southern Democrats, newspaper and advertising interests and others of a similar sort. It was already evident that far from putting our enemies in Puerto Rico on the defensive, we were going to be on the spot ourselves. It soon appeared that I myself should be lucky to survive at all. And a kind of premature jubilation, which, however, was a powerful stimulant to potential contributors and to workers in the cause, would appear.

We were committed, nevertheless, to a battle on the food front which could not be foregone. It was suggested at this time that withdrawal might end the opposition. But that looked like giving up something for nothing. There was going to be opposition anyway. Besides, what with one manifestation and another I was beginning to seethe, in spite of myself, with a kind of indignation. It was unfortunate that the first real trouble should happen within the Department, and that the quarrel should be about the fifteen millions. But that was how it happened. The fifteen millions, as I have said, had been appropriated with admirable speed, but had then sunk into an impenetrable oblivion in the Division of Territories. My efforts to have it used had resulted in chilly indications that in due course the Department would make known its plans—as though I were not, now, a member of the group at all. I then heard that "a Mr. Gordon would be sent." Well, Mr. Gordon was, eventually, sent. And, after being among us for more than a week, called on me. That week he had spent with the Chamber of Commerce cooking up a scheme for the creation of a private stock pile to be "guaranteed" by the fifteen-million fund. But it was now well into the month of March.

I told Mr. Gordon that he was being led up the garden path, that he was dealing not only with our enemies but—believe it or not—with the enemies of the people of Puerto Rico. Our stock pile should already have been completed if it was to serve the intended purpose. All this he obviously set down as "politics." This became a favorite resort, from then on, I may say incidentally, of those in Washington who wanted to appease the business interests, even when they were supposed to be our friends. If it was against our program it was "practical business"; if it was for it—or by me—it was "politics." I took the trouble to explain a few times that I myself was not, in any ordinary sense, to be thought of as in "politics." There was a desperate situation to be met; and it had to be met in ways which powerful interests would not approve. That, I contended, was not "politics." It might seem so because Muñoz supported it. But others were welcome—indeed they were implored—to support it
too. Of course, they would not, being too closely identified with reaction, and
crossed with the bar sinister of the *Falange*, but that I would not accept as adequate
reason for lack of support among my actual superiors. I thought too that they ought
to understand a New Deal in Puerto Rico as not different from the one in the United
States of which we were not yet—officially, at least—ashamed.

But Mr. Gordon rejected my pleas. He went about making sonorous speeches to
sundry luncheon clubs and being feted with unconcealed hilarity by those who
regarded the performance as one in the eye for me. Possibly, also, they felt, it might
hold off the bulk-purchase plan which would so completely cut them out of the
enormous profits they were already slavering for on rice, beans, dried fish, salted
pork, corn meal, flour—the poor man’s food. Indeed they became quite certain that
they had won when Mr. Gordon actually signed an agreement with them. And time
was running on. And the submarines were gathering.

I could do nothing as prices continued to rise and shortages worsened. Mr. Gordon
went off to the Virgin Islands; then he went back to Washington. I could not find out
what, if anything, he had reported; or whether any plan of action was in the making.
It was only too tragically clear that no private stock pile was going to be
accumulated. But how long would it take officials in Washington to find it out? After
a couple of months, I began to feel that they would never find it out, and that, if
Puerto Rico were not to starve, I should have to start a revolution in the Division of
Territories—perhaps even somewhat higher up. And even if Congressional
displeasure was involved—for that was definitely in the air by now—I should still
have to do it. Mr. Pagán had been persistent; there was, anyway, a reactionary trend;
and I was a symbol of everything that the reactionaries disliked. Those in Puerto
Rico who were by now violently involved in dislikes of a similar sort found the
fellow feeling in the Congress most helpful. They began to work on it.
IN THE TELLING of this story, it occurs to me, the men of ill will have been played up and those of other disposition have not had their due. This would always be so, perhaps, since contrast makes drama and drama impresses itself on any history whether the writer wills it or not. The villain of the piece, no matter what the outcome, can be made contemptible but not weak; else there would be no victory worth recording. But when I consult my conscience, going on with this account, it appears strangely tranquil. And after all, why not? The enemy in Puerto Rico was old, wily, and hitherto dominant; he had never before been successfully challenged and had succeeded, against the democratic trend, in holding down and exploiting an enormous unprivileged mass of countrymen. He had done more; he had all but swung this small piece of the Western Hemisphere back into the European orbit where not modern but medieval standards were orthodox. It was frightening to hear what went on in Puerto Rico when the Falange was spreading its tentacles across the Main and into South America. But the most frightening events were those which had to do with the unnatural intimacy between some of our own representatives and the men of the Falange in the years of the Spanish civil war. Nor can the goings back and forth, the mutual honorings and entertainment, be put down to naivete or to the requirements of usage. The representatives of the United States were experienced, fully experienced, and the extensions of ceremony were beyond all need. They were, in fact, flagrant repudiations of democracy, gratuitous insults to its more loyal adherents.

All of this, it may be said with some truth, was of a piece with corollary occurrences in the States. It was notorious that those who had fought on the Loyalist side in Spain were given a bad time by officialdom at every opportunity; and that those who had been on the other side were favored. I myself knew men and boys who had followed an ideal into danger and hardship, coming out badly broken, and who had lived thenceforth—in our own United States—a life hardly more free than they might have had if they had stayed in Vichy France on their way home. As for refugees, not many could find their way in, and those who did were only a little better off than those described by Mr. Arthur Koestler in Scum of the Earth. They were scum of the earth in America too, we must in all shame admit. Men for whom banners should have been put out and flowers strewn—because they had expiated, a little at least, mankind's infamy—were, like criminals, subjected to every kind of humiliation. Was it because they reminded us too sharply of duties about which we had gone slack? Of moral pretensions to which our actions gave the lie? That may explain why these atrocities were permitted by ordinary folk, why, that is, they did not smite the doers of this outrage. But it does not explain how there remain among
us, after a hundred and fifty years, men who betray in every action their contempt for the principles of our communal life. This is what is most disturbing. There are those who, when we give them leave, show the same intolerant cruelty which Jesus expiated on his cross, and the same provocations still bring it out of the depths of human nature. Is there a man among us who is kinder, more just, more vigilant than others in behalf of the oppressed, and who displays in this life what we have said we believe to be the conduct of the approved man? That one, given a certain turn of events, is in danger. He must be ground down into the muck, made indistinguishable, removed from his moral height. We find men like A. Mitchell Palmer, or Mr. Martin Dies—we always find one of this sort easily—to be our executioners.

This was not a much more prevalent disease in Puerto Rico than it was in the United States except for old affiliations with Spain. It happened that, just as I came to Puerto Rico, a change in the climate was taking place. The falangista orgy was over and the participants in it, frightened at what they had done, were in a new cowering mood after years of fascist arrogance. But suddenly they discovered that they had sympathizers in a most unlikely place: not in Spain, not in any South American dictatorship—right in the United States: right, also, where it would do them the most good—in Washington itself. For not all those who were so helpful to our enemies in Puerto Rico were fooled into it by thinking them plain businessmen who were being subjected to an unusual and dictatorial regulation; some of them were men of the same sort, men who were doing the same cruel work in our States, and for the same cause. In serving the-men of ill will on our island they were serving the cause to which they were shamefully dedicated.

The Puerto Rican progressive movement could go on because —and only so long as—men of better will in Washington permitted it. Some looked the other way; some washed their hands; some were otherwise engaged. The President was one of these last. Occasionally he would find an excuse for a declaration of progressivism or of belief in civil liberties; but these declarations were less frequent as the burdens of war became heavier. The United States Supreme Court was—the majority—the best in generations. But between President and Supreme Court at the top and administrators at the lower operational levels, there was a widening disparity. In any large bureaucracy policy made at the top can be effectively dissipated among unwilling subordinates. This was notably true of the enormous war organizations which were being hastily thrown together in 1941-42, and more particularly because of the President’s tour de force in the production and shipping services, followed later by a similar one in the field of price control, when Mr. Leon
Henderson went out and an advertising man came in.\(^1\) When he called in the businessmen, he risked sabotage all along the line. For many of them were scarcely distinguishable from the fascists in other lands—in fact many of them had been admirers of Hitler and Mussolini—the dictators, they said, "kept order." But there were other devotees of fascist thought and action at strategic centers: the farm bloc, for instance. Mr. O'Neal's parade of defense for "free enterprise" was merely a cover for merciless Southern landlordism. And, to come down to our small island, no one could honestly contend that the Chamber of Commerce in Puerto Rico, with all its questionable affiliations, had a philosophy in any way different from that of the mighty United States Chamber with which it was affiliated.

Puerto Rico was not different. But it was an island—a crowded one, where no one could get far from his enemies, where provocations were ubiquitous, where exploiters and exploited were easily identifiable in person. It was also a colony in whose riches powerful Continentals had a stake—and a stake too, they thought, in keeping down wages and not letting labor "get above itself." It was to be expected, incidentally, that these absentee owners should make use of their affiliations for protection—affiliations which ramified into the press, into Washington departments, into the Congress. Now, also, the military had interests in Puerto Rico. And the military, when it is engaged in the active business of preparing to meet an imminent enemy, does not like trouble in the environment. It casts a suspicious eye on "agitators"; it wants its work done without argument. When it is told by the leaders of the community privately, and by the press publicly, that the current civil administration is "fostering unrest," "tolerating strikes" and sympathizing with "unruly elements," it is likely to react. And I was accused daily of all these attributes and affiliations. Hours of radio time were bought, many columns of the press were used, and ceaseless private agitations went on. Collins, Phillips and others like them, who wanted me to run the civilian show in spite of everything, must have had some uneasy times. But they stood by.

What I started to say, however, was that all the opposition had remarkably small results. There were honest men, men of good will in Puerto Rico just as there were at home. Many of them were tolerant, humorous and patient. They were inclined to listen amusedly and discount largely. They were moved, if at all, only toward a little disquiet, never toward joining the bitter ones. Men of good will are like that everywhere. But there were men, also, whose indignation rose with their gorge and who, unsolicited, undertook defense. That, too, is a phenomenon characteristic of disinterested men of good will, once their convictions are engaged or their sense of

\(^1\)Mr. Bowles, of course, turned out to be a fighting liberal, one of President Roosevelt's greatest successes. But it did not look that way at first.
fair play is outraged. My great good fortune in Puerto Rico—as in the States—was that my enemies were intemperate—so intemperate that their own ranks began to thin and their support to fall away. At the climax of the crusade what would have been thought to be the most unlikely persons began to come to me privately with assurances of confidence, with messages of shame for their affiliates, with offers of public collaboration. Sometimes they came straight out of the enemy camp. Gradually the number became so large that generalization was no longer possible and I was unable to say that it was the businessmen, the employers, the big farmers who were against us. For now many of them were privately or publicly for us.

This did not happen at once; and I must take credit, such as it is, for the right strategy in fostering it. I had done it in Washington and in New York and it had always worked. The enemy was provoked to more violence, that was all. Good will is a constant percentage in the body politic. Unfairness, violence, injustice will unfailingly bring it out. So a public man, if he is wise, does not regret too much having enemies as well as friends. And if he is to have them it is just as well if they are extreme and obviously unfair. These qualities were being displayed in Puerto Rico without reserve. My luck was good in this too. I had only one worry. That was the Congress. Congressmen were listening to the surreptitious stories which were being conveyed to them privately; and they were asking whether all that had been said about me years before—which lingered vaguely in their memories—had not, after all, been true. This Congressional reaction was not yet formidable. But I felt that it would grow if properly fostered. And it seemed that this weakness was well known to our enemies; it would therefore be fostered. The only large group of Republicans in Washington—outside the new war agencies—was in the Congress. The Puerto Rican Republicanos could be trusted to make use of their likeness to Republicans in the States. There were several other disaffected groups which would work in the same way—that of the right-wing labor leaders, who blamed me for their loss of prestige, and the Farmers’ Association, whose members felt that a threatened rise in wages was overwhelming evidence of communism on the part of those who suggested it or even those who did not oppose it.

Now, however, it began to seem that our resources of man power and ability would be equal to the task ahead. I had been disappointed in finding so many bright young men among the reactionaries at the University. That they should be devoted to so negative a cause was, I began to see, the result partly of their upbringing—that smothering, feminine adoration which boy children in Puerto Rico had somehow to survive, and out of which they often emerged spoiled, selfish and undisciplined—and partly the result of insular conditions which must have seemed extremely restricted to an ambitious young man. The competition was going to be tough even
among the small number of the elite without deliberately encouraging the enlargement of their numbers. In my first discouragement at the antics of this group I was inclined to feel that it was larger than it really was. As time went on, there had emerged from it here and there individuals who saw opportunities in the new program and who wanted to join in our work. Their number would gradually enlarge until it would become, as I felt, a remarkable demonstration of the appeal public service can have as against that of individual gain or self-interested ambition.

There is another aspect of the Puerto Rican situation which tolerant outsiders are apt to overlook. It is true that the Falange was sinister and that it had a blood relationship with that group I have called the "better element" or the "elite" This was true even though the political party to which most of them belonged was the Republicano whose main tenet was statehood in our Union. This confusion of nominal loyalties might not have arisen so easily if the elite had not been strongly infused with expatriate Americanos whose thinking was sufficiently muddled to include in their ambitions for our Republic an economic system not unlike that of the totalitarians. With the example before them of lawyers, military men, and prominent businessmen who found falangista ideas congenial, the old Spanish and the young Puerto Rican reactionaries can hardly be blamed for some confusion—for feeling, in fact, that an American elite was looking forward to something not altogether unlike what Franco was establishing in Spain. In a Union of such imagined qualities, they would find statehood quite comfortable.

From the economic aspect of this, the religious element has to be distinguished. I came to know, later on, a number of falangistas who were Populares. Obviously they had not joined the middle-class European totalitarian movement in order to keep the workers in their places, because Popularismo had its origin, and its reason for being, in an aggressive attempt to improve the lives of agregados and obreros. The secret was religion. Economic radicals can be as religious as anyone, Marxian opposition to the Church notwithstanding. They are often not institutionally religious because so often the Church, being rich, seems more hospitable to employers and landlords than to impoverished Christians. And one who agitates for, or even believes in, equalitarianism may find himself strangely unwelcome in the company of those who profess Christ. The relevance of this here is that the struggle in Spain was sure to be reflected with an almost fratricidal bitterness in an island only some forty years separated from her.

The agitation on the falangista side was intemperate and obscurantist. And the ripostes of the Loyalists, although clearer, were equally intemperate. Neither side was satisfied with argument: both were ready for force. The favorite argument of the falangistas was that the Loyalists were priest-killers and nun-rapers. The
violence of this contention betrays the spirit of the controversy. No distinction was made between taking church property and suppressing its spiritual functions; and, indeed, most of the priests themselves seemed not to want any made. They are, however, not identical, and there were churchmen, just as there were laymen, who saw the distinction. Indeed there were many who felt that a return to material poverty might mean a spiritual renaissance for the Church.

It was not, it will be seen, an inevitable mark of economic reaction that a young man should have been loosely allied with the *Falange*. He may have been led into that position by his religious advisers. This was by no means usual. It was not usual, either, for a banker, a lawyer, an engineer, an agronomist, or even a doctor to be a Popular; but it was not by any means unknown. And there were a good many who would not formally affiliate with the *Populares* because of the supposed independentista leanings of Muñoz' followers, who were economic reformists, nevertheless, and who could be called upon to help if they were properly approached. I set out to find and to declassify all I could of the able young people. In so relatively rigid a society, a young man is likely to be ticketed almost without willing it and he is apt to accept his designation finally merely from inertia. I hoped to rescue some at least from relative uselessness. The truth was, at this time, that the *Populares* were very weak in technical ability. The party had a mass of loyal men and women at the bottom, a middle layer of local agitators and workers, small politicians—the useful cement of affiliation—but it had almost none of those in the middle class who carry on the paper work and do the technical jobs of modern civilization. These had to be recruited; and Muñoz, in his eagerness to reward political loyalty, was falling into the old Puerto Rican fault of putting a technical label on an incompetent individual and expecting him to do a satisfactory job. That had been one curse of the island. And it had brought the government service, the University, and even business, to a level incredibly below the demands of the situation. It now stood in the way of recruiting.

An outsider could not, perhaps, do much about this; but I determined to put in my bit. And first of all I set out to labor with the upper rank of the *Populares*—Muñoz most—to convert them. They had to be convinced that their movement would fail if this were not done. To it I began at once to devote myself. But there were others who understood what I was trying to do—mostly younger men who had had training in American universities. They began to join in my work. And instead of political workers, who were competent as orators but not as technicians, I began to find places in the Government for these younger engineers, economists, lawyers and so on. Even at that I foresaw difficulty. Competent personnel was limited; the insular civil service was admirably devised to protect mediocrity; and the tasks ahead were
exact. For by now the program began to take on form; Muñoz’ legislative control was operating to bring it into being.

Before my time—in the spring of ’41—the land law had been passed and its Authority was by now fairly well organized. But the idea was gradually forcing itself on the Populares that this was not nearly enough. It might operate to secure a certain justice in the distribution of wealth; but what was more necessary was means for increasing wealth. The general line of approach to this was industrialization. It had to be, since already the population had far outgrown the potentialities of any likely agricultural improvement. It was not unthinkable that advances in farming might yet be made, although it seemed more likely that the trend would be the other way because of soil exhaustion and the destructive erosion which had all but ruined the interior hill country; but even if agricultural possibilities did enlarge, there still would not be enough wealth to go around.

Working this out was not difficult and it was the perception of it which led me into numerous, and for a long time futile, attempts to see duplicated in Puerto Rico the development company of Haiti. That, it appeared, was impossible if it had to start with Federal help, because it just would not be forthcoming, but possibly a modest beginning might be made with Puerto Rican funds; they were very limited but not so limited as they had been and a few millions might be allocated. The purpose was primarily industrialization although what possibilities there were in agriculture for improvement also seemed to depend on governmental development and such a scheme ought not to neglect these.

In this connection we wondered about the many millions of idle private capital which lay—and for decades had lain—in Puerto Rican banks. It seemed extraordinarily difficult to tempt these funds into industrial uses. The opportunities appeared to be obvious enough. Two million people form a sizable market for any kind of consumers’ goods; and there seemed to be no reason for not manufacturing in Puerto Rico both the service goods and the by-products of the great sugar industry. A long list of consumers’ goods could be manufactured too; and their makers would have the advantage of not paying freight for those raw materials which could be produced in Puerto Rico or on surrounding islands—cotton, leather, vegetable oils, hardwoods, many articles of food and so on. The list of by-product goods might include, besides rum which was already a large industry, alcohols and

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2 Societe Haitien-Américaine de Dévelopement Agricole.
3 I should not attain this ambition until 1945. In that year the legislature would pass, and I would sign (on 24 April), a bill for such a company. And Mr. Thomas Fennell of the Haitian company would become its Administrator.
4 Service goods: bags, bottles, tools, paper, ceramics, chemicals, containers, drugs, alcohol, fertilizers, machine parts, plywoods, etc., etc.
solvents, plastics, paper and paperboard, glass of all shapes, including bottles, and vitamins. Inspection of a casual list of this kind revealed one hopeful characteristic: it had on it some of the products which were just coming into prominence or into new uses for which there might even be an export market. We had no minerals to speak of, but we had glass sands. We had no known petroleum; but we had water power. And we had an infinity of workers quite capable of becoming expert. Why had private capital refused temptation if any of the feasible products were profitable?

Diligent inquiry did not furnish any intelligible answer to this question. I gradually came to believe what I had been told at first—that profits in sugar itself were large enough to make any other opportunities seem; by contrast, so meager as not to be worthwhile. There was undoubtedly concentration. Bankers knew sugar and trusted sugar loans; population was grouped around sugar enterprises to service them; there were sugar experts and no other kind of experts—a whole list of reasons could be drawn up. And this was an island. It was not like an industry on the continent, existing in neighborly juxtaposition with others, with influences running back and forth; and workers ready to change one job for another. The important conclusion was that idle capital did not, as might at first be thought, mean that the opportunities were profitless. It meant rather that the capital was lazy. How put it to work?

Ours was not the first group to consider how this dilemma could be resolved. The studies already mentioned had pointed the same way. Industrialization must be forced. Government must use what capital it could get and try to tempt private funds into new ventures. There could be partnership, if necessary, so reducing the risks to investors. It was with these ideas in mind that we worked out the Development Company and the Development Bank. They did not come into full existence in that legislative session. We were not that far into our problem. It had still to be worked on, studied over and its various methods and varieties of solutions tried in practice. This would take years. But the beginning was being made in 1942.

These were not even prominent in my message to the legislature. What was on my mind, as I stole the hours at Jájome for its preparation, was such changes in government itself that the young men of ability in Puerto Rico could take part in the vast work just beginning and feel that they were shaping a satisfactory career. It was not until the session was well along, and Muñoz’ control was coming out firm and

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5Then, too, there were savage dumping practices by which mainland Industrialists discouraged insular competition.
smooth, that he proposed putting on the books the main features of the industrial program.

Even then I paid little attention to that part of what had to be done. I was working on a planning law, a budget bureau, a central statistical service, a reorganization of the civil service, a measure to take the police out of politics, and one to establish a fire department. This, of course, was in addition to matters of defense and supply which in those days were the really immediate and demanding necessities: we created a new civilian defense organization and a State Guard; we rewrote the law establishing the supply service; we created transportation and communications Authorities (these services having all but completely broken down from past neglect and present pressures); and we provided funds for the encouragement of home food production.

Besides this, the crisis which was approaching because continental restrictions on civilian activities were extended to the island was recognized by increased taxes, by appropriating a large sum for unemployment relief and by setting up a Commission to make further recommendations for extensions of welfare benefits. Altogether it was a magnificent accomplishment. But its digestion and implementation was to be another matter; also I was discouraged over the sabotage of the civil-service and police reorganization laws by Muñoz’ own group. We had carefully prepared the civil-service law, but it passed in such emasculated form that, after study, I determined on veto. The main instrument, therefore, of a regenerated government service was lacking at the very time when enormous demands were to be made on it. The legislators would now go home and leave me to fight it out with the local politicos. Would it be possible to carry out the task at all with a personnel gathered under these compulsions, admittedly incompetent, chosen only to reward or to buy an expected party service? At least it had to be tried. And I found in the end that, in spite of everything, we should find many who were willing to join. And by exempting the Authorities from civil service we paradoxically secured a considerably higher average ability than would have been possible under the old law. This did not help already existing departments, but it did help the new agencies. What I had forgot, in my discouragement, was that Puerto Rico had never had anything but this kind of government and that what I was aiming at was beyond local experience. So that what we did achieve appeared so far-reaching as to seem like the beginning of a renaissance. Which, after all, it was!

Then, too, I had another experience which surprised me greatly. As I began actually to be acquainted with, the local political leaders, instead of merely imagining what they must be like I found that I had formed an exaggerated opinion of their complete preoccupation with politics. At least a few of them were Populares because they
regarded the party and its program as a movement which gave them an opportunity to be of service. The number of these and the strength of this impulse was really amazing. Not anything like all of them were distinguishable from small bosses anywhere. But it was a revelation to discover how many were interested in party mechanics for other reasons than the ones usually attributed to such people. Mr. Swope had first misled me on this. His concern had been mostly, it seemed, that so many were independentistas at a time when the nation needed loyalty. About this he judged correctly: at least eighty per cent were separatists—and at a time when perhaps ninety per cent of the rank and file, the ordinary voters, were determined loyalists. I soon came to feel that this was less important than did most Continentals. To be intensely fond of the patria is neither an unusual nor a dangerous sentiment; and if it had not extended itself to the nation, that was more others’ fault than theirs. Besides it was difficult to see what the United States would lose from a freed Puerto Rico. It was Puerto Rico which needed partnership with the States. This, as I have indicated, Muñoz knew well enough and, in spite of sentiment, fought with his followers to establish as a principle. The people realized it instinctively, which tended to enrage the independentista leaders but about which they could do nothing. Every once in a while their sentiments would get the best of them and a flamboyant meeting would be organized, defiant speeches made, and so on. Each of these outbreaks would be so obviously disapproved of by the people that Muñoz would have to go to work at once repairing damage. The energy he would spend going about the island after these outbreaks, repudiating their authors, and reiterating his dictum that status was not a popular issue, would in itself have broken down a less vigorous man, especially since he himself hoped for some kind of assisted autonomy. Still, in a kind of perverse way, this sentiment among the little bosses was a sustaining incentive for other and worthier efforts. To any American who is aware of his nation’s history in any conscious sense, talk of political liberty is rather familiar than strange, rather agreeable than repugnant. At least it was so with me. The speeches made by the most extravagant independentistas sounded a good deal like those I had been taught to regard as a precious part of our own patriotic literature. Even when we Americanos were referred to collectively as "Yankee imperialists" it seemed to me more a matter for humor than suppression. And for better or worse that was the way I treated the matter.

At any rate we got so that we could work together. They were usually intent on immediate local interests, I necessarily on larger ones. They saw most issues in terms of Puerto Rican attitudes; I saw them in terms, also, of general American opinion. We came to grant each other a certain superior knowledge, in our less excited moments, which made a good working arrangement. The sympathy between these local leaders and myself—with Muñoz interpreting and helping—was a source
of irritation to most continental expatriates, including a good many—but by no means all—Federal officeholders. They were used to Governors who exhorted Puerto Ricans day in and day out, in schoolboy terms, to a kind of infantile acceptance not only of patriotic symbols but of Americano habit and custom. They demanded an uncritical conformity which no Spanish folk were ever going to yield. Governors had thus by implication held up the expatriates to Puerto Ricans as models, a position in society much enjoyed by those who had not always been so favorably situated in their home communities. My wife and I not only did not do that but we found our Puerto Rican friends, not among those who were professional pitiyanquis, but among others who were working with us in what we had to do.

After a few days of speechmaking the session got down to business, and, although much legislation was not actually passed until the clock had been stopped at the end, it was processed gallantly. And what a volume there was of it! I look at it on my desk now, at least five inches thick; I recall that about as much again had to be vetoed; and I wonder how it was ever done, even with the almost two weeks of overtime.6

One measure for which I was largely responsible was the Planning Act. I have recorded the services of Alfred Bettman of Cincinnati, who prepared the first draft. He felt strongly that he had met the peculiar difficulties of Puerto Rican governmental structure and that he had solved the constitutional problem involved in the Organic Act. This document, serving for a constitution, was, it must be kept in mind, not a constitution at all in the usual sense, but merely an Act of the Federal Congress. As such it was liable to change without the consent of the Puerto Rican people. This had not, in practice, proved dangerous, although the possibility was a constant source of irritation to insular pride. But what had proved dangerous was the reverse of this: Congressional neglect. Because of ignorance, lack of interest, and an unsympathetic regard for what was often thought of as an ungrateful ward, Congress had hardly changed the Act at all; and year by year it had grown more obsolete.

One provision prohibited the creation of new Departments. Was the proposed Planning Board a Department? There had been many semi-independent Boards and Commissions established in defiance of that provision—the Board of Health was the oldest, but it had been followed by a long string of others set up in response to new demands on government. In spite of these precedents Bettman was worried. Then there was a prescribed relationship between the legislature and the executive council. This last was a corporate cabinet, something which had all but disappeared.

6Of course, that volume contains both Spanish and English versions.
elsewhere, a kind of second executive which, as I have pointed out, the Puerto Ricans used cleverly enough in circum-venting continental Governors, but which at the same time made effective executive action all but impossible. We wanted to provide that the Planning Board might determine land uses and regulate annual public expenditure, both in accordance with a legally adopted master plan. That was the function of planning in modern government: to lock projected improvements into a logical whole which could be broken only with difficulty. Bettman was less interested in budgeting as a control, believing that regulation of land uses was sufficient. I thought his draft imperfect because of this. I also thought his scheme for controlling the use of land far too elaborate and costly. He felt that its complex nature was imposed by the Organic Act. In New York City the Planning Law which I had helped administer had a provision which required more than a majority vote of the legislature (the Board of Estimate) to reverse decisions of the Planning Commission; in some cases the majority required was three-fourths. This did not make legislative reversal impossible; but it made deference to political pressures more unlikely. There was no way to obtain this provision except by amendment of the Organic Act, and considering the current Congressional opinion of planners and planning, such a change was unlikely. We needed a device which would have the same conservative effect, yet which would conform to the Organic Act.

Some of these problems were solved and some were not. Mr. Bartlett and I undertook what we believed to be the indispensable rewriting of the Bettman draft, making it less elaborate and so less costly to administer. Also we had the end in view which we had not been able to get Bettman to accept, that a planning measure was not of much use unless it was made an impregnable part of the administrative process, anchored there by the requirement of more than a legislative majority for reversal.

Bettman, working with a Puerto Rican lawyer, was unable to regard all Puerto Rico as one large city, for planning purposes, thus getting away from the obsolete mechanics of some seventy municipal governments on an island thirty-five miles by ninety. This system had grown up in the coach-road days when a trip from San Juan to Ponce or Mayagüez required several days. Now it could be done in a few hours, or even, by plane, as I usually traveled, in a few moments. For administrative purposes, and especially for planning, the island ought to be regarded as one unit. The process of substituting the insular for small-city services had begun long ago. Health services were being centralized; when the new district hospital and health-center system—whose construction had been interrupted by the war—should be completed, the municipal hospitals could be closed, a consummation longed for by most public-health officials who regarded these institutions as little better than pesthouses. The
same was true of other services; police had long been insularized, for instance. As standards rose, and people demanded more of government, the incapacity of the small cities became more glaring. There was on the whole a distinct centralizing tendency. But not all Puerto Ricans recognized it; and Coalicionistas, particularly, feared at this time the loss of the numerous jobs they had held onto in the few cities they still controlled. Bettman had been given a coalicionista lawyer to work with him; and he was too innocent to discriminate between irrevocable custom and political preference. This was one of Mr. Malcolm’s contributions to my comfort.7

Mr. Bartlett and I had a task almost as arduous, in consequence of this, as though we had not had the services of an expert draftsman. We perhaps did not altogether succeed; Bettman felt that we had not, and asked to be dissociated from our draft. But we thought it the best we could do under the circumstances. The legislature went into the matter rather carefully, criticizing even our rewriting as too elaborate. Of course, no legislature ever likes to pass a planning law, just as executives in general do not like to sign them or to work under them. They reduce the area for political manipulation and debt-paying in public projects just as civil-service laws limit debt-paying by giving jobs.8 These activities are never in the public interest, however, and recognition of demand for this kind of thing has forced legislative action rather widely in the last decade, particularly among municipalities, in which field the initiative is usually taken by state legislatures when they grant or amend charters, thus imposing limitations on city politicians rather than on themselves. But the Planning Law in Puerto Rico was distinctly an act of renunciation. It did not surprise me, therefore, to see it severely modified before passage. Legislators, performing an act they resent, are like the rest of us in doing such a thing grudgingly rather than wholeheartedly. I was disappointed, nevertheless, to find that the insular legislature had a farm bloc in all respects like the national one—and, within the insular sphere, just as powerful. In the end its representatives succeeded in exempting all rural areas from the provisions of the act, a wholly inexcusable—indeed an indefensible —exception. Nevertheless the law as it emerged was, for the area it covered, a fairly modern one, and would prove, in spite of our failure to solve satisfactorily the problem of requiring more than a legislative majority to go against the Board’s findings, extremely useful. I even retained the hope that amendment in

7 This lawyer proved so useful that when Mr. Fitzsimmons, the Auditor, set out to really make life hard for me, he transferred this same individual from Mr. Malcolm’s office to his own and made him his legal adviser. He would turn up later—after Mr. Fitzsimmons had left—as a member of the staff of the Subcommittee of the House Committee on Insular Affairs (commonly known as the Bell Committee, after its Chairman, Mr. C. Jasper Bell of St. Louis). And later, as happened with most displaced Coalicionistas, he would be employed in one of the Federal war agencies and go on obstructing insular efforts.

8 This point was elaborated in The Fourth Power, 1939.
the future, might yet extend its provisions to rural areas which were being ruined by uses of land such as only a planning law could correct.

The plan to insularize municipal services was furthered in this session: under the impulse of civil defense, there was set up an Insular Fire Service; we also provided for an Insular sewerage service, as well as a park service, and authorized the Water Resources Authority to take over from municipalities the provision of potable water. This last organization we were also assisting, as I have noted, to acquire the remaining local power and light systems.9

The measures for strengthening government included, besides the Planning Act, the setting up of a Budget Bureau and a Central Statistical Office; but the failure of the civil-service and police measures was, of course, a disappointment. Proposals for increasing the island’s income were more favorably regarded by the legislature than had been anticipated and we were not ready with perfected drafts. As a consequence the bill establishing the Development Bank was little more than a declaration of purpose. The truth was that we were not clear as to all its functions, as yet, and were reluctant to arrive at a definite form. The Government had deposits in private banks of many millions of dollars out of which the banks made a very good thing, paying an infinitesimal interest and lending at a much higher one (even by purchasing Federal or insular bonds they could, by paying 1/8 per cent interest and receiving from 2 to 4 per cent, make a huge profit annually). Should the Development Bank be made a place of deposit for these funds? Also, if it were, for what purposes should the funds be made available—what classes of loans should be preferred? We were not prepared to answer these questions all at once, or to answer, in fact, others similarly crucial. We only knew that we wanted the bank to fill the gap in Puerto Rico made by the failure of private bankers to develop an investment institution in contrast to commercial ones, that is, one which dispensed long-term credits rather than short and seasonal ones. Our conception was that the bank should be the credit medium through which the industrialization could be achieved which we believed to be the only hope for real betterment in Puerto Rico. But this meant that it should not try to direct only public funds to these uses: there would always be more private than public capital available, and we thought that by covering a margin of risk we might attract these private holdings into new enterprises. Whether this ought to be done by direct loans, by generously rediscounting the loans of private banks, or by making advances to mixed companies, we were not certain. So the measure as it was passed merely directed the Governor to issue a charter and to prepare for operations. It provided, however,

9 It would prove necessary, later, to set up a separate aqueduct service for the supply of water and the maintenance of sewers.
that no business should be done until the legislature had given further
authorization. Late in summer, I should be even more pressed with war problems
and should be no clearer in my mind on these issues. I should therefore issue a
charter with the very widest authorization, complying thus with the law, but leaving
amendments to be suggested by the bank’s directors. The bank would gradually,
during the next two years, take shape and become accepted.

We were clearer at the outset about the kind of law we wanted for the Development
Company. It was conceived that this was the direct medium for starting new
activities. It would be done either by setting up a wholly owned corporation or by
providing that part of the stock of subsidiaries might be disposed of to the public. It
might also issue bonds. It was expected that the company would share certain
developments with private individuals—a bottle factory, for instance, was to be
built in conjunction with the makers of rum. Wide authorization to go into business
was provided; and the already successful cement factory begun by the P.R.R.A. was
turned over. The company was thus a going concern from its day of organization.

One of the subsidiary, but important, phases of this legislation was the provision
that the company should establish a Laboratory of Design. I had in mind, in
suggesting this, the success of various minor areas in establishing themselves in
world markets by superior style and workmanship—Sweden, Czechoslovakia and
Ireland were examples. If we were to manufacture, in Puerto Rico, various
consumers’ goods they ought to be carefully adapted. Besides there was the possible
export market for at least a few products. The laboratory was to be a service for
private as well as public enterprise. The fruits of this provision would appear
quickly. Unique furniture made of bamboo and royal-palm fiber, new types of native
rugs for which a market already existed, and new ceramic designs would come
within a year.

Preceding and during this session my relations with the Auditor gradually
worsened. He had two counts against me: that I prevented him from pre-auditing
the transactions of the Water Resources Authority, and, by establishing this
precedent, kept him from interfering in the management of any of the new public
enterprises—a controversy similar to that then going on between the T.V.A. and the
Comptroller General of the United States; and that I insisted on a Budget Bureau in
the Office of the Governor. It did not appear to me that either of these was sufficient
cause for a state of war between us; but that was what, in alliance with Mr. Malcolm,
the Attorney General, he preferred. I never said publicly what I thought of Mr.
Fitzsimmons but perhaps he guessed. His insufficiency as an Auditor lay in his
restricted talent for bookkeeping. But such limitations are seldom known to their
possessors; and Mr. Fitzsimmons felt himself more competent to make fiscal
decisions for the insular Government than the Treasurer or myself. He was so
certain that he was right that he did not hesitate to appeal to the Secretary, and
failing that, to the press, to stop me in my headlong course. During the making of a
budget to take effect at the beginning of a fiscal year, it is, of course, necessary to
make a global estimate of revenues in the future on which to base expenditures. As
to revenues for 1942-43, then in preparation, Mr. Fitzsimmons guessed that they
would be only half those for 1941-42. The Treasurer guessed they would not be less
and might be somewhat more than they had been in that year.\(^{10}\) Besides we were
starting off with a surplus equal to about half the budget. Nevertheless the Auditor
insisted that health, educational and other services should be cut in half; and, of
course, that no appropriations should be made for the projected public-service
enterprises, the Authorities, and other capital expenditures.

All this was strictly none of the Auditor’s business; it was given importance by its
publication. In any case it was a fantastic error in judgment. It was based, I
discovered, on the theory that there was going to be wartime prohibition in the
States. This, he imagined, would cut off revenue from the Federal tax on rum which
is returned to the insular treasury. I was having trouble enough from other sources
without attempting, on such a prognosis, to reduce by half the government services
in Puerto Rico. Indeed I thought and said that they would certainly have to be
greatly expanded because of unemployment and the increasing cost of living. I had
in mind higher income taxes too, and a general budget made independent of rum.
We should have to have relief work, home allowances, an expansion of free lunches,
and so on if we were to meet the crisis at all. This would require large sums, but my
estimate of income was large enough to meet the requirement; besides I was certain
that the revenues from rum would go up rather than down. Accordingly, with other
help and by putting in extra hours, I made a new budget, discarding that prepared
by Mr. Fitzsimmons, and asked the legislature to approve a new bureau in my own
office, thus taking away from the Auditor the budgeting function.

Any student of government will recognize that auditing and budgeting are such
antithetical activities that they cannot safely be left together within one
organization. Auditors are notorious squeezers, to begin with, and by nature
negative, but also there is something unnatural in the thought of allowing an agency
to audit expenditures for which it has provided. The new Budget Bureau would
prove extremely useful. I should appoint Mr. Louis Sturcke as its first head and
organizer, another of the old-timers who had been with me both in Washington and
New York, and he, together with a new Auditor, would succeed eventually in

\(^{10}\) They would actually turn out to be some 25 per cent more, even, than his estimate.
bringing the chaotic fiscal affairs of the insular Government into some sort of order. He would be succeeded by Mr. Roberto de Jesús Toro within a short time and the Bureau would be firmly established. These are not matters which interest the usual reader; but it was a serious matter, from the point of view of administrative control, that more than 50 per cent of the expenditures of the Government should be from "trust funds": that is, recurrent, a constant burden on revenues, no matter how these might fluctuate; and outside budgetary control.\footnote{Another technical name for them is "continuing appropriations." They do continue: no matter what the revenue, expenditures as to these items must be kept up.} Mr. Fitzsimmons' budget actually covered less than half the Government’s expenses. These trust funds were set up in response to the pressure of special interests who wanted to abstract themselves from any possible reduction in revenues. Legislatures had obliged and executives had concurred unthinkingly in this. Abuses of this sort exist elsewhere; but they can never have exceeded those which had grown up in Puerto Rico—part, I suppose, of the attrition of Puerto Ricans on continental Governors. A fund set up in this way for politicos\footnote{One of these which I borrowed from Mr. La Guardia was to forbid the filling of vacancies except with my personal approval. In the first year I reduced expenditures in this way by one twentieth of the total.} pensions, for a Tobacco Institute, or even for such worthy causes as hospitals and colleges, was put beyond the power of "foreigners" to reduce.

I must not dwell longer on these fascinating fiscal matters—fascinating, I realize, only to an administrator who has to deal with them day after day, weighing and reweighing the various possibilities, and finally accepting the responsibility not for a general judgment, but for a specific one measured in cold figures. Mr. Buscaglia, the Treasurer, did well by me, however, and between us, in spite of Mr. Fitzsimmons and others like him, we should make fairly good estimates. We should provide for the necessary enlargement of services; and, at the same time, we should reorganize the whole fiscal structure, refunding half the debt and paying off the other half. Within two years we should have the soundest government, in a financial sense, under the flag. Of course, we should have good luck; but we should have taken chances too, and have persuaded the politicians, against their wishes, to increase taxes; we should also have controlled expenditures by unorthodox methods.\footnote{One of these which I borrowed from Mr. La Guardia was to forbid the filling of vacancies except with my personal approval. In the first year I reduced expenditures in this way by one twentieth of the total.} But the results would be there for anyone to see. And it would be obvious, as our critics studied it, that they were unwillingly impressed.

But such evidences of competence would not be at once apparent. What would be more easily seen, especially by those who wanted to find it, would be indications of extravagance, and of collectivism. To old-fashioned government servants like Mr. Fitzsimmons, planning boards, statistical offices and budget bureaus were
unnecessary and wasteful. They seemed so, too, to those whose taxes were going to be raised. It used to be said in Washington that the New Deal was only theoretically unpopular until taxes were raised; and this was equally true in Puerto Rico. Everything else could be forgiven. But this whipped the gallegos’ fears into frenzy. The old matriarchs and the grandees, Puerto Rican style, were not going to be able to sit like spiders at the centers of their family-and-retainer webs and run the island any longer. They now knew that Muñoz meant business and that the election had after all been lost.

But they made a mistake in pushing Muñoz too hard. Reminding him of his heritage had not worked, nor had any of the other dodges. He could not even be blackmailed. They now began to threaten exodus. They would take their fortunes and go away—to Florida, where the sugar business seemed to prosper in the deep humus around Lake Okeechobee, to Santo Domingo, where no socialistic nonsense was permitted, to Cuba, which was not, like Puerto Rico, overcrowded with unruly folk. Muñoz reacted to this. He sponsored a law which made sugar-milling a public utility and so subject to regulation; it was also provided that on substantial abandonment of any enterprise it could be taken by the Government and operated for its owner’s account.

This really brought civilization down about old aristocratic ears. The owners of these ears got their lawyers to go with them, continental lawyers, too, and approached the military. They demanded martial law, loudly and stridently. And they told Collins and Phillips of a conspiracy which by then was well articulated, having its Washington manifestations especially well laid out. They seemed to be amazed, so deep were they in their own rage and grief, that Collins should be totally unimpressed. Being loyal and disliking treachery, the military men informed me at once. There were, however, no measures I thought it necessary to take. The desperation of the frightened schemers was obvious, and, even though I did not underestimate the power of money, hate and malice, its extravagances would be self-defeating in the end.
DURING THE EARLY MONTHS of the war, the project for international collaboration in the Caribbean lay "on the President's desk" or moved, in diplomatic pouches, back and forth between Washington and London. Toward March of 1942 intimations of life were apparent in San Juan; Charles was sending word by passing travelers that progress was being made. And on the ninth of that month there arrived a letter from the Secretary enclosing a press release to be given out at the White House. Charles and Sir Frank Stockdale, Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, were to be "co-chairmen." Mr. Coert DuBois and I were named as American members. Also another body, which until then had not been mentioned, was to be set up: the Caribbean Advisory Committee. To this were appointed, besides Charles, DuBois and me, Judge William H. Hastie, Mr. Carl Robbins and Justice Travieso: what utility this body had, I could not at first imagine; and to this day I do not know what Charles had in mind, except that his anxiety over the Plan Caribe agitation in Puerto Rico may have suggested a wholly American Committee rather than an international one to which Puerto Rican matters might be referred. But what matters? Thinking this over during the next twenty-four hours, one at least occurred to me. The entry for 10 March in my journal suggests that the war was dominantly in my mind, perhaps because of the note that there was an alert at four in the morning, the third in two days, but also, in spite of a slight incoherence, that I was thinking of postwar arrangements. At any rate it apparently seemed a good vehicle for an approach to the question of status:

10 March 1942. It seems too bad that this Caribbean Commission could not have been set up on a more comprehensive basis, including the independent islands and perhaps even the bordering countries. We are in for it now; and we run the risk of all colonial occupations. I should think that after the war the old colonialism would be dead. What has apparently beaten the British and the Dutch in the East (Java has probably fallen now, and Rangoon certainly has) has been betrayal by the "natives," if a new choice of masters on their part can be called "betrayal." I can't help wondering what would happen here if an enemy landed in force. Exactly how would Puerto Ricans divide if offered a new opportunity? I believe they feel more, but still not nearly enough, part of us. I have been wondering whether it might not be strategic for the President to support a new status for Puerto Rico now. I am writing him to suggest that we dissociate ourselves, by such a gesture, from the colonial empires, and thus not run the risk of a Malaya or a Java here. And why not have the new American Advisory Committee join in my recommendation?

That letter was written; and it was the beginning of a long campaign which would be more formally initiated when the Committee met later. At the moment I was having
trouble with Muñoz over jobs, and with Mr. Gordon over the food reserve. I was beginning also to worry a little, even before the legislature had acted on the budget for 1942-43, about revenues. Would they be sufficient to meet the obligations to which I was consenting? I knew that the Division in Washington agreed with Mr. Fitzsimmons that my budget was too large. If the submarine blockade continued to tighten and arriving goods became scarcer, excise taxes on them would become scarcer too, and this was even more importantly true of exported rum. Perhaps Mr. Fitzsimmons would turn out to have been right after all, even if for a wrong reason. Then, too, I was being attacked in Congress by Messrs. Taber, Crawford, Church, and others, attacks which lost nothing in their translation. The insular press displayed them not only in *extenso* but in *excelsis*. It must have surprised Mr. Crawford to discover how great a statesman he was thought to be among our tories. Most of the current furor was occasioned by the release at Interior a week or two previously of my "500-Acre Report." The Republicans thought it amusing to bait the Democrats by citing a reference to similarities between the estate system in Puerto Rico and that in the continental South. And since I recommended that the reorganization already begun under the Land Authority Act ought to proceed, even if in a different way, Mr. Crawford had no difficulty in suggesting that this was an appeal for government ownership of land. And how, he wanted to know, did the Southern Representatives like that? How they liked it, whether true or not, was soon to be made known.

But to go on with current complications: just at this time I was having to find a new chief of police and to reorganize still again civil defense; then, too, I began more actively to see and encourage the local defense organizations. On such a trip to the south coast, in a borrowed bomber, we landed at Losey Field and I had a chance to look around and talk with the officers there. I was amazed and disconcerted to discover that plane dispersal had not yet been provided for. It seems incredible that an important airfield can have been in this condition at the middle of March in 1942. It was so, however, because I saw it, and having discussed it with them, knew that it was not a matter of any special worry to the officers. If an enemy attack came in from the sea those clustered fighters would never get into the air—just as they had not at Pearl Harbor and Manila. This was a setback. I was a long time after this in getting back my former assurance.¹

¹I might have had more assurance, possibly, in army foresight if I had known that during this week an army engineers’ group had landed on Ascencion to build the landing strip which would make a South Atlantic crossing possible for fighter planes going to the African and Russian battlefields. Ascención is an islet halfway across from Brazil to Lagos or Brazzaville. It was on this crossing that the pilots used to say: "If I miss Ascencion my wife gets a pension," which indicates the difficulties they had.
This week produced—in the midst of accumulating troubles—one of those crises which would continue to recur while the pressures of war and blockade mounted. The thesis was that I had been asked to resign—in fact, that I should be leaving, under orders, on a certain date. The story was started and carried on by a newspaper proprietor. He had it from someone who had it straight from Mr. Roosevelt. Oh, and yes, it had been confirmed at Interior. After the insular fashion, the fabrication became elaborate: the family silver was being packed and our northern wearing apparel being got ready. Tyler’s nurse had been given notice. All this in headlines every day. Muñoz came in looking perturbed. He was sure he was going to have to deal with a strange Governor; and how was he to get the bills signed which his heroic efforts had got through the legislature? He was inclined to be accusatory—I was planning to quit in the midst of the fight, and what about his commitments? It took some time to check the flood of reproach. He went back to his legislative session still somewhat unconvinced. For a week or two the newspaper proprietor in question kept it up. Dispatches were sent from Washington nominating new candidates; interviewers expressed satisfaction that at last the President had acceded to Puerto Rican demands for my replacement. And, as in all similar incidents, of which there were many during the next year, face was elaborately preserved by the shameless use of the press. Finally, after the agitated legislature had passed a resolution of confidence in me and one withdrawing confidence from Mr. Bolivar Pagán, who was serving as stooge at the Washington end, the President sent a letter to Muñoz in response to the legislature’s message, indicating warm support. And the press for a week or two found it convenient to develop other interests.

With all these annoyances, it was a relief to have a compulsory journey in the offing. For Charles had talked the State Department into giving the new Commission a special plane for a survey trip around the Caribbean and the end of March saw us gathered in Trinidad for our first meeting.

Under ordinary circumstances, for a Governor to go away leaving a legislature in session would rightly be thought almost criminally negligent. Anything could happen. It was especially risky for me to go at this time with war tension increasing and with Muñoz under the strain imposed by the accouchement of so vast a rehabilitation scheme. But I had been made a member of the Commission after protest; and I could not refuse to follow orders. So, after formally registering my uneasiness, I went. The last day for the introduction of bills was past, anyway, and

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2One of these candidates, Dr. Baruch, would tell me cheerfully more than two years later that he had wanted to be Governor and had lent himself to this. But this was when his ambitions had been satisfied by the ambassadorship to Portugal.
perhaps sheer exhaustion would prevent the occurrence of untoward incidents. My last shot before leaving was a really outrageous letter to Mr. Ickes, protesting delay in the stock-piling of food, denouncing the empty posturing of Mr. Gordon, and generally making myself a nuisance. I thought that either he would ask me to resign out of hand or call in his crew of saboteurs for an explanation. I hoped he would demand my presence in Washington for a showdown. I was sufficiently fed up to make it an interesting one.

Take it altogether I was not likely to be very helpful, in any long-run sense, on the general colonial issue; or, for that matter, on specific future plans for the Caribbean. I was getting deeper into a fight of my own which I wanted to finish now no matter what the outcome. It was remarkable how quickly I cooled off in the leisurely atmosphere of Government House in Trinidad; for a week or two I became again an observer rather than an executive, a change which was wholly agreeable.

There had been no discussion of agenda for our meeting. There were security reasons for this, I was told. But the fact that there had been no preliminary exchanges, by mail, cable, or phone, all of which were nominally available, indicates another of the difficulties which hampered wartime administration in Puerto Rico. For purposes of censorship it had been determined "in high places" to treat us as though we were a foreign country. This had taken me by surprise; in fact the first notice I had had of it was someone telling me of a supposedly confidential phone conversation between myself and Interior officials. It seemed that my conversations were not only being listened to but recorded. I was to be regaled later by the tale of how certain naval officers of the Reserve, now on active duty, were much amused to gather and listen as my talks with Washington officials were amplified. Since these officers were mostly Republicanos it was natural that they should convey the more entertaining bits at once to political leaders. And it was true that they displayed knowledge of matters which I had thought confidential. This practice of the censors was not known to me as yet, nor even suspected; but I was aware that my letters—even those to the Secretary—were being opened and read. For some reason it was thought to be in the public interest to circulate, in mimeographed form, excerpts from censored letters, to a selected list of Washington officials. The communications between Mr. Ickes and myself, he discovered, were known to all officialdom. I never knew what he did about this curious development, but presently it stopped. For a long time, however, the letters continued to be read. I found it of no use to protest. Those involved fell back on "security." For the entire year to come, I had no confidential communication with my home office.

So we began our Trinidad discussions from scratch. We were conscious that we were preparing the way for something larger than ourselves. Until we became
acquainted with one another and with our mutual problem, we should not break into new international territory; we should, as I felt, be too cautious in that, too slow to approach necessary if dangerous issues. It was true, however, that the immediate need was for organization of a supply system throughout the area which would stand up even in blockade. Our two nations could not let these millions of dependent people starve. Nevertheless, incredible as such a situation seems, it was clear that unless our group did something about it nothing would prevent the arrival of actual starvation within a matter of months. After nearly three years of war the British islands had no stocks left. Rationing was severe; and nothing remained in the shops but the necessities and there were barely enough of these. We heard at once that many smaller islands not only had no reserves but were actually out of food altogether. This appalling situation had been allowed to occur because there were no replacements for the ships ordinarily depended on, and because these were now being lost one after the other. In ordinary times ships in the insular supply service go regularly for years on accustomed rounds; and merchants obtain their supplies from traditional sources. This regularity was now broken up. There was bewilderment and fear. The British administrators had taken over from private importers some time ago and were buying in bulk wherever goods could be found, distributing to local merchants what they could get. Their job was being done with efficiency under extreme difficulty; but even they were baffled by continuing cargo losses. They needed a larger affiliation which would take the whole supply problem as a necessary task and see to it in spite of war.

This need was an overwhelming one in the spring of 1942. We could hardly have sat to discuss the future of the Caribbean with hunger dominating everyone’s thoughts. Food, consequently, was what we considered in these meetings, and what we worked at during the rest of that year. The future could go over until it was certain that there would be one.

Nevertheless we were aware that larger problems were just over the horizon; and in odd moments we talked of them informally. We had to believe that our side would win the war even though at that time this seemed hardly a justifiable assumption.

Still, if that were not assumed, no discussion was possible. Not our Commission, but Nazis and Fascists would settle Caribbean policy if things went badly. And there was no denying that they were going badly, not only in Burma and New Guinea at the other side of the world but in our area as well. Goods were piled high in the railroad yards and on the docks of the Atlantic and Gulf ports, not only goods we needed for civilian subsistence in the Caribbean, but also munitions for the armies of China, Russia and Britain as well as those necessary to building, among others, the bases along the Antilles arc. The confusion and congestion were beyond description. And
the seas seemed empty of ships. The submarines were all around our islands, within sight, almost, a constant and arrogant menace. Work on our defenses seemed likely to be stopped altogether or at least greatly delayed. Since the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau had gone up the English Channel while the British dozed, the whole sea picture had changed. It was quite possible that the British would be brought out of the Mediterranean altogether in order to hold the Atlantic. The battles in our sea were just beginning. They would be worse before they could be better.

Yet I remember an interesting exchange one evening in which other Commissions like ours were foreshadowed if things should go well. One would be needed for the Mediterranean; and out in the Pacific there were variously controlled islands on a really vast scale. The whole area from the Solomons, up through the Marshalls and Gilberts on one side and out across New Guinea, Borneo and Java on the other, enclosed a great sea which the Japanese had long been approaching with possessive eyes and now had grabbed in one convulsive movement. General Mac-Arthur had escaped to Australia but as yet he had nothing to work with and it looked as though he might have to resist there. Still if we should recover and win back this area for the United Nations, the peace would involve the very problems we faced in miniature in the Caribbean. There would be no stopping place, of course, short of the mother nest in Japan. And sterilization there would be a special problem. But thousands of Pacific islands would be "freed." What was to be done with them? Many would not even have a former sovereignty to which they could return. They would have been under mandate since the first World War. And would the others be content to go back to French, Dutch or British rule? Or would some international commission like ours be entrusted with their larger interests while they were given, such of them as wanted and could use it, local self-government? Speculation was merely that. We had no great wisdom, and we were working in the dark. We might talk casually of these matters, but actually we were too hard pressed for any considered discussion.

March is the dry season in Trinidad and, seeing the brown lawns in the park, I was reminded of the climatic variety among these islands. There is a corner of Puerto Rico—the southwest— which is so sheltered from the Trades that it gets little moisture and often has more the appearance of New Mexico than of the subtropics. It is a pasture land and relatively unpeopled for so crowded an island. But except for this, Puerto Ricans seldom saw the results of real drought, or realized the difference such periodic shortages of rain can make. Certain plants and trees will not tolerate the deprivation. Certain others behave differently. I had noticed on trips to St. Thomas or St. Croix how, in those relatively dry islands, the bougainvillea grows less luxuriantly but has a more brilliant bloom. Here in Trinidad there was a lovely
showing of what in the Spanish islands is known as Isabel Segunda but which was here called plumbago. Its modestly blue flowers lighted whole hedges as though reflecting color from the sky. In our damper gardens it never attained this glory. But except for a few defiant flowering plants of this sort, the dry months are almost dormant.

Government House in Trinidad, like most of those in British colonies, was, as one could see, the archetype of gentlemen's houses in England—but of a century or two ago, when squires could afford house servants, gardeners and stablemen, and still cared for a land which produced great wealth so immune from taxes that it could be put back into the soil again. The land now has come into competition with distant estates where costs are less, especially for labor; and, since the rise in taxes, the great houses are either closed or are separated from the foundation of agricultural income on which they were originally built. But in every colony there is a bit of the old English life surviving at Government House. It is the seat of officialdom, not of an agricultural enterprise, but its resemblance to the houses in the mother country which were estate centers is too obvious to miss. It was put here to show the "natives" how true Englishmen live. And so far as they can, the colonial estate owners imitate the spaciousness and luxury of Government House to this day.

The skeptical American is apt to wonder whether the ideas seated here are not, like the Houses, those of rural England before the industrial revolution. I am not going to say the easy thing—that they are. For British Governors are intelligent and competent and have a decent sense of the requirements of noblesse. I never myself have known one whose ideas wholly fitted the house in which he lived. But it must be acknowledged that the country-house life, leisurely and affable, is not the expected source of social change. And perhaps my experience of British Governors has been too recent to be representative.

I may as well confess that on this trip I was so grateful for the interlude of relief from my own responsibilities that I sank willingly into the apparent English peace and borrowed no more trouble than was forced upon me. I had to go to meetings. Charles and Sir Frank were insistent meeters and always ready with minutes, memoranda and references. I came awake once in a while to make what I hoped was a bright remark. But on the whole I was a weight. Anyway, what was being dealt with was the supply problem of the British islands. It soon turned into a duel in which my somnolence was perhaps useful since it simulated stubborn resistance. For what the British were after was that the United States should take the whole supply problem off their hands for the duration. That in itself made some sense. Administratively it would be a gain. But it soon developed that it was their idea that they ought to get supplies for the islands on lend-lease. Since these goods on arrival
were going into the regular channels of trade to be sold to consumers in the usual way, and since one so cynical as myself in the matter of British-United States relations felt with utter certainty that lend-lease goods would never be paid for, it looked like an awfully good thing for somebody. I remarked, as soon as I got the drift, that it must be the answer to an importer’s dream to get goods free and sell them at wartime prices (which, of course, misstated the proposal—it was the governments to whom most of the gains would have gone); and I said freely that I suspected their officialdom of having joined up with what corresponded to my own ineffable comerciantes group. In fact, I said, they might find one reason for the dislike of colonialism in this partnership. The people no longer believed that the officials worked for them—rather for the small business clique who exploited them as a regular thing. Sir Frank, I must admit, was a little shamefaced about the proceeding; but Mr. Caine, the Colonial Office representative who had now become a temporary member of the Commission, pressed hard and, as it seemed to me, without tact, even after the thing was exposed—perhaps under Home Office instructions. Charles and I had to be downright rude—I, of course, more than he. And even then our London friend did not give up. Later he was to get some real concessions in Washington, needless ones, as I felt, which someday might be investigated to everyone’s embarrassment. But he didn’t get them out of us in Trinidad. This began a feud between Mr. Caine and myself which was to go on all through the early work of the Commission over similar issues. I thought him needlessly, almost insufferably old-colonial; he probably thought me a crude American. We never saw eye to eye on anything. Perhaps I understood him better for being English myself (all my ancestors came from the South of England, the paternal half of them only just in time to give me an American-born father) and being therefore quite capable of being insufferable right back at him when he was overbearing.\(^3\) Charles was at least a little impressed by the British; their pretensions, so far as he was concerned, were practically sterling; and he was as weak as a girl whenever they made demands. He was inclined to regard me with horror whenever I snapped at them and was rude. This was often, for I thought, to use again the Americanisms which I used then, that they were getting away with murder in the Caribbean, at least, and that we were being suckers. I still think so; but that did not imply any lack of respect for their abilities. On the contrary. But I did not see that I was required to like it. Charles stiffened a lot later on, of course.

\(^3\)Several years later I was to have a generous and appreciative note from Mr. Caine which makes me a little ashamed of my offensiveness in 1942. He thought a particular legislative message of mine effective and said he wished British Governors would show the same sort of leadership. To this I answered that he certainly gave me too much credit now as he had given me perhaps too little once before. And I asked him back to the Caribbean so that we might quarrel some more. I hadn’t had a real one, I told him, since he had been with us.
and, indeed, was the most effective protector of American interests in the Caribbean. He was always on the job when it seemed as though everyone else had forgot us.

Sir Frank Stockdale, our Co-Chairman, although he formally sided with Mr. Caine, knew us and the Caribbean too well to insist beyond the point of decency on such concessions as were involved in this first quarrel—for there were to be others—between myself and Mr. Caine. Sir Frank, following the Moyne Commission into the West Indies, had a modest fund to spend on enterprises calculated to improve conditions of all sorts. It was the British version of our Federal public works extended to the colonies. It was, however, a more intelligent one; for Sir Frank was required not merely to respond to local pressures but actually to shape such a program of expenditures as would produce improvement and contribute to welfare. To do this he had to understand the region's potentialities and to cut behind centuries of tradition, prejudice and maladjustment. This meant sending in outside experts in agricultural production, in industrial development, in distribution, and in such other matters as town planning, education, health, housing, municipal services—all the phases and elements of modern life in which the West Indies lingered in another century—the century out of which the pattern for Government House had come. Sir Frank was not going to be beloved in the islands by anyone of note. Some descendants of this generation's common people might someday call him blessed. But the Chambers of Commerce, the government bureaucracy, the planters, and even the Governors, many of them, were not going to enjoy the foreign expert advice and shaking up and the reconstruction which were coming. A great deal was going to be heard about the old colony's traditions, about experts who thought they knew better than long-time residents, about the encouragement of unruly classes and people being educated beyond their opportunities.

Sir Frank was, however, well equipped not only for his job but for resistance to the detractions which were going to come his way. He was the perfect Dickensian model of the Midland squire. He would merely have filled in the picture of the English inn if he could have been seen emerging in his greatcoat on a frosty morning and shouting for his stable boy; he would have done, in fact, for a representation of that Mr. Wardle who was the host of Messrs. Pickwick, Winkle and party on a famous occasion. His big frame and heavy paunch, the twinkle in his shrewd blue eyes, daunted many a profiteering importer and many a planter too, who would have shouted "communist" at a more poetic-looking gentleman. His talk ran to crop figures, cost estimates, wholly accurate vital statistics and distressingly realistic appraisals of commercial potentialities. He knew how little can be done on the fast-eroding slopes of the volcanic islands, or on the "extremely infertile" soils of the Guiana hinterland. He was not taken in by the mirage of settlement schemes through
which each distressed area hopes to unload its excess of population in some other area. He knew that short of drastic reorganization throughout, and acceptance of nature’s hard conditions, there was no way to improvement. This was as little liked by local politicians as by the Chambers of Commerce. But Sir Frank, based on London, and near the end of a long colonial career, went his way cautiously and with complete skepticism.4

This was my first acquaintance with him. We sat across the table from one another for several days and I could see him sizing me up as, rousing from lethargy, I fenced with Mr. Caine. He was not altogether disapproving. We should meet again many times with increasing mutual respect. He, Charles, Caine and I were the guests at Government House of Sir Hubert Young. The great House was furnished with country comfort. The airs blowing its silk curtains and wandering through the comfortable rooms reminded me of places I knew in Kent and Dorset through which the Channel breezes blew in summer. My bedroom opened upon a wide balcony over stretching lawns and paneled rose gardens. The enormous trees in the park might have been the white oaks and elms of the English countryside. I rose late and loafed. I had enjoyed this kind of thing before—abroad—and suspected that it might be in my blood. I found it only too easy to assume that I had some kind of right to enjoy it while the lesser breeds labored for its maintenance. That night there was a dinner for perhaps sixty guests; and the cellars still had port for the drinking of healths. I sat on the right of the Governor and cheerfully offered the visitors' toast to the symbolic head of this Empire after His Excellency called us up to honor our President.

It was somewhat different in British Guiana. Trinidad was, after all, a comparatively rich island. There were resources of oil and asphaltum which bolstered its economy, even though the once-prosperous cocoa industry was now ruined by witch-broom disease. British Guiana had other resources too—bauxite, for instance, an industry expanded greatly to meet wartime demands for aluminum; and there were vast, even if almost useless, bushy hinterlands, out of which some sustenance for a Capital must necessarily come. Yet its people, four to six degrees above the equator, and living mostly on the empoldered lowlands along the steamy coast, seemed to me to live more squalidly than any folk I had ever seen, more so even than the Trinidadians. Surinam, just below on the shoulder of South America, is, of course, still Dutch, and Georgetown, British Guiana’s capital, seems at first to be; for this coast was reclaimed from the sea by low-country techniques which were put into use when all of it belonged to Holland.

That impression from the air, which results from seeing many canals, probably, is soon dissipated. For many of the waterways within the city have been filled to make streets, and the most frightful slums, inhabited by an incredibly mixed population, have spread, out of all control, over large sections of the town. North and south of Georgetown, on the sugar and rice estates, a peculiar shedlike type of community housing, called "workers' ranges," has everywhere degenerated into filth and ugliness. I was sorry for Sir Gordon Lethem, as I saw the kind of colony over which he had been sent to preside. For Sir Gordon is a humane man—the most progressive British Governor I have known—and struggle for betterment here seemed to me almost hopeless. Still, even Sir Gordon's position had its recompense. His house and the gardens were comparatively modest; but they were still in the colonial fashion. He rode on the dike in the mornings and took a satisfying interest in the remarkable local museum and the rich botanical garden; and these interests must have helped some in what was otherwise a trying task for a man moved by others' sufferings.

Here, as in Trinidad, the visitor at once notices the large proportion of East Indians; but there are also Chinese, Malayans and other nationalities from the opposite side of the globe, a strange conglomerate in a strange setting. After our meetings, Sir Gordon took me to visit several East Indian hostels and churches and to have a look at the diked sugar land where the cane was brought to the mills by canalboat. I had always heard of Demerara crystals as well as Demerara rum; both had for centuries been well-known products in world markets. It had to be admitted, however, that their source was not impressive. The mills and distilleries were old and run down; laborers seemed poorly fed and worse housed. Here, I thought, was the living example of that phenomenon the economists call "the margin." This whole economy was marginal, surely; its costs could not be driven lower by any thinkable savings; and evidently the gaining of efficiency by great rebuilding schemes was not thought a good risk.

Sir Gordon was more inclined to be optimistic, evidently, than the Development and Welfare experts who had been studying his colony. They pretty well wrote off the vast hinterland, stretching out south across the Rupununi savannas to Brazil. But he told me privately that Sir Frank was prejudiced. He thought the bush had vast possibilities for cattle-growing and even food culture.

We had projected a flight into that hinterland with Major Al Williams, who had been developing his own private air service in the Guianas for years; but, as is so often

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5"There is indeed in the interior of British Guiana little prospect of permanent agricultural development. . . . The economic future of the Colony is likely to be based upon agriculture on the coastal belt, minerals from the central belt, and upon extraction of timber from the forest. . . ." Report, 1941-43, op. cit., p. 12.
true, the weather made it impossible.\textsuperscript{6} That we could not at least see the back
country from the air was a disappointment. Sir Gordon had traveled through much
of it by river boat, by canoe, on horseback and afoot, and his tales of the "pork-
knockers" in the diamond country, as well as his description of the Kaieteur Falls,
where the Potaro River comes off the great escarpment, and the grandeur of the
country roundabout, had made us curious. The army fliers at Atkinson Field where
we landed—fifty miles up the Essequibo from Georgetown—also told us many
stories of the strange wild land out back. The field was built right out in the jungle;
many of the laborers were Bush Negroes and Indians whose way of life was quite
visible just outside the fences. They were practically naked, their houses were
primitive palm and thatch, and their agriculture was almost non-existent. The road
down to Georgetown was rough; but the soldiers' company was good. They did not
think themselves heroic; but they were living more dangerously than they would
have been at most fronts. There were numerous deadly snakes; the fearful tertiary
malaria was endemic; and other fevers and parasites made the health— and even
the life—hazard extreme. This was only one of many such enterprises—and by no
means the worst—but I have kept a deep respect for the men who carried it out and
who underwent all the miseries, besides the hateful monotony of long tours of
unrelieved duty in such places. For the army, as well as the rest of us, suffered from
the shipping shortage and isolation was nearly complete.

We were met at the airport by the Governor's aide. He stepped up to me at once to
say that there was a message for me at Georgetown. I asked, for God's sake, what
was it? He said it had been described as of a personal nature and the cable operator,
after finding I had not yet arrived, had thought it something which could wait and
had reserved it for later delivery. I was furious. For days I had been awaiting the
news I hoped the cable carried—and it was to be further delayed when it was at last
available! Moreover, I had begun to be worried, for the event was overdue. My
appreciation of the jungle life we saw on the way to Georgetown was strictly on the
surface. By the time we arrived my temperature was pretty high—and then the
cable office turned out to be closed until morning! I considered breaking in; and I'm
afraid I was impolite to the aide. In the midst, however, of an impassioned demand
for action, the base commander handed me a message which had come to him by
military radio. I opened it with feeble fingers. It said: "Deliver to Governor Tugwell:

\textsuperscript{6}The Guiana clouds and fogs were a hazard which made a graveyard for many of our Africa-bound
bombers, piloted by inexperienced boys; losses would become so great a little later that very special
precautions would have to be enforced. This could account too for the establishment at our University
of the Tropical Meteorological Research Institute to give postgraduate training in weather analysis.
The truth was that weather in our part of the world had some characteristics not known in the
Temperate Zone; and the young pilots were flying into it without sufficient warning or preparation.
nine-pound boy born last night." The Colonel, when I had been congratulated and sustained with appropriate ceremony by all those present, said he had considered it a big order but hoped he had not failed me. I had recovered by evening enough to write in my journal, "This, by agreement, will be Franklin, after my great-grandfather. May there be no wars in his lifetime."

Next morning I was able, with a relieved mind, to explore with Sir Gordon a mutual hobby: the botanical garden. It was neither so comprehensive nor so active in influencing the colony's agriculture as ours at Mayaguez. That does not mean to imply that this and other British centers do not turn out first-rate work. For the expenditures made and the personnel used, their return is, I believe, a good deal higher than ours. In sugar cane, in sea-island cotton and in coffee they have contributed more than our own people; and their gardens are museums of subtropical horticulture. As we looked about this morning Sir Gordon reminded me that the subtropical belt all the way around the world has by now almost the same look. This comes from the industrious spreading of plants and seeds for centuries from one area to another. That had been the lifework of Mr. David Fairchild, I told Sir Gordon; and we had still in our Federal Department of Agriculture a Plant Exploration Division, begun by him, which had contributed to this borrowing of vegetation. But we, not possessing extensive sub-tropics, had not done nearly so much as the British, many of whose possessions had for centuries lain between 20 degrees north and 20 degrees south. Sir Gordon reminded me, indeed, that Bligh of the <i>Bounty</i> had been carrying live breadfruit seedlings from the East Indies to the Caribbean when his famous adventure began. And Bligh had made a second voyage—one which was completed—and the breadfruit of the West Indies, now so plentiful, was all of it descended from the seedlings of this second voyage.

Sir Gordon was inclined to agree with me that colonialism would be greatly modified when new arrangements were set up after the war. He thought—and because his last post had been at Antigua in the Leeward Islands, he spoke with knowledge—that the great nations had failed in their duty to the lesser peoples, and that our Caribbean Commission might, by acting as a binder, serve some of the purposes of confederation. In other words, it tended to make many little areas into a more considerable one—and more considerable ones are likely to get more attention. I was still of the opinion that this would not be enough; and in the casual discussions I cited two instances which indicated something more serious than just neglect. One was the British policy, adopted within our generation, and even coincidentally with known West Indian distress, of subsidizing the beet-sugar industry in the United Kingdom. This had been unforgivable. And the riots in Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica in the thirties had been directly traceable to it. But
our own case was no better. We had taken Puerto Rico by force and, without her consent, had closed her within our tariff system. Her coffee—then her greatest asset—had lost its market in Europe because she could take nothing in exchange and because she was on our higher exchange level. The United States had not wanted the coffee either; and so the fincas had declined. But this was not the worst feature of this illustration. We also had made it impossible for her to buy rice, for instance, on the world market. We had forced her to pay perhaps 30 per cent more than she would have paid, say, for Burmese rice. So we had, in effect, taken away her livelihood and then had required her to support, out of her impoverishment, the far more prosperous farmers and processors in our States. 7

With no more than these two illustrations, I said, a case could be made out for not trusting either of us as nations. When our own interests were touched we seemed incapable of being fair to dependents. Sir Frank, as a dispenser of Empire benefits intended to allay the unrest arising from economic decline, and Sir Gordon, who must preside day by day over a colony whose present was deplorable and whose future seemed likely to be little bettered, were not likely to deny the injustices. It was not to be wondered at, however, if both felt I was too hard on the Empire. They were colonial career officers.

Next day in Barbados the immediate troubles seemed to be more serious. From the air, as we circled it in our DC-3, the island looked like a large brown pancake on a bright blue plate with bubbles of batter at the edges. For this was the dry season here too; at once, on landing, we had a sense of being cut off, isolated; and, in fact, the situation was nearly desperate. Trinidad was, after all, at the corner of the continent, her roadstead was full of ships, and we Americans were busily building army and navy bases. Supplies were short and rationing strict; but there was a sense of things centering there. British Guiana was on the continent and grew enough rice, at least, to feed herself. But Barbados was far out of the wartime ship track; supplies were about exhausted and despair was in the air. Her molasses and sugar could not be shipped out or food brought in. Her concentration of population was the greatest in the Caribbean, and disaffection had, even before the war, gone further than in most other places. I had not envied Sir Gordon, but I really pitied Sir Gratton Bushe. It was evident, however, that there was effective administration. I had, until then, never seen so much done with so little. Necessary war restrictions had been thoroughly organized; and there were few indications that insiders were taking advantage of shortages for profiteering. Indeed nowhere had this ugly business got the hold it had in Puerto Rico. As I studied the British controls I had cause for shame.

7This illustration was not wholly fair. The coffeegrowers of Puerto Rico had also fallen far behind in technique, so that their costs were such that the world market would not have sustained them in any case. The tracing of cause and effect is difficult in this as in other economic declines,
and resolved to try harder, when I got back, for the management of imports so that shipping space should be devoted to the most needed products. Also, I was confirmed in the opinion, which had been growing for some time, that unless we had a system of bulk buying we should not be able to supply our needs at all. This had been the basis of my difference with Messrs. Gordon and Swope. And then I had not actually seen at first hand the British method. It had brought them through severe crises. It was true that they needed new sources of supply, for most of these islands had had their most important commercial connections with Canada, and these were now ruptured by the loss of the Lady ships. We were, indeed, discussing this as we went along; and it was becoming clearer and clearer that there would be great advantages in centralizing supply for the whole Caribbean. The single reliable source of food in the whole world now was the United States. It occurred to us that the Agricultural Marketing Administration, already doing the bulk buying for lend-lease, might well buy for the account of all insular governments. This would open to all of us the possibility that our people would at least share fairly in the supplies of rice, flour, beans, etc. If we left it to the private importers, they would trade only when it was profitable to them; they would not build up stocks of price-controlled foods; and they would, in any case, get only what was left after the Government had satisfied its needs—and this might not be enough. Every consideration led us to resolve that this would be our first effort as an international commission.

We considered, also, what we might do to increase shipping, to reduce losses from submarines, and to insure that the lines of supply should not be totally severed—as appeared to be quite possible. One thing was obvious. The small boats which carry so much interisland commerce ordinarily, and even much of the trade with the mainland, were now hung up in harbor, afraid to move. The submarines did not waste torpedoes on them but they did frequently sink them by shelling. If they could be set going again it would be a great gain. Our preliminary explorations seemed to indicate that it was not personal risk which kept them at home but rather the inability to insure and to get gear and gasoline for auxiliary motors. Perhaps also they were not being offered rates commensurate with the present risks. Mr. Coert DuBois, of our number, was an indefatigable small-boat sailor, and it seemed appropriate to put him on this job. He at once devoted himself to it and during the next year would organize the West Indies schooner pool.

4 April. As I write we are a half hour out of Barbados, where our DC-3 barely raised its wheels over the rough at the end of a half-constructed runway. We are headed for a day in St. Lucia. Little Barbados has the most effective wartime organization I have ever seen. I wish our planters could be brought to co-operate in food-growing as the Barbadians are doing.
Later. We are in the air again out of St. Lucia, raising Martinique on the starboard bow. Our base at Vieux Fort is a typical palm-grove layout for a few years’ use. There are a useful runway and a standard wooden barracks. We were met by Colonel Ring, who went with us up the coast to Port Castries in a PT boat. We had a look, from the sea, at the naval air establishment and then ran into the long-necked, narrow harbor. Just a month before, a particularly audacious sub had run deep into this neck one evening and let go two torpedoes, sinking the *Lady Nelson* and a large freighter at the pier. She had turned, gone out and lost herself in the darkness without even being fired at. There had been, apparently, gross negligence. There was then no submarine net at the harbor mouth; the pier and the ship were floodlighted for the discharge of cargo; and the guns on the heights never seem to have been put into action. We ran up alongside and looked into the enormous holes full of twisted steel sheets and a litter of machinery and cargo. The stench was sickening. There are no facilities here and not even the bodies of those killed have been got out.

St. Lucia is worse off for food than any place we have yet been. There is no flour and none in sight and these are bread-eating people. Colonel Ring feels certain there is submarine assistance from Guadeloupe. We are just now passing, two miles out, at six thousand feet, Fort-de-France, Martinique. I count eight ships in the roadstead—two of them large warships. The rest look like freighters or tankers. There is a lot of uneasiness in this part of the Caribbean about these Vichy-French islands and these ships. Ring was full of complaints of bad staff work on our part and negligence in surveillance— he seemed to me too outspoken even if all he said was true. He says, for instance, that he was notified four hours too late, the lateness having no excuse, of two subs in harbor at Fort-de-France. Consequently they got clean away. He tells other stories of subs being seen by his patrols, which he checked with other planes, but which were not attacked and did not appear on official records. This does not accord with what I know of Hoover.

In this matter of subs being supplied from the French islands, the State Department has officially said—repeatedly—that "on information received" no aid was being supplied. They cannot afford to have facts turn up which prove the contrary; but it does seem incredible that official reports would be doctored to support our Vichy-appeasement policy. And I seriously doubt, from all I can put together, if any submarine-supplying goes on.

At the very least, however, it is clear that there is very bad army-navy liaison here. There is a navy observer in Martinique and several consular officials, but unless information is more accurate and moves faster to the army patrols something
serious will happen again. Those two stinking ships at Port Castries are hard to get out of mind.

That night we slept in Antigua and dined with Sir Douglas Tardine. His troubles resembled those of the rest of us. His Leeward group contained some of the poorest communities in the Sea, so that its food shortages were, if anything, more acute than others. Anguilla, St. Kitts, and the British Virgins have varying annual rainfalls, Anguilla, especially, being subject to long droughts, but none of them approached self-sufficiency and practically all of them had exhausted their reserves. Once again the need for an assured supply system was underlined. But Sir Douglas urged us to hurry; otherwise, actual starvation must be added to what already was severe privation. As if to emphasize his forebodings he shared with us the last of his port, and asked us back in pleasanter times to see the remains of Lord Nelson’s harbor at Englishtown. It was nothing to be ashamed of, he said, even in these days of monstrous works.

Next day, if beauty had been wanted, was the most spectacular of all. We went out of our way to circle St. Eustatius—where the American flag had its first foreign salute—and Saba, where a village maintains itself in a volcano’s crater rising straight out of the sea. We had a look also at Monserrat, Nevis, St. Kitts, Barbuda, St. Martin, and the many British Virgins; and then we landed at St. Thomas for lunch. By four we were home, flying in on a thick squall whose turgid clouds streaked with sinister light could not divert my mind from the proximate pleasures of fatherhood. And by evening I was admiring the new son I had heard of down in Guiana.

The fortnight’s absence had covered a period of thickening complications. Tension had risen again until it approached that of December, when fears of attack had been the cause. This time it was recognized that the true danger lay in blockade—in that and in the preoccupation of Washington with larger affairs. Puerto Ricans had begun to think, not that the great nation to which they were attached was unable to reach them with supplies, but that it did not want to—at least not badly enough to risk the necessary ships. From my point of view this was worse. It emphasized the impoverished-nephew view of our relations which Puerto Ricans are always apt to suspect Continentals of having anyway. They were much inclined to indignation at our neglect.

While I had been away there had begun a momentary diversion. Muñoz had made an overheated charge that the insular Government had been robbed of some four millions in taxes justly due, by the manipulations of certain officials, some of them probably Popular legislators, in cahoots with certain oil companies. The whole
matter was histrionic and greatly inflated; and it was pitched on a moral level which made it slightly ridiculous in the persistent political atmosphere of Puerto Rico.

This useful, even if in some ways annoying, dust-up did not, however, last very long, and underlying it, and becoming more and more visible as the atmosphere cleared, was the fear of blockade and renewed evidences of hysteria as the discovery was made that food supplies were short. It was at this time that hoarding began. At night, or even in daylight, trucks carrying foodstuffs were reported as being unloaded in the back yards or at the country places of the wealthier citizens. The grocers, the wholesalers and the importers were advising their business friends to stock up against the day of rationing; and it was obvious that the advice was being followed on a large scale. About this poor sportsmanship I could do nothing. For one thing this was now the province of a Federal agency—the O.P.A.—which held the territory of price regulation even if without qualifying performance; for another, the hoarders were not more than five per cent of the population; and for still another, it was impossible in the humid subtropics to keep most foodstuffs for more than three months. The danger lay not so much in the drain on the remaining supply of food as in resentment among those to whom hoarding was foreclosed because of their poverty. It was provocative, and I feared its effects. That these were not serious showed that the poor had more confidence in their Government than the rich—a curious paradox, when it is thought about—but not, after all, unusual.

These were the weeks which brought the struggle over imports-control to a climax. I had seen, now, that bulk purchase was effective in the British colonies. Our studies showed that only one sector of the trade in Puerto Rico would be injured, and that all the others would actually be benefited—that is, if they foreswore black-market operations—by the certainty of supplies. The importers, however, would have no function left. The Chamber of Commerce was doing its best to conceal these facts—and its best was very effective. For it persuaded the whole business community to make common cause with it against our plan. It was well publicized also that I was opposing the Department on this issue—that Gordon, Swope, and, it was hinted, those higher up were unfavorable, Prices were rising, supplies were going down and down. The Chamber of Commerce knew, even if I, at that time, was still unable to get accurate figures, that the tonnage arriving was now below our current needs even on a minimum basis. It also knew that, lacking the controls for which I pressed, the scarce-arriving ships were still carrying luxuries—hundreds of tons of profitable bottled and canned luxuries—beer, whisky, canned fruits and juices, fancy groceries, sporting goods—a long list of articles for which there was no possible defense in time of blockade. They came because those who made money out of their coming had control of cargo space. I relentlessly hammered the Department with the facts,
hoping that someone in real authority would act. Mr. Gordon, after visiting Puerto Rico, had not communicated with us further. At any rate I was told that no policy changes were contemplated. The fifteen millions for our stock pile still lay untouched in Washington while our stores ran out.

This was not precisely the atmosphere I would have chosen for the first meeting of our American Advisory Committee on the Caribbean. Charles had long ago invited them, however, and they came. Judge Hastie, Mr. Robbins, Justice Travieso, Charles and I met in my office. Mr. DuBois went off on his urgent schooner-pool assignment. It might not be a contemplative session; but it was a favorable one in which to propose a change of status. I invited them to back my proposal for an elected Governor. I thought this evidence of concern might mitigate somewhat the bitterness over our neglect of Puerto Rican needs in our own preoccupation with war. In any case it was a thing which ought to be done. And by now I felt that if I lasted through the wear and tear of the crisis, my whole duty would have been done. The burden of governing could be laid down with honor; and if it could go to a Puerto Rican, then it would be laid down with something more than that kind of honor—with even a sense of achievement in the doing of it.

They made no difficulty about it, and a carefully drafted memorandum went forward through official channels to be endorsed by the Secretaries of Interior and State. This done, and such hospitality dispensed as was appropriate to the times, I let the rest depart for Jamaica to finish their Caribbean inspection. At the last moment I decided not to go. I had to stay at home with my own problems. It was more satisfactory to provide advice, and maybe help for others. But there was one reason I did not care to assign for failure in Puerto Rico, if there should be failure. That was neglect. So I let the others deal with the larger questions until I could disentangle myself again, at least momentarily, from the worst complications of my task.

During this period of 1942, I had reason to be grateful to Muñoz for his development of a strong party organization although I feared that it might tear itself apart as American Democrats were doing—it had so many diverse, even hostile, elements. Yet somehow, and even with what I thought extreme demands for patronage, the party lined up on the right side in the issues which counted. I began to have friends with whom I did not, I found, have to agree. We could agree to disagree about certain matters, yet trust each other in what we understood to be essential. Some were Senators; some were Representatives; all, no matter what else they might be, were loyal Puerto Ricans; and I was Puerto Rico’s Governor—an outsider, of course, but nevertheless an associate who was recognized as true too to a cause.
IT WAS MID-APRIL OF 1942 now and hot weather had come. What that meant in Puerto Rico was that the temperature had risen, on the average, some five degrees.\(^1\) To Northerners this small difference becomes after a while as noticeable as it is to Puerto Ricans. To the newcomer it is strange, in apparent summer weather, to be told by the local folk that it is winter now and not suitable for bathing; also that heavier clothes are indicated. I recall being embarrassed once, in Governor Winship's time, by turning up at a Cabinet dinner in a white jacket and facing a company dressed to a man in formal black. I had forgot—or, to be honest, did not know—that winter received full social acknowledgment throughout the Antilles.

For the first time, along with a sudden uncomfortable heat, I had an opportunity to see how marked the new season could be in the subtropics. Every tree and plant took on a new, an astonishing vigor. And now my investment of effort in the garden at La Fortaleza produced a dividend of pleasure. Whoever had been responsible for making the old Palacio de la Santa Catalina even more unlivable than it had been before its 1939 reconstruction (by putting bathrooms and closets where there had once been entryways for air) had also made of the garden an exhibit in—apparently—European architecture. The architecture had influenced the planting too and, when we moved in, unhappy hedges and beds of Northern flowers were trying to grow in a hot and humid sunken enclosure around a tiled Spanish fountain. But friends at Mayagüez had come to our aid with several truckloads of new horticultural material and a more generous layer of soil. And now, not more than six months later, the spring was giving us a rich crop, so rapidly do gardening results yield themselves when growing is constant. For the spring, if noticeable, shows only more rapidity in processes which go on all year. I had had a difference of opinion with my friends about the bananas (\textit{Musa sapientum}). I liked particularly the long broad blades of well-fed guineos and plátanos. They were by now at least fifteen feet high and spreading gracefully across the fountain as I had pictured them, relieving its geometric sterility; and the coralitas (\textit{Antigonon leptopus}) were in the process of hiding the architecture behind a screen of cushiony pink and green; and these were mixed for relief with the waxy yellow of allamandas. My friends had thought the bananas too common for the garden of Santa Catalina; but when I insisted on planting lowly big-leaved yautias around the pool, thus hiding the tile altogether,

\(^1\)The average winter temperature is 73.7 degrees; and the summer average is 78.8 degrees. January and February are the coolest months with a mean temperature of 73.2 degrees; and August is the warmest month with a mean of 79.0 degrees. This is for San Juan. Actually the climate varies with locality.
they gave me up. Now, however, they were coming around. It was, they admitted, at least a tropical garden again. A brave attempt with herbs died out, not because they would not grow, but because all of them grew too fast and, unless constantly tended, turned rank and weedy. There are few expert gardeners in Puerto Rico and I had not the time to work at it daily myself, giving it the care a good garden of herbs and flowers should have. I had to be content with a tropical effect to be enjoyed more in the gross than in detail. But that we had. And when an already grown flamboyante which had needed food and tending came out a little later we had all the glory anyone could want. This tree blooms for such a small fraction of the year that it cannot be made the piece de resistance of any landscape. In its off season it is a particularly dead-looking large piece of brush. One who did not know what to expect would be amazed to see the bareness turn to freshly lighted small flames creeping up its branches, and then to see the frothy green of its leaves inundate the fires and, in a few weeks, put them out, leaving a feathery umbrella to stand against the fierce suns of summer and fall. But after Christmas all the green goes, withering into dirty yellow and dropping exactly as though it were deciduous, and staying that way for months.

There were also two large mangoes (Mangifera indica), several coconut palms (Cocos nucifera), an aguacate (Persea gratissima), a mamey (Mammea americana) and a quenepa (Melicocca bijuga L.)—some of them so crowded that I saved them only for that year. The mangoes were the worthless turpentiny type so prevalent in this hemisphere, but a grown mango tree of any variety is too impressive for easy

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2 The yautía belongs to one of the largest groups of tropical plants. Colocasia antiquorum is a tuberous perennial which, like other tropicals, appears under various names in different places. In the West Indies the most often heard of are the coco-yam, the eddo, and the dasheen. In Puerto Rico, as in Cuba, malanga is frequent. These are known in India as kachchi, kachi, arvi, etc.; and in Egypt as Zelquas. The yautia is usually placed in the genus Xanthosoma, which also, according to Macmillan, includes the tania, the habarala, etc. It is easily understood why those accustomed to these starchy tubers prefer them to the potato. They have a more substantial consistency and a faint acrid flavor which is not unpleasant.

3 May I quote Macmillan (Tropical Plants and Gardening, Fourth Edition, 1935, P-89)? "Poinciana regia. Leguminosae. Flamboyante; Flame tree; Golden Mohur or Guli-Mohur (flower-of-gold, in reference to the Indian gold coin mohur). A gorgeous tree when in full blossom, bearing immense sprays of scarlet or orange flowers; native of Madagascar, introduced into Ceylon before 1841. It is a very striking object about Colombo during the months of April and May; grows from 40 to 50 ft. in height, with a spreading liabil, and has very handsome, fine, feathery, long bipinnate leaves. Almost deciduous for a short time in dry season. Suited to moist as well as dry regions, especially near the sea. Cultivated in all tropical countries. There are at least two distinct varieties, that with flowers of a bright orange shade being most attractive." A reader who will look at his globe will see that Colombo, in Ceylon, lying somewhat nearer the equator, is just about opposite Puerto Rico. The promience of the Flamboyante in the Puerto Rican scene, and the fact of its Madagascar origin, illustrate quite well the worldwide distribution of subtropic species. It is an interesting comment on the excellence of the British colonial service that this standard work on tropical gardening carries an introduction by Sir Frank Stockdale. (Quotation used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.)
sacrifice. So these were kept. But I planted better varieties for some future Governor to harvest.

The garden and grounds at Santa Catalina scarcely cover an acre. The part of the city in which the Palacio is built—the extreme west, fronting the harbor—must have been more spacious in earlier centuries. But during the undisciplined nineteenth, other buildings had crowded it as they had the cathedral, until now its solid dignity could not any longer be appreciated. Some future city planner will perhaps clear out several squares in front of it and allow it to be seen again. Meanwhile the conception of the successive Spanish architects who have contributed to it is obscured. The round, crenellated towers on the harbor side which were begun in 1535 were defense works. Later engineers thought—why was it not obvious from the first?—that the fortification, to be effective, ought to dominate the harbor entrance rather than its interior bay. Perhaps the towers were meant to protect the old San Juan water gate whose neighborhood then was the main anchorage and landing place for the small ships of the time and through which there came up into town most of the port’s voyagers and freight. The old gate is still in its original place, unused now except for strollers on the marina below the palace walls. After several enemy fleets had penetrated the harbor, however, and having anchored in the bay, ravished the city, El Morro was begun on the far point of land which overlooks the channel to the harbor. La Fortaleza—or Santa Catalina—then became the residence of the Spanish Viceroy and the eastern wing was built. It now forms the main feature of the structure. Two connecting wings were subsequently constructed, thus enclosing a patio with a large cistern, making a fortress fairly self-contained, at least against ill-armed infantry. It seems to have answered the needs of the Viceroy. By the thirties of this century, however—in Governor Leahy’s time—the general dilapidation had made a complete reconstruction necessary. The heat which came on so quickly

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4 The best types come from the East. There is a large grove at Mayagüez from many sources whose progeny, it is hoped, will eventually supplant the poorer prevalent types in Puerto Rico.

5 Mr. Swope and his family lived in the rebuilt Palacio for the few months of his incumbency. When we went there to live, we at once discovered that, even after the reconstruction, there were serious leaks. The walls of many of the rooms were continuously damp and often ran with water. After much study and numerous attempts at repair it was decided that the trouble lay-in the fact that the old brick-and-rubble walls were so porous that the rains soaked in and gradually found their way downward. We were unsuccessful in stopping it; and in fact until, in order to make for ourselves a sleeping place more permanent than the canvas we used at first on the roof, we built a false roof over a kind of penthouse or mirador, the trouble continued. And it still continued afterward in those parts of the Palacio not covered in this way.

Our experiences in trying to live in the Palacio convinced me that it would better be made a shrine and museum of Puerto Rican history than be kept up as a residence. Retired to a quieter function it could be kept for the edification of future generations and restored to the genuine seventeenth-century tradition. Now it is neither authentic for any of its centuries of life nor efficient for residence and office. The time has come for its retirement to the uses of history. Perhaps future Puerto Rican Governors will dedicate it to the past and create for themselves a modern executive establishment,
about the middle of that April was not confined to the weather. All the other affairs in which I was involved became hotter too. The supply problem went on deteriorating even beyond what we had set as the probable worst. Interior continued to sit stubbornly on what we regarded as our fifteen millions. The ships which did arrive, after agonizing delays, turned out to be 50, 60, even 80 per cent loaded with non-essentials. New offices of intelligence and censorship were settling down in our midst and throwing their weight about. Both Hoover and Collins began to grumble at the fresh young lawyers and brokers who were sent them in unmanageable numbers for "intelligence." The Admiral could positively sneer that word, and I suppose they were a nuisance. The F.B.I., which was closer at home to me, was still unable to understand that, at the moment, a falangista was more dangerous than a comunista. The O.P.A. was engaging what seemed like half the lawyers in Puerto Rico—many of them taken from useful work in our Government—and spreading itself with maddening lack of effect; furthermore, when it seemed that we might exhaust our gasoline supplies, it was calmly announced that in this matter jurisdiction would not be accepted. Prices were rising at the official rate of six points monthly; and unofficially much more rapidly. Unemployment, as a result of W.P.B. restrictions and of the exhaustion of materials, was growing at the rate of some twenty-five to thirty thousand a month. Mr. Bolivar Pagán, echoed, of course, by the local press, was filling the Congressional Record with "charges" against me. The elite, now really taxed for the first time, were in a mood of violent reaction; and the sugar planters were getting together to fight off demands that they devote a percentage of their land and capital to food production. They saw signs of insistence in this matter which opened their purses to the lobbyists and added fuel to the fire under the boiling pot in Washington. Muñoz and his followers were enormously excited over the "scandal." And the official terminus of the legislative session was arriving with work on the budget, as well as a dozen other bills, put aside in favor of the "investigation."

On 16 April, toward midnight, the legislature’s clock was stopped. Later that same night the Development Company bill was passed. Next day I signed, with some ceremony, the Civil Defense Act. On the 17th the Planning measure passed; then came acts setting up the Transportation and Communications Authorities. Bills were now being passed by title—that is, not being read. But I was having a lot of trouble with Muñoz over appointments. The two remaining Coalitionist as in the Cabinet had come to the end of their terms. Up to now I had kept them while I had looked around for qualified candidates to be substituted when their terms ended. At the same time, as I have noted, the Populares were still dependent, for a majority in the

6Among other curious features of the Jones Act was the provision that cabinet members should have a four-year term.
lower house, on the *Liberales* with their one seat there, and I thought it necessary to keep these moderates happy. So I had selected, partly for this reason, and partly because I thought them the best-qualified candidates, two *Liberales* for the posts of Agriculture and Health. On Agriculture, Muñoz would give way; on Health, he would not. "But," I argued, "it is in your own interest." He would not do more than shake his head stubbornly. I accused him of having promised the numerous field jobs—the thousands of sanitary inspectors, health center and hospital employees, etc.—to the local *políticos*.

He had another reason which he always cited in these situations. How much weight it had in his mind, however, I never knew. He talked about "Ole Gandule." This mythical figure was the hostile Governor who was always expected shortly, so that, although *I* was fair enough, all dispositions had to be taken as though I were the most oppressive of colonial supervisors. Appointees must owe their jobs to the majority leader, not to the Governor. If he could be stubborn, so could I—in what I conceived to be a good cause. I said I would not deliver the whole health organization to the local *políticos*. Rather than do that I would resort to the device used by other Governors when confirmation for their appointees was refused. I would appoint just after an annual session, and when confirmation was refused, simply appoint again after every subsequent session. True, this might hurt the pride of the appointee; but everyone after all would understand that it was a political rather than a personal lack of confidence.

The health problems in Puerto Rico, as in most subtropical regions, originate only partly in climate; most of them are, in fact, economic. If there were decent housing and no malnutrition, the tuberculosis rate, now so high, would doubtless come down to what is normal for well-fed populations in the temperate zone. If there were not so much poverty, there would not be so many prostitutes and the venereal disease rates would be reduced. If there were shoes and latrines, there would be no hookworm. If there were facilities for bathing and laundering, so that people had no reason for immersion in contaminated streams, there would be no bilharziasis. And, above all, if there were pure water supplies (and sanitary disposal of sewage) there would be very little dysentery and enteritis.

It may be as well to go on, in this connection, to express a conviction that an incidental result of improvements in these respects would be a simultaneous reduction of the birth rate and of the death rate for infants. A people which overbreeds is a people in despair, like a sick tree which flowers desperately out of season in the attempt to perpetuate its race when its own individual survival seems unlikely. People relatively secure and hopeful for their children are careful for their future. Not only is their number regulated by love and foresight, but training in
vocations and careers are opened to each of them. Thus economic improvement transforms a vicious downward spiral into an upward one.

There is, in the collective history of every people, a period of delicate balance when one way or the other may be chosen. Wisdom among its leaders at that instant may result in greatness; the lack of it may result in degradation. It is the tragedy of Puerto Rico that too many of her leaders in the past should have sacrificed wise public policy for the power and emoluments of political dictatorship. They were bosses rather than statesmen. The connection with the United States might have been used to raise the levels of life; instead it was exploited for selfish purposes. It is the fashion in Puerto Rico to blame the United States for the Puerto Rican decline from 1900 to 1932 and there is truly cause for blame. But the United States was more careless than selfish, more tolerant of lobbying interest than intent on doing Puerto Rico harm. One who doubts has only to recall the hundreds of millions which have been devoted to repairing damage done by special interests. If outside individuals have profited from the exploitation of Puerto Rico the nation itself has spent much more in subsidies and relief. If the coffee plantations have been ruined, cane has been subsidized; if the cost of food has been increased by tariffs, relief and subsidies have been given at the rate (for the ten years of the New Deal, at least) of some fifty millions a year; if a shipping monopoly has been protected, the gates of the nation have been opened to scores of thousands of immigrants.

The earlier leaders showed little interest in economics. Muñoz Rivera, who negotiated the autonomous charter with Spain in 1896-97, was an exception. This organic law, if it had become effective, would have given Puerto Rico not only a preferred market for her products but the right to negotiate for food anywhere in the world where it could be had cheapest. The new connection with the United States was not used advantageously. The leaders were either in league with or tolerant of the land policy which transferred half the island’s productive soil to absentee owners and kept the country folk at the primitive level. And they made no attempt to tax the profits of these estates for the welfare services which might have mitigated the workers’ hardships. Instead of following the civilized curve, the birth, disease, and death rates in Puerto Rico since the United States’ occupation exhibited the usual features of precivilized ages. Indeed the situation had worsened rather than improved. Somewhere along the line the vicious downward spiral had begun which, unless checked, would, from the forces generated within itself, gather momentum. Finally, at no distant time, the island might well, under the policies prevalent in the thirties—and still worked for by the commercial organizations, the Republicanos, and so on—have been reduced to a kind of animal-like warren of half-
starved, semi-naked, illiterate people. A good enough stock would have been pushed backward toward the slime.

It was Muñoz’ task to check this downward spiral and to start it upward. It was a heroic work, requiring resolution, ruthless-ness and persistence. He had the resolution—but I was afraid that he lacked the requisite toughness. And I wondered whether he had the persistence. He would not control his subleaders; he would not require discipline; he was infected with ay’ bendito; he was soft when he needed to be hard. I recalled that he was spoken of as El Vate. And the epithet pointed to a weakness: that he would not require efficiency; that he would pardon betrayals and failures; that he would be kinder to individuals than to Puerto Rico as a collective entity. He was the kind of person who never really believed that others’ motives were self-interested and so inimical to the public good. It seemed sometimes that he always thought everyone but me at least partly right and probably his rejection of my advice was because it was hard. This trait of his was so overmastering that he always found excuses even for those who betrayed him.

23 April. The tension which had seemed less during the last few weeks is increasing again. The war for a time seemed to be everywhere but here, as the tough Russians fought back and the Japs slugged into Burma. But we have a new wave of submarine sinkings just now. The British have stopped all ship movements in the Caribbean and I believe we shall be forced to do that too until convoys can be organized. Aruba has been shelled again and our local oil supplies look like being exhausted. What we should do on a wholly motorized island without gasoline it is hard to think; but we may have to devise something even if it does seem unthinkable. I asked the legislature for emergency powers to control transportation, create pools and really save tires and gas. The público drivers were offended and since they have an axis with the Populares, the thing died after two days of calling me names for trying to be a dictator. It will nevertheless have to be done and now I shall have to get the Federal Government (Office of Defense Transportation) to do it. Trucking rates have developed a black market and food prices are seriously affected. I shall not be able to wait. In fact I am sending Roberto Sánchez Vilella to see Eastman in Washington at once.

25 April. The "scandal" has after all turned up nothing scandalous. But there will be punitive bills passed which, to help Muñoz, I shall have to sign. They are inexpedient in wartime; and they run against Puerto Rico’s long-run interest in a free port—they will, for instance, provide taxes on the reshipped contents of cargoes broken in our ports; but my refusal would allow a ridicule about this whole affair, which is just below the surface now, to rise. Ickes will probably object. The oil companies have already been bearing down through him as oil co-ordinator—but I feel certain I can
clear things up with him. Also Muñoz has promised a special session of one day to put off enforcement of the taxes for the duration of the war and begs me to sign the bills for the rest of their provisions. It is disquieting to realize, however, that even in an organization headed by Ickes, there are dollar-a-year men performing as usual.

27 April. This is Monday morning at nine and the legislature, due to quit on the 15th, has not yet finished. For the last three days and nights the sessions have been continuous. The atmosphere by now is indescribable. Weariness hangs in the air like a fog; and the legislators pray only to be released from their ordeal. This is made worse by the fact that not one Popular can be spared on any vote. Muñoz has had to use every device imaginable to whip them to their task and they every device imaginable to escape, even going to the hospital whence they have been brought on stretchers. In spite of everything, including such confusion that it is difficult for anyone to know where we stand, all our agreed bills—except the emergency transportation bill—seem to have passed. If they finish this morning I shall send a congratulatory message which was ready a week ago. After all, they have legislated into existence, in two months, a program which, together with last year’s legislation, and if it can be reasonably well administered, ought to reverse the whole dangerous downward trend of Puerto Rican economic life. That is worth congratulations!

Scared by the tax bill and the setting up of the Authorities the Coalicionistas have been trying a new trick: to invalidate by court order all laws passed with the clock stopped. The Court may accede, being Republicano. If it does, the separation of powers will be more than ever confused here. The courts have already mandamused me as the executive; now if they interfere with the legislature, they will have usurped the whole of government. (Later. Judge Córdova Díaz decided against invalidation.)

Hitler made a speech yesterday which, if it can be taken at face value, puts the war in a new light. In spite of his present power and prestige, the twilight may be visible. Of course, we may starve here in the Caribbean before the submarines are defeated. Nevertheless, the end may be apparent to him. He was at the least far from confident. I and, I suppose, most others on our side have been waiting breathlessly for the great German spring offensive. Is it just possible that there will not be one? If so, the Russians have done more damage than had been thought. It is possible too that a turn may have come in the East. Cripps’ failure, so disappointing to all of us, seems to have been inevitable—caused by the deep divisions in Indian life rather (for once) than lack of British generosity. He has gone home discouraged; and the Japs penetrate Burma further day by day. But they make no progress now toward Australia—and it begins to seem that they may not. It is incredible that they will not
still attack Russia in the East: it was this, together with a fierce German drive into Iran that we expected momentarily at least two weeks ago.

Still other Puerto Rico-bound ships have been sunk—we do not know the count, but it is large. And not a cent of the fifteen millions for food stock-piling has been used.

Lucchetti, returning from Washington this morning, reported general impatience with the power company’s evasions. The agreement is general that they should be expropriated. It appears that the War Powers Act will suffice. We shall save many tankers of oil before the war is over by turning our hydro power into lines otherwise served by the company’s oil-steam plants.7

28 April. Shipping losses keep up. There are new demands from Washington for stricter rationing of gas and oil. Their tone and timing indicate their connection with the pressure on the oil companies here. The legislation being passed is bitterly resented by the companies. For years, like other importers, they have been able to arrange for easy regulation and for keeping their taxes down. The means can be imagined. They resent the change.

29 April. Studying and disposing of bills. Officially I have thirty days after the session for disposal. Actually the legislature used up half my time.

Day before yesterday the President sent to Congress an anti-inflation message. It seems deficient in not putting stoppers on wages and on farm prices beyond parity. But it asked for a top on rent and on the prices of industrial products. It suggested also, what seems indispensable, that unspendable incomes should be taken by taxes or forced loans so that black markets may not wholly defeat rationing. Our own situation in this respect is desperate. The cost of living is creating intolerable pressure—mostly black-market. But I see nothing to check it. The O.P.A. is in a hopeless administrative tangle here. Paul Edwards can do nothing because every decision has to be referred to Washington with documentation which makes time a joke. He will not stand it long. Meanwhile the situation, as supplies are exhausted, is completely uncontrolled. Those who cannot hoard, presently will not share.

5 May. Working on final version of the budget, with almost as much to do as before it was sent to the legislature. Hundreds of changes were made, many with no more than a political basis. The legislators raised the salaries of good Populares, cut those of their opponents, etc. To be accurate, it was not quite like that; close examination shows a lot of bipartisan trading. They raised salaries of friends and cut those who were unfriendly. I even found that several employees in my own and the executive...

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7 This turned out to be true. Many millions of gallons were saved in the first year of integrated operation.
secretary's office were at it. I, of course, restored every salary, which had been raised, to its former level. Since I can cut but not increase, the cuts had to stand.

Besides the budget there are more than three hundred bills to be acted on in the coming ten days.

11 May. Intensive work disposing of legislation. My idea of reducing vetoes to a minimum seems like a bad joke now. Easily half the bills washed up in the last days were of that special-benefit sort which are intended to get credit for representatives but not to become law, Puerto Rican legislators have been used too long to letting a Yankee Governor take the blame for vetoes. My percentage is going to be nearly as high as Swope's or Leahy's.8

The battle of the Coral Sea has shown our Navy in a better light, The admirals may not have much foresight and may be stubbornly conservative but they seem to be superb technicians in actual battle. The invasion of Australia is still not definite but the conquest of Burma is complete. These are days of suspense. The initiative which our side desperately wants to seize still belongs to the Axis, however, and everyone waits for their spring offensive, hoping we can counter it without fatal losses.

I have announced a special session to be held in June to be devoted to fiscal matters which the regular session could not get through—revamping taxes, refunding (and reducing) the debt, and doing something—whatever Washington will let me do—toward checking the dreadful inflation which is rapidly getting away from us.

I must also satisfy Ickes' oil men by putting off export taxes for the duration.

The other day Jack Madigan stopped in on a base-inspection trip (I was out) and left a note from Fiorello La Guardia. It said: "I told you so. Love, Fiorello." I don't see what he has to crow about in view of his own troubles with civil defense!

Charles had been busy in the month since our trip down the islands and the arrangements were now complete for a meeting of supply officers from all the British and American possessions. It was to be held in Jamaica. We hoped such a meeting might impress officials in Washington and London with the desperate nature of the Caribbean situation. The amassed information would, we thought, startle the stodgiest bureaucrat. Specifically we wanted centralized bulk purchasing and a guaranteed allocation of minimum shipping space. Other than this we hoped to find the means to force an adjustment of sugar plantings to the tonnage which

8I was too pessimistic. Actually Muñoz and I between us reduced the percentage of vetoes from 60-65 to 40-45.
could be forecast for its movement. If this could be done the unneeded sugar land might be devoted to the growing of food—that is, if the planters could be persuaded to co-operate. Our meeting would focus attention on the food shortage, on the surpluses of sugar and on the need for guarantees of shipping space.

On 14 May I left for Guantánamo by Naval Air Transport, had lunch with Captain (later Rear Admiral) Weyler there, and transshipped to an amphibian which was to take us to Jamaica. Dr. Fernos, Bartlett and Moscoso were with me.

That made four of us—the pilot and a radioman made six. Those J.R.F.’s carried seven, however, and we were not crowded. I was forward in the co-pilot’s seat. Almost at once the sea began to show wreckage; that, the pilot told me, was all that remained of a general cargo ship which had been torpedoed the day before. And soon we saw another litter of debris on the glittering surface below. We had just finished shouting to each other about its extent—the ship must have been blown open to have spewed out so much of her freight—when I saw something dead ahead cutting the sea. It looked just for an instant like a long rowboat traveling fast enough to make a wake. Then it came to me stunningly that I was staring at a conning tower. I jerked at the pilot’s arm and pointed. He swore, reached for the overhead throttle with his right hand and pushed hard on his wheel with the left. Instantly we were slanting down toward the submarine at a pace the staid J.R.F.’s were not supposed to be built for, but evidently were.

It was all very swift, like the taking of a photograph. The men in the conning tower saw us at the same instant that we saw them, and almost by the time we had aimed our nose at them their nose was aimed at the ocean floor. There was a brisk breeze which wrinkled the sea and her disappearance was so complete that once she had gone under there was no sign of her existence. I could have believed that I had imagined it all—as Hoover would tell me I had when I got back to San Juan—if the experienced pilot had not seen it too. We saw nothing more; and when we got to the spot where she had disappeared we had no depth bombs to drop, this not being even a patrol plane. By that time the pilot and I both had our side windows open and were leaning out with small bombs in our hands from an improvised rack he had fitted into the cockpit. He turned and wove back and forth for some time, scaring Dr. Fernós, Bartlett and Moscoso half to death. All they knew was that we were shouting crazily at each other, handing something heavy back and forth, and leaning out of the windows. Also the plane was engaged in gyrations calculated to make any passenger feel that his time had come.

When we had straightened out again and told the others what had been going on, I found myself still holding one of those greasy foot-long bombs in my lap. Evidently I
had no intention of missing another chance. Also, after watching our pilot maneuver that slow, clumsy-looking Grumman amphibian—it was a commandeered civilian plane—I could see how American pilots were going to hold their own in the war. And I wondered wistfully if it was possible to learn to fly after fifty. I should in fact ask a flier friend of mine a little later at our Naval Air Station about that, and he would say: "Why the hell not? You can ride a bicycle, can't you?" And that would open one very happy chapter in my Puerto Rican life.

Jamaica has the largest population of any of the British colonies in the Caribbean. Lying as it does almost in the shadow of Cuba and well within waters which sheer geography makes American, it has a special problem of relations with the United States. The British would not have survived as an empire, however, if their colonial administrators had not been skilled at maintaining possessions within the spheres of interest more legitimately belonging to others. Jamaica was a typical instance. But there had developed here some special problems in which foresight had been sacrificed to special interests. Of all the tough tory outfits it has been my luck to run into, the Canadian mercantile, shipping and financial interests are the worst; and they had developed a special hold in many places in the Caribbean, especially in Jamaica. They, more than the usual reaction, had been responsible for the hampering of social progress and the lack of recognition for developing political maturity. Just now the colony was in difficulty not only from these causes but from the same stifling of normal economic activities which had affected Puerto Rico. Added together they made the most immediately explosive situation in our part of the world. Sir Arthur Richards, the Governor, had felt forced to take repressive measures; and as we met, several popular leaders were in jail and unrest was being made manifest in numerous disturbances, mostly small, but indicative of the prevalent feeling. He was obviously uncomfortable with us. Charles had been in Jamaica before, the last time only a few months previously, and had felt called on to do some reporting at home of which Sir Arthur was aware. The coolness between them was obvious.⁹

As a matter of fact, although we were guests at King’s House we saw very little of our host. He had the usual formal dinner, of course, for some sixty to seventy guests, done in Government House style; and I myself made occasion for one or two conversations with him; but he was not being more hospitable than convention required. I found him, as I have found all British Governors, intelligent, forceful, and personally weighty—a man who would be regarded in any company as worth notice and respect. He was dealing with a system in Jamaica with which he was obviously

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⁹Sir Arthur was soon to be given another post: Nigeria. This was an advancement for him; his services in the difficult early years of the war were thus recognized.
out of sympathy and not conforming very well. He had been provoked by a heritage
of indiscipline into taking harsh measures but he regarded them as merely the
practical necessities of war. He knew that the deeper forces at work were not
affected. In fact he was ready to concede popular resentment which might be
harmful. Nevertheless, as he said, security comes first in wartime. Other issues can
be deferred.

If anything Jamaica was worse off than Puerto Rico. And it was interesting to
discover the means used to meet disaster. It was gratifying to find that in this, the
only really comparable economy in our sea, the problem had been conceived almost
exactly as we had conceived it in Puerto Rico. Sir Arthur and the others had
concluded, as we had, that the war could not be argued with successfully; and that
had left only the alternative of making the very best use of allocated ships, of trying
to produce more at home, and of economizing in every possible way. This did not
mean that we ought to ignore the consequences of our situation. There would be a
scarcity of all kinds of goods. Repairs would be difficult; and perhaps a large part of
our machinery would have to stop if the blockade should tighten further. Building
materials would be lacking; therefore there would be no new construction and
insufficient maintenance.

This created a dilemma which we recognized but could only meet by sacrifice and
ingenuity. The growing of food at home in any quantity would require new
equipment, not only for production but for storage and distribution. How were we
to expand warehouse and cold-storage space and find a quantity of trucks and the
tires to keep them running? The transfer of labor from ordinary occupations to new
ones would be a problem too. New housing was out of the question and increased
burdens would be thrown on transportation systems already breaking down from
lack of repair parts and shortages of gasoline and oil. In Puerto Rico these problems
were intensified by army recruiting. The reservoir of skills was small at any time;
and the cream was being skimmed again and again so that it could be foreseen that
before long little would be left.

Looking at what we should have to face in the months to come, it seemed clearer
and clearer that unless the planters, especially, co-operated, we could not hope to
meet what we were up against. How were we (1) to convince the sugar men that
there would be a limited amount of shipping so that all their efforts should not go
into sugar production; and (2) to persuade them that their present duty in the crisis

\[10\] Except that wages and living standards in general were normally so much lower that there was
really less hardship from unemployment, for instance. There was also, however, more food produced
in the colony.
was to grow food and to give employment to displaced workers—in a word use their resources and facilities to help in readaptation.

The danger was that they would choose to fight for sugar and to attack anyone who seemed to have a different policy. They had, in fact, already begun: an alliance was already visible between them and the importers. It looked as though the first and main item on their list was going to be my replacement by a more amenable Governor, one who would work for rather than against sugar. Mr. Bolivar Pagán was eager to join such a coalition and the Republicanos would naturally assist with enthusiasm.

We could at least attempt to forestall all this. In that effort we dispatched to Mr. Welles in the State Department a request that the supply officers assembled at Jamaica be given a declaration of intention as to shipping and the necessity for temporary self-sufficiency. This would be the framework of any structure for cooperation which we might erect. He responded promptly and effectively. And we were able to present at the first working meeting a commitment signed by representatives of all relevant agencies in Washington, including the War and Navy Departments and the War Shipping Administration. This, I hoped, would be the weight I had sought for months with which to impress the sugar men and the public. I could now say, with the backing of the military, that we would have much less shipping than would move the sugar it was planned to produce. I could demand that they co-operate in revamping their program to produce more food.

But I was still not satisfied. And, with Charles's help, I framed a resolution requesting that bounties for food-growing be made equal to those for sugar-growing. I hoped that patriotism would be enough; but actually it seemed doubtful. If we could make our policy more profitable than the other, it would have the kind of reinforcement understood by even the most recalcitrant of those on the other side. Having got this done, my main job at the conference was completed. I hoped now that there would be allocated from some war fund in Washington the sum needed for subsidy—perhaps fifty millions.

There was, however, other business only slightly less important. All of us wanted to improve procurement procedures and insure sources of supply. The British were already buying in bulk, of course; but that was the issue of my quarrel with Swope, Gordon, et al. Charles had persuaded Mr. Gordon to attend, and he was being exposed now to the consequence of his follies as well as to the picture of better arrangements by those who had learned, in the hard way, how to secure supplies. His conversations with the intensely practical Britishers were a comic relief in an otherwise overtense atmosphere. For Mr. Caine and I had become leading
antagonists in a quarrel which dominated the proceedings, and the whole meeting had more or less chosen sides.

The issue, as it gradually became defined, was one of colonialism against self-government. It was evident, when the meeting gathered, that only from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands had delegates come who could be said to represent the people of the area. All the British colonies were represented by officials responsible to the Colonial Office in London. With this backing Caine was proposing a series of resolutions, obviously inspired by his home office, which would have made it appear not only that the people of the West Indies were satisfied with all existing dispositions but were quite ready for more sacrifice. Recommendations would have been made to local governments for even more effort and economy. It was my view that such sentiments did not exist. On the contrary there was resentment concerning the inability of the British Empire and the United States—who had in this area the responsibility of sovereignty—to carry out the obligations implied by their pretensions. And if they were able to carry them out and were neglecting to do it through indifference, that was even worse. I refused to be a party to saving face for the Empire under the circumstances I knew to exist. I insisted that our resolutions should be framed as demands on the home nations for more attention to the area’s needs. I pointed to the fact that for months I had sought a simple commitment on tonnage on which I could base an enforceable policy and had found no one willing to give it until just now. So much for the United States. The case of Britain was worse. In her colonies, because the war had gone on longer, starvation had actually arrived in numerous localities. Nothing had been done to relieve unemployment or to shut down on exploitation by the merchants and planters. This was an exaggeration, as Caine could point out, since rationing and price controls were effectively administered. But I was essentially right and Mr. Caine knew it. For several days we fought privately; but he chose to ignore me and make his plea to the meeting, whereupon we had an open battle:

15 May. Three days of rowing with the British, and especially Caine, resulted in a resolution which pleases no one but which represents the most we can agree on. Caine has been determined to center recommendations from the conference on cutting Caribbean supplies to a minimum. I was determined to center them on security for the Caribbean peoples. He speaks from a Colonial Office point of view which regards colonials as good or not by the test of benefit to the home country. Not one representative of the island people was here for the British. I finally got into the recommendations paragraphs about the need of subsidy for food production. It was a hard fight.
Our meetings were held in the legislative council chamber, a kind of miniature parliament room, and it was not too difficult to imagine, in this controversy with Mr. Caine, that I represented the oppressed against the oppressors, and that this was only one more of many hundreds of occasions on which protests against using the semblance of political freedom for Empire convenience had unexpectedly arisen in this old chamber. For Jamaicans had never been altogether subservient and some protestants had from time to time found their way even into the protected council.\textsuperscript{11}

In a way I was glad for the opportunity. It put my country in a light more appreciated by the West Indian people than the one in which they more frequently saw her. I have spoken of the fact that at the time of the destroyer-West Indian base deal, we might probably have gone further and perhaps have acquired the islands. One reason, among others, for not doing that was certainly knowledge of West Indian distrust on the color question. On that issue at least the Empire was to them preferable. Jamaica lies too close to our Southern states with their Jim Crow arrangements ever to contemplate with tolerance, so long as these exist, the possibility of a closer relationship.

Charles did a good deal of hand-wringing as Gaine and I snarled at each other through the week; and it was he who insisted on compromise. After getting the cable from Mr. Welles I was quite ready to depart for Washington in search of food-subsidy funds and in the hope of persuading the President to espouse my reforms. But Charles had other business. All his time was not taken up by conciliation. He spent some of it persuading me and others to accept his favorite scheme for caches of food at strategic centers about the Caribbean, together with emergency development of a mostly overland—and therefore relatively submarine-proof—route. I have spoken of this before as the West Indian Highway.\textsuperscript{12} There were obvious difficulties, and he had to argue us into acceptance. It was doubtful, we said, whether there were any suitable warehouses for long storage anywhere on the route—in Santiago, Port-au-Prince, Ciudad Trujillo, San Pedro de Macorís, or even in San Juan. And the road from Port-au-Prince to San Pedro would need extensive reconstruction if it was to carry any large volume of truck traffic. The road from Havana to Santiago presumably would do, although it was in poor repair; but neither the short route nor the mountain route across Haiti and Santo Domingo was

\textsuperscript{11}In less than a year the Colonial Office would find it necessary to "liberalize" the Jamaican constitution by removing the more flagrant bars to real legislative representation.

\textsuperscript{12}Mr. Thomas Macdonald and I had conceived that the three across-water gaps would be crossed by high-speed electric ferries. We thought of the route as beginning at Port Everglades or Key West, crossing to Havana, running down Cuba to Santiago, crossing to Port-au-Prince, traversing Hispaniola to San Pedro de Macoris and entering the Puerto Rico Highway system at Mayagüez, when there would be a water-level route to Roosevelt Roads. This made a total of 505 miles at sea and 1,025 miles overland.
more than what the engineers would call "secondary," and much of it was "country." This meant that it would have to be redesigned and rebuilt with a new foundation. And a good deal of it would be heavy work on mountain grades. Only the army engineers, in times like these, we said, could command the resources for such a job; and they had business elsewhere. Characteristically he was not deterred by opposition; he went right on talking about it as an accepted project until the rest of us fell back on what seemed the certainty that it would die in the toils of a military bureaucracy. The Army would not want another job to do; and the Navy would never admit inability to protect shipping at sea.

Just at the end of our meeting I was shaken, however, by the rumor which came to us that all shipping was stopped from Norfolk north along the Atlantic coast—perhaps from Port Everglades north.\(^{13}\) This was loss piled on loss for Puerto Rico if it should be fact. If all the merchandise on its way to us had to be rerouted and carried to Southern ports, there to wait for navy clearance, perhaps to be convoyed, there would be a hiatus, in receipts already small, which might really bring on the complete exhaustion of supplies we had feared. This news, which became worse as the rumor was authenticated, turned me from skeptic to advocate. The difficulties suddenly dwindled by comparison with the alternate disaster. Charles, of course, was delighted by my conversion and made the most of it.

Our work was done now in Kingston. We had substantially the recommendations we wanted in spite of Caine and his official following; at least I felt it was enough to impress the officials from whom I was going to ask assistance and funds. The end of my stay was enlivened by the spectacle of Mr. Gordon, who seemed suddenly to realize the enormity of his offense. The news of ship-stoppage and the marooning of the private importers’ merchandise on the piers and in the warehouses of Northern ports already jammed with lend-lease goods; and the knowledge that another burden on an already almost paralyzed railroad system, made delivery at Southern ports, in any short time, impossible, punctured his airy optimism. He was now contrite and anxious to have us take over the responsibility. I felt that with his opposition removed, and that of others in the Division at least damped down, we could hope to make arrangements which would save the situation in the long run. But nothing now could prevent weeks—perhaps months—of privation in Puerto Rico.

\(^{13}\)It was, in fact, stopped along the entire coast.
FROM KINGSTON, Moscoso and I went north with Charles. I was determined to assault the Washington fortress in person this time rather than by sending envoys or memoranda, both of which, it appeared, could be ignored without embarrassment. Those who were interested to protest and even enlarge their profits in wartime—and they were entirely heartless about the consequences to the people in general—had such a control of the press and radio that the issues for which we had been fighting all spring were still almost unknown to the Puerto Rican public. In fact, it was clear by now that the shortages and privations were going to be laid on the doorstep at La Fortaleza with at least the intimation of neglect if not the charge of responsibility. The comerciantes' theses were already evident in embryo: (1) that we had not worked faithfully to protect and enlarge our tonnage allowances; (2) that we had interfered with the merchants in their earnest effort to create stock piles; and (3) that we were preparing an attack on the sugar industry to cover our own negligence—this attack taking the form of forcing the substitution of food crops for cane. Charles had all this outlined to him before he left Washington for Kingston by Mr. Swope, who remarked with what Charles called "malicious emphasis" that the demand for a shift to food would "just be another nail in Tugwell's coffin." "What's he got against you?" Charles wondered. And I honestly did not know. But that he was more and more hostile was evident. He was making no further secret of his opposition and every returning visitor from Washington had for some time been telling me about it. Except as an inconvenience it did not appear to matter much. It seemed quite clear that our insistence had been justified. The situation by now was indeed a complete justification in itself. He could be ignored as we were learning to ignore the vast volume of publicity manufactured both in Washington and in San Juan. I began about this time, however, to wish I had someone with the ability to tell our story—a wish which was to lead to another of my mistakes. For one never carries the unsatisfied desire for assistance in publicity long without having the desire satisfied. A policy-making official in that condition is like a plant coming into flower for the bees. Only a miracle makes such a relation satisfactory; and in this case the miracle would not occur.

Dr. Fernós went back to San Juan charged with the mission of bearing down on the planters with the evidence and the recommendations now at our disposal: (1) of the certainty that tonnage would be very short; (2) of the current ship stoppage which might last for months; and (3) of the judgment among all supply officers that bulk buying of food was absolutely necessary and that, even with this, only an enlargement of home growing of food could avert hunger. He was to tell them that we were prepared to subsidize food-growing for the duration to an extent at least as
great as the subsidies for cane. He was to tell them further that, if they would co-operate, we could couple these subsidies with a promise that whatever limitation was agreed to would be lifted when the blockade ended. In this way the sugar industry would be protected against the danger that other regions would seek to enlarge their permanent quotas at Puerto Rico's expense. For already the lobbyists for continental cane and sugar beets were joyfully proclaiming the weakness of Puerto Rican sugar. Had they not always said, they demanded, that it was dangerous to depend on offshore areas? Better to raise continental subsidies and so make the nation self-sufficient!

Dr. Fernós' task was one in which there appeared to be some hope of success. He thought the planters might be persuaded, especially since we were confident that we could get the funds for subsidy. It all turned on that, he said. It was of no use to expect patriotism to count, especially patriotism for Puerto Rico. The sugar men always said that what was good for them was good for the whole economy. They were never prepared to admit that the reverse might be true; but we were not going to ask that of them—only that they take our pay for producing food. Mr. Gordon, contrite now, and anxious to repair the damage he had done, accompanied Dr. Fernós back to San Juan. It might be that his defection would shake the opposition. It was his job now to withdraw the commitment to the importers that, regardless of events, the Government was going to be "kept out of business." Unless the Government got into business Puerto Rico was going to starve.

Charles dropped off at Cienfuegos in Cuba to get ambassadorial help from Mr. Spruille Braden. From this descent it could be predicted that Mr. Braden's life would be an unhappy one for some time to come. The devious dealings which were going to be necessary before our overland route should find its way into and down Cuba, with the added complications of a great cache at Santiago, were going to take an ambassador far afield from diplomaties. One who knew Charles would know that Mr. Braden was going to find himself doing a lot of work. I hoped he would not get too far into it until the Army and Navy had been safely enlisted; but it was no part of my duty to warn him.

Next day, before going on to Washington, there was a pleasant task to get through in Miami. Several weeks before we had had a tight squeeze—one of many—on chlorine. Chlorine is one of those materials of civilized life which the ordinary citizen never hears of. But a water supply, and especially a neglected one (such as that which had been for years a source of patronage for San Juan políticos), which should go untreated by chlorine for twenty-four hours might kill a good share of the population. The San Juan bunglers had exhausted their supply without telling us; we had borrowed for them all over the rest of the island. But ships had stopped, and
there had come a day when appeal had had to be made to Captain Griffin, then in command of the Naval Air Station. He had responded nobly. But he had only had planes, not chlorine. So I had telephoned to the Mayor of Miami. And he had taken no end of trouble to procure a supply of the heavy drums for us and to put it on Captain Griffin’s plane. There had been a bad twenty-four hours over this incident and in relief we had had a scroll made, thanking the City of Miami for help in time of need. It was presented on this day with due ceremony and with honest gratitude.

Next morning early, as we went out toward the airport, we had a shocking preview, as we agreed forebodingly, of what was on the way to us in Puerto Rico. As we passed the United States Employment Office, there were many hundreds of job seekers lined up there, most of whom had obviously spent the night in the street. The evidence was there that Miami, as the Mayor had told me the day before, was in distress. She seemed to have no place in the war—there were no industries, and there would be, it was thought, no tourists. Such of the population as could was scuttling out. But the Puerto Rican population, we reflected, would not be able to depart for anywhere else. We should have to take care of them somehow right where they were. It was not yet clear that we could even get food for them, which was the purpose of the current journey. What if we should get it and there should be no way for them to buy it? Insular resources could never be stretched to such a wide relief program; and besides, those resources were going to contract, as Miami’s had, according to the Mayor, so that we should be able perhaps to do very little. The only hope was that in Washington we might find some funds to distribute as well as a safe supply of food.

On 21 May 1942, Moscoso and I landed in a wartime capital—and almost at once I fled to New York. The stories I had been told when in 1933 the new administration had moved down to the Potomac came back to me now; and it was easy to realize something of the way the "cave dwellers" had felt, those old-timers whose homes were there, as their pleasant village expanded in a a busy administrative center and lost its air of leisure and changed its slow accustomed ways. Now I, who had helped in that transformation, was suffering the same unease. It was no longer possible to feel at home in the capital. I found a kind of refuge—the kind many expatriated New Yorkers find on their return—at Mr. Frank Case’s Algonquin.

My retreat to New York was hastened by a cool reception from Mr. Ickes. He had obviously been primed by his oil men; and he at once let me know that the signing of the oil-tax bills had been insubordinate. It was pretty hopeless to try to explain the complicated politics and the face-saving which had moved me to sign. All that could be done was to say that a Governor had to be trusted, that a special session had been promised in which, if he would request it as Oil Co-ordinator, all collections would
be postponed until after the war; he had to believe that all this would happen. He was caustic. What faith could be put in políticos' promises? And why did I have to join in face-saving for Puerto Rican políticos at the expense of people with whom he had to work? My response was that, in the first place, there would be no expense; and that in the second, I might have a little more credit than he seemed disposed to award for (i) keeping the dominant elements in Puerto Rican life loyal to our cause and (2) for having got through a remarkable program of legislation. My co-operation with them was no more than a fair exchange, it seemed to me, for their co-operation with us. This overstated my claim to credit, of course. I had nothing to do with Muñoz's loyalty to the democratic cause; and most of the legislation was mine only in the sense that I had signed it. But one is apt to spread oneself a little under provocation. And it really seemed to me, whatever fortunate concurrence of circumstances had brought it about, that I had come to Washington with a bundle of achievements. Mr. Ickes' attitude was a bad omen. I had hoped to go back with full hands too—with some way of mitigating unemployment, with an assurance of protection for our food supply, with balm for sore sugar planters, with weapons against inflated prices. None of this could be achieved if Mr. Ickes was to be hostile, because everyone else would be preoccupied with his piece of the war or, perhaps, merely indifferent, but not, in any case, disposed to active assistance. The Secretary simply had to be got into a more co-operative mood.

The wait in New York was not wasted. I wanted Mr. Lindsay Rogers to be a member of the Superior Council of Education which would presently have to be appointed. And this was the chance to confer with him. Muñoz had stood with us in the University troubles after his rout by the young reactionaries; and a new University bill had been among the accomplishments of the legislative session just past. It was a better measure than that which had hitherto governed the University. As in most such cases there had been compromises. But since it went a long way toward eliminating "politics," it could be counted good. In order to do this, a newly constituted Superior Council of Education had been set up (Consejo Superior de Enseñanza) whose duties were to include the supervision of the whole educational process in the island. The new Board was, in contrast to the old one, given powers

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1 By "politics" I mean the control in detail of University management by or for political leaders. They had hitherto been able to influence professorial and other appointments, to secure modification of regulations and standards, even to gain favors for individual students. A university which is regularly exploited by politicians in this way is, of course, faithless to the intellectual tradition it pretends to preserve. And the University of Puerto Rico as it was could not be recognized by other universities as worthy of the name. The new act was intended—and went a long way toward—enabling us to carry out the purges, establish the standards and insure the independence necessary to enable it to take its place in the company of genuinely dedicated institutions.

2 This feature was resented by the Commissioner of Education, who, being a Presidential appointee, and having his rights prescribed in the Organic Act, could not, he felt, admit that any legislatively
to act only on general issues; management, including appointments for all administrative officials, was lodged in the Chancellor's office where it belonged; and academic appointments were to be determined by the Chancellor acting with faculty advice.³

So it was essentially a change for the better and under it the University might begin to redeem itself. But the Governor had to appoint the Trustees. It was now up to me to select appropriate ones. The definition for appointees limited me in only one way: two of them were to be "eminent educators, identified, by their history, with the cause of democratic culture"; and it was understood that these were to be outsiders, although the law did not say so. It seemed to me that one ought to be from the field of social studies and I determined to make my own choice here, though naturally many suggestions were being made by interested people.⁴ The Act would not become effective until 7 August, but with all the competition it was well to be forehanded.

The choice of Mr. Lindsay Rogers was not determined on the basis of friendship. Other former academic colleagues had been equally close. It was, with me, a feeling that he might contribute something valuable out of his wide experience, his deep scholarship and his honest temper. And perhaps it was this last which was most valuable. For in all my years of association with him I had never known him to say or do an intellectually dishonest thing. He was not politic, not even very agreeable in his institutional relations; he was apt to be sharply critical, to expose incompetence and drive it out of academic shelter into the open. If Puerto Rico needed anything it was just this uncompromising integrity. Luckily he was at home—luckily, since he was not only Chairman of the Political Science Faculty at Columbia but was now spending half his time in Montreal as Assistant Director of the International Labor Office.

Aside from this piece of business which turned out well, we had dinner at Charles on Sixth Avenue. The Valeurs came too, and seeing Robert and touching again his

³Leyes de Puerto Rico, 1942, 135.
⁴Acceptance of appointment was made probable by providing for a fee of $1,000 annually, and, of course, traveling expenses, for trustees who held no other public office.
clear intelligence was like a draft of good French wine. It stimulated and made one optimistic. It could not be said that there was the same effect from Eliot Janeway, who always regarded discouraging events as disasters rather than as difficulties, or even from seeing Jerome Frank, now a Federal judge, writing opinions more for legal scholars than for litigants, and as overoptimistic as Eliot was overpessimistic. Yet it was good to see them again, each for his special quality, and both because they served to remind me that our show in Puerto Rico was a small one. My friends took it for granted that I was putting up a good fight with some "pretty lousy opposition" as Eliot said; but otherwise they wanted to talk about a larger world. They hadn't heard much about us; if they had not been sensitized by knowing me they would hardly have heard of our troubles at all, so obscure were the occasional paragraphs in various papers. But what there were had an obvious bias, which accounted for the friendly tendency toward pity. I had known for some time, having been told by correspondents of the press associations, that many of their dispatches were rewritten to give them the bias which was the party line of the publishers. I saw in talking to these friends how effective this small tinkering could be. The items were infrequent; they were often about trivialities; they managed to convey the general effect, however, to one who might follow them, of trouble and failure. My friends were sorry that the job had been too much for me, sorry that I had lost the confidence of the islanders, sorry that the general protests were probably going to make it necessary for me to be replaced. It was, as I say, a small piece of publicity work, and one in which they had no deep interest, but it was a good one. When I described things as they appeared to me—that there was plenty of support to be counted on among the masses, that our share in the war was going well, that the sugar men were bucking a duty they were going to have to perform, and so on, they exhibited the maddening polite skepticism I was also to find in Washington.

But it was most of all noticeable that they weren't very interested. My feeling that Puerto Rico was a kind of test case had not projected itself very successfully. Perhaps I had exaggerated its significance. One of the first Washingtonians I saw, for instance, was Mr. Welles, who greeted me with sympathy for a recent action taken by the Farmers' Association. I was puzzled and later got hold of the La Prensa article he had been quoting. There was featured on its front page the story of a meeting in San Juan which had spent hours denouncing me and had passed violent resolutions asking my removal. This was, as Mr. Edelstein, the United Press man in Washington, said, the opening gun of the spring offensive. There had, of course, been many such meetings, but the blast of metropolitan publicity made this one seem significant. He told me frankly that I would be removed. They have the money and

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5 New York Spanish-language dailar.
the influence, he said. "And," I said, "the press!" And this was true. What was asked for was being supplied.

My colleagues in the Division of Territories exhibited a kind of restrained sorrow for my troubles. In a few days the San Juan paper arrived with a large picture of the speakers’ platform at the meeting which was being taken so seriously in Washington. Among those lending countenance were several Federal officials: the Director of the Extension Service being in the front row— the Farm Bureau Federation again! And Fernós had hoped to convert them to our Jamaica proposals! I said, about the current furor, to inquirers: "Would you rather have the California Farmers' Association for you or against you? This is the same thing." And it was perfectly true that it was better in Puerto Rico to have this whole crowd against rather than for one. But it was irritating to have Washingtonians take so seriously what they knew to be not only inevitable, but advantageous. They also knew, though they did not admit, that the supposedly huge protest—representatives of six thousand farmers, it was said—was the front for a few sugar planters who were shirking their duty in the war. And yet here was most of officialdom talking and acting as though the six thousand farmers were real and were actually protesting. I became pretty short with lachrymose sympathizers.

The Secretary had come around again, however, angry as always at reactionary pressure. When I came in he was sitting solidly in his shirt sleeves, hard paunch bulging as usual, and taking a big tumbler of orange juice. He was grinning and asked how was the stormy petrel. To which I replied that I wasn't a petrel but that some of these guys were going to think that I was a storm before we got through. This pleased him and he began to devise ways of helping—or of annoying the enemy, I was never quite sure which, his temper being what it was. I was seeing the President next day and discussed with him my intention of broaching the elective governorship issue. The State Department, I said, would be agreeable, though no one was prepared to admit that the proposal was significant for colonialism in general. This discovery, in talking to Mr. Welles and others, had been a disappointment to me, because I had thought of our proposal as a contribution to the world struggle, one which would reinforce the tendency of subject peoples everywhere to drift to our side. He was comforting. It would have that effect, whether the State Department acknowledged it or not, he said. And he enlarged, satisfactorily, on its significance.

27 May. Washington. The President seemed to be vigorous and cheerful yesterday and when I spoke of it he said he had learned long ago that whatever happened—whatever the reasons for not doing it—he had to have four or five completely free days each month. If he got them he could keep well and get along. He spoke of the
new house he was building as a retreat "within driving distance, but well away from Washington." He got off for some time onto an indignant description of delays in its completion—reminding me of the time I found him working over his income-tax return, furious as any other citizen at its complications—and at the size of the tax!

I got him around to the status question as soon as possible, knowing his habit of talking away his visitors' time, and knowing myself a visitor now. He was quite agreeable; the introduction of the subject, in fact, started a conversation on the future of the West Indies. I gave him my impression of the situation in Puerto Rico—that political maturity was being approached, and that the tutelage of a careless Congress, even, sometimes, a malicious one, was becoming intolerable. The same was true, I thought, in Jamaica, except that the oversight was anything but careless. The places where it was difficult to see ahead were the other British, French and Dutch colonies—except that the French had more loyalty to count on because of their greater color tolerance. Martiniquans felt themselves Frenchmen, not French subjects: and this was not true anywhere in the British colonies. He was very plain, in his turn. All the islands, he felt, had to be allowed self-government even at the risk of bad government. And he himself felt certain that it would be bad. He talked about Haiti, and how Haiti had sunk as low as possible into poverty, governmental corruption and so on and now was beginning to reform and reconstruct. Whether or not this was true it was necessary to raise at least two more questions. So, with his permission, we went on.

His help was needed, I told him, in getting more co-operation from the Army and Navy. Selective Service had not yet been used in Puerto Rico, and the Army, by taking volunteers, merely got unemployed boys. Two or three divisions of Puerto Ricans might well be taken in the regular way, carefully trained and used as other troops were used. Nothing, I said, could contribute more to solidarity of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. Besides there was no reason for doubting, as the Army seemed to do, that they would be useful soldiers. Equally bad also, perhaps even worse, was the refusal of the Navy to recruit Puerto Ricans at all. This supercilious exclusion was understood for exactly what it was, and was deeply resented. Sailors from the States were now all over Puerto Rico and each of them was a reminder that Puerto Ricans were considered to be an inferior people.

He agreed that this Army and Navy discrimination was outrageous and promised to do what he could about it. But, he said, he had been having a struggle with the Navy over Negroes—to have them rated as anything but mess boys—in which, so far, the Admirals had refused to obey. Three times he had sent "directives" (a new word around Washington which, as an editorial in the Post the other day said, seems to be
the current substitute for "co-ordination," which was so much used and abused for several years). But they had not been carried out.

On the problem of supply and shipping he did not appear to appreciate at all the immediate seriousness of the Caribbean situation or its likely consequences. I said plainly that there was reason for believing it to have been caused in the first place by blunders in navy planning which stubbornness had prevented from being corrected. The truth at this moment was that sinkings in the Caribbean were appalling, that they had not been anticipated and that no promising corrective measures had been designed to meet them. I spoke, of course, only of our surrounding sea, not knowing the situation elsewhere. He refused to admit that this was so or that we ought at once to put the thousands of available small craft to sea under amateur yachtsmen. He gave me the same answers to that suggestion as had been given by Hoover, showing that the navy attitude was at least official. It ran like this: that these little boats were a nuisance to service and to keep under control, that actually they could not be armed or entrusted with depth bombs and so on. I ventured the opinion that if this was so we should be embarked on a program of building small ships which could be armed; but he was skeptical also of this.

He did approve in principle the idea of caches, and liked even better the idea of subsidies for food equal to those for sugar—always having had, of course, a leaning toward insular self-sufficiency. He consented also to modification in the executive order setting up the Board of Economic Warfare to include Puerto Rico, the idea of this being that we may be able to get supplies from unaccustomed sources through the Board.

28 May. Even more intensive work looking toward the establishment and securing of supply lines, since the reports of sinkings are more and more serious! Amazed at the fact that no one realizes that the West Indies will starve if cut off from outside food supplies; most people think ships are only sugar carriers and, they say, the United States can get along without sugar if necessary!

We now have allocations from the President's emergency funds for the caches in Cuba and elsewhere and the Agricultural Marketing Administration has the food in stock. It should be moving there within a week. A representative leaves for Cuba today. But already this is insufficient. Today the British have a message from the Leeward Islands saying that the situation there is desperate. It can't be much better elsewhere. A cache is of no use, perhaps, now. The emergency for which it would be needed is already here. What we need is a supply line in operation.

Yesterday in Mr. L. W. Douglas' office in the War Shipping Administration we ran into two Army Colonels from the Services of Supply who told us that "orders were
being given to base commanders in the Caribbean that shipping would for some time be so short that they would have to live 'off the country.'" This exhibition of ignorance and indifference was so infuriating that we shouted the Colonels into suggesting that we meet with their superiors. But General Somervell is in London. So Ralph Olmstead, of the A.M.A., Charles and I started a series of meetings with Assistant Secretaries Patterson and Forrestal, Mr. Douglas, Admiral Home, etc., etc., with the purpose of educating Washington officials—impressing upon them their responsibilities in our part of the world.

What we have to work toward is a unified supply system; but it is doubtful whether we shall get it even in these extreme circumstances. It has surprised me, however, to have Admiral Home for the Navy espouse the highway scheme with enthusiasm. His pessimism about the blockade and the Army's venture into "living off the country" show vividly enough what we are likely to have to endure for the next year. With all these dangers building up I ought to be back in Puerto Rico where my job is. With enemies there watching for chances at sabotage, being away is risky; at the same time the very lives of Puerto Ricans now depend on the waking up and organizing of people here in Washington. Imagine those Colonels "living off the country"!

29 May. The other evening I told Stockdale and Caine something of what the President had indicated as his view of the political and economic future of the Caribbean peoples: that they must be allowed autonomy even at the expense of very bad government which they will have; and that we must be patient and helpful. They seemed to feel that this was the only course to follow in Jamaica as well as Puerto Rico. But they felt differently about the smaller islands, and even about Trinidad, with its large East Indian population. These are questions with which the Commission must deal but so far has put off for more immediate emergency action.

It is clear to me that autonomy must be increased. But I have some feeling that, however subject to criticism colonialism may be, it is infinitely superior to the dictatorship for selfish purposes into which many of these less developed areas will fall—just as Santo Domingo did, and, indeed, most of Central America. It is, after all, mostly the políticos who clamor for "independence" in these backward spots. They want it, not for their people's sakes, but for their own. They want to fish in the resulting troubled waters when discipline is relaxed and no big brother is looking. If this matter worries me for Puerto Rico, it must be much more true of the smaller, less literate, less politically experienced places.

The Commission, meeting the other day, adopted a "formulation of policy," the first attempt. It did little more than renounce executive functions to make the British
Governors more comfortable and announce that the secretariat would be in Washington so that Charles can keep it under his thumb.6

This morning, having prepared the way, I took the members of the Commission in a body to call on the Secretary. He—and they—were polite. It is certain, however, that he is still resentful.

The campaign for self-sufficiency in food, which would lighten the need for ships, should be greatly furthered by the amazing achievement Charles and I can now chalk up for one day. Such a thing is unheard of in Washington, but: We got the signatures of Hull, Ickes, Wickard, Douglas, Knox and Stimson to add to our own on a letter prepared by Olmstead asking Congress for $21,000,000 (later reduced to $15,000,-000). All in one day! This fund is intended to subsidize food-growing, at rates equal to those for cane-growing. With this impressive endorsement the Congress surely ought to give us the funds. But they should have come from executive emergency funds.

1. The functions of the Commission are advisory and not executive.
2. Executive functions in respect of Caribbean supply matters, including functions arising out of recommendations made by the Commission, should be discharged on the British side by the West Indian Supply Agency which is being established as part of the Colonial Supply Liaison, and on the American side by the Caribbean Office of the State Department as the general liaison with the various American departments concerned.
3. Executive functions in respect of other work which may be undertaken on the recommendation of the Commission will similarly be discharged by appropriate bodies to be chosen as may be convenient.
4. Meetings of the Commission should be held normally at intervals of approximately three months.
5. Secretariat. The main office of the Commission to be in Washington with joint American and British secretariat, office accommodation, typing and clerical assistance being provided by the Caribbean Office. The duties of the secretariat would be to keep the records of the Commission, prepare for and attend meetings, and take such action arising out of conclusions at such meetings as it may be instructed to undertake by the co-chairmen of the Commission. The secretariat will also have the regular function of keeping in touch with other bodies which may undertake the carrying out of work recommended by the Commission and of receiving and, if necessary, distributing information, e.g. publications and reports dealing with technical subjects and matters of social welfare.
6. A British West Indian regional office will be established at the Headquarters of the Comptroller of Development and Welfare in the West Indies and as far as possible matters other than supply will be co-ordinated through the officer who will be attached to the regional office.
7. British West Indian Governments will, however, be encouraged to use the secretariat of the Commission as a channel for inquiries not involving any question of policy which they may wish to have made in the United States, e.g. inquiries about technical processes and reports; the Governments of the American Territories similarly to make use of the secretariat wherever convenient for inquiries of a similar character which they may desire to make of British official agencies.
It is interesting to have had dealings with Lew Douglas many times lately and to be working with him again after all the bickerings we had in the old days when he was more or less the inside champion of the reactionaries (as Director of the Budget) and I was supposed to be the New Deal radical. I asked him when we met the other day whether he wanted to pick a fight. He said: "Never again a fight in the family! The war makes those old issues seem pretty small, doesn’t it?” I wonder. Janeway says the reactionaries are incapable of becoming good soldiers. They have to stop their war work every time someone says "New Deal" and make a speech. And they would rather prevent public ownership of something than win a battle any time. An end of all this is necessary if we are to win: that is, unless the Russians, who really have unity, win for us.

30 May, Bayshore, Two days with Charles on Long Island. When I used to come out here in the old days we spent most of our time on the bay. This time we stayed ashore and mulled over the Caribbean.

We have made progress: our insistence, and Admiral Home’s support, resulted in a meeting with Under Secretary Patterson first, and then with him and Assistant Secretary Forrestal (of the Navy), together with various members of their staffs. There seems to be general agreement that we should set up a joint Commission for Caribbean Supply. And the army lawyers are drafting an executive order. The whole thing will come as the result of Army-Navy requests. They do seem relieved at the solution and more than willing to cooperate. I detect a little withdrawing on Charles’s part now, Is it because a Commission may get out of his control? He keeps suggesting that the same thing may be accomplished by liaison, or by a joint agreement, with each agency signing for its part. I am holding out for a Commission with executive powers so that responsibility will be centered.

Trouble in San Juan of the familiar sort. The English-language newspaper (a subsidiary of the Spanish paper) has done a neat reversal. It has been well enough known for a long time now that Malcolm, Fitzsimmons, Brown, Frisbie, et al. were maneuvering to get rid of me—so much so that it was secret no longer, but a campaign. Now, a first-page story is printed with the headline "Tugwell Plotted Purge to Get Rid of Opponents." There is said to be great furor over it. There is a new angle too. The publisher took a long chance and included General Collins among those I was said to be plotting against—obviously hoping to get between us and cause trouble. There have been endless attempts to upset my liaison with the military. Immediately on getting the clipping from my wife (who, for once, has lost her temper), I went to see Colonel Greenbaum, who is Patterson’s legal adviser, and asked him to assure General Collins, through official channels, that not only was it
not true but that General Collins’ friendship and co-operation had been acknowledged repeatedly and were still deeply appreciated.

Edelstein, the correspondent here for the San Juan paper, told Taussig the other day that I seemed to be a little tough but that they would get me all right. He’ll resign when we really get to work, Taussig reports him as saying. They do seem to impress more and more Congressmen. And the farm lobby is helping them. There is daily work being done by at least a dozen people. It must be worth a good deal to spend all that money for.

2 June. Washington. Meeting yesterday with army engineers to start reconnaissance survey of West Indies Highway (as I still call it, lacking an official name). The Agricultural Marketing Administration reports astonishingly that they already have food moving in the direction of the caches. This must be about the most remarkable of all the war organizations. But, of course, it exists in direct descent from the Surplus Marketing Administration, started in our time in Agriculture; so it is not an overnight improvisation like some of the others.

Brought Ickes up to date on all developments for emergency supply and got his approval for the political proposal. The draft of this is as follows:

"MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

"The Governor of Puerto Rico has called to the attention of the Committee a suggestion in which you have expressed interest, in a letter to him of 21 March 1942, concerning an immediate change in the political structure of Puerto Rico. The Committee, after deliberation, recommends that you sponsor at once an amendment to the Organic Act of Puerto Rico (unchanged in all major respects since 1917 and badly out of date) which would convert the governorship into an elective office and would make the Auditor, the Commissioner of Education, the Attorney General and the Supreme Court Justices appointments of the elective Governor. The first election for Governor ought probably to be set for 1944 when a general election is due for Puerto Rico. Combined with this there might be a provision for a constitutional convention to be held one year after the war is ended, which would settle the status of Puerto Rico in a permanent way. Meanwhile there ought to be provision for a Presidential Delegate who would advise both the President and the Governor on matters of mutual interest. This office might or might not be continued after the permanent status was fixed. This whole change would give Puerto Rico substantially greater local autonomy in political matters. It would, in fact, have the effect of converting Puerto Rico into a state, except for income-tax purposes and for voting representation in the Congress—but it would not require a determination at present of the troublesome issues of independence or complete statehood. Furthermore it
would not disturb existing economic relationships, and ought not to set in action any powerful lobbies. It ought to command the support of most elements in the Puerto Rican population. No one could afford to oppose an elective governorship.

"It is felt that such a move, if made at this time, would clearly show that the United States has no ambitions to be a colonial Power, and desires only to establish the freedom and well-being of peoples within its sphere of influence without any desire to dominate. It is submitted as a suggestion indeed more for its general than for its local effect. All subject people in the world ought to be stirred by its implications. "Respectfully submitted,

"Chairman, "Caribbean Advisory Committee."

3 June 1942. More conferences with Douglas, Olmstead, etc., with the object of increasing the Puerto Rican food supply and insuring its arrival:

1. By securing funds for purchase of present sugar surpluses in Puerto Rico to quiet fears of sugar processors— put money in their pockets, too.

2. By securing the subsidy for food-growing, equal to that for sugar, on 60,000 acres of good land.

3. By getting lifted the limitation still remaining on molasses distillation so that it may be reduced in bulk.

4. By securing the establishment of the Caribbean Supply Council which will take the food procured by the Agricultural Marketing Administration and deliver to the various islands. (This involves delivery in Puerto Rico, for instance, to our Supply Administrator, who will distribute to the trade). For this project co-operation is necessary among the following Departments: War, Navy, Agriculture, Interior, War Shipping Administration, Economic Warfare, Lend-Lease Administration, etc., etc.— a difficult job of reconciliation and of joint operation among incredibly jealous agencies many of which seem to spend half their time and energy "giving each other the foot" as Jack Madigan says. We seem, however, to be up to the point of general agreement. An executive order is drafted and is circulating for approval. Charles seems to be more and more reluctant, however, and may retreat entirely in favor of something loose and co-ordinative. The situation seems to me too serious for that.

A message from General Collins says what neither of us would say to the other face to face: that we are friends and have the kind of loyalty between us which friends ought to have.
Lunch with Milo Perkins, who seems hopeful in spite of the fact that Jesse Jones is gunning for him. What makes him optimistic I can’t see, except that Jones has made enormous and costly mistakes. Still these things do not count much against political power.

5 June. In preparation for a final meeting to approve the executive order for a Caribbean supply organization, Charles and I wrangled all day. He has made up his mind that he wants a simple "directive," on the ground that an executive order would cut across too many functional lines and so be sabotaged by all. I have some of this feeling, but more feeling that power is needed to smother jealousies and get something done in a hurry. I never saw such a place as this is now for delaying every issue until some personal fight is over.

Later. The meeting was in Welles’s office. All agencies were represented. The first notable thing to happen, after protestations of good will on everyone’s part, was that War and Navy pulled out on us, after having been, all this time, the main proponents. Obviously they had heard from the generals and admirals in the old armchairs. They took the high line that no civilian could be entrusted with military supplies, especially munitions, etc. Douglas was furious. He said frankly that this would result in the worst waste of shipping imaginable, that their supply ships were half empty much of the time, ran on indefensible schedules, and refused to assist in civilian carriage. He said, in fact, that this was right now the most inexcusable waste in the whole shipping picture.

I then reminded the Army that they were failing to supply their bases adequately. Construction was held up for lack of materials, and even food was a worry. I told the story of the supply Colonels, who had notified me that, in our starving islands, the Army was "going to live off the country." I said I thought that the military and civilian populations were in much the same situation, and that the time had come to recognize it. There were some red faces but no concession. They were obviously under instruction. Seeing this I said that if they did undertake their own supply and refused to co operate with us, they ought to undertake not to draw on civilian supplies. We might get them to the islands with great effort only to have them requisitioned because army supply had failed. Then, through no fault of ours, the civilian population would suffer. But we should be unfairly blamed. This also they refused.
As to the issue Charles and I had argued over, the meeting, after argument, came down unanimously on my side. Since I plan to leave at once, however, Charles will have to see it through.7

After the meeting I stayed to talk with Welles about the status proposal, telling him I could not be away longer and that the President had put off seeing me from day to day for a week. I urged that he and Taussig see it through and he agreed.

It was well known about Washington that the President's time was being taken up by the visit of a "prominent Russian." And anyone would tell an earnest inquirer that it was Molotov. No one knew how long he might stay, and since the situation in Puerto Rico had deteriorated seriously, according to letters from my wife, it seemed best to return to my post, even though the President had asked me to wait. I therefore excused myself to General Watson and left.

San Juan was very nearly a paralyzed city by 8 June. I hurried home from the airport and called an emergency meeting of the Cabinet and others of my official family. It was decided that even though I should necessarily have to speak in English, it might be reassuring if I should explain the situation to the public over the radio. There was in my mind the secret, somewhat despairing hope that a careful explanation of the plan which had been worked out would rally to us those who had been working in opposition—perhaps even the planters themselves. It was at least worth an effort. Who could tell? It might be that the necessities of war would prove to be a solvent for hatred and bitterness. If internal peace—even if it were no more than a truce—could be attained, the crisis which was upon us now could be met with a more equal willingness and sacrifice. Working together we could mitigate its worst effects. Divided as we were now the incidents of crisis would be enlarged and fed upon. They might result in civil wounds so deep that they would never heal. Fernós and Gordon had made no headway. But it was necessary, nevertheless, to try again.

In preparation, on the afternoon of the 9th, some fifty Puerto Rican leaders were asked to come to La Fortaleza. They were given a full explanation of the facts in the situation—the shipping shortage and what it meant for imports of food, building materials and so on, and what it meant for the movement outward of the sugar crop. The grinding season was finishing with upward of a million tons. Much less had been moved than was customary in the spring, and even less was moving now. We were told flatly by the Navy and the War Shipping Administration that not more

7No executive order was issued. So far as Puerto Rico was concerned, this would delay the solution of our problem for some months.
than six hundred thousand tons would be moved throughout the year. We should be left with a surplus which would crowd our available storage before grinding began again in January. And if shipping did not improve—and we had been told it would not—that surplus would grow by the end of the season to almost a million tons.

That this in itself was a prospective tragedy no Puerto Rican needed to be told. But I drove home the possible consequences with determination. The forebodings of the past six months had changed now to the certainty of impending distress. Every one of these men had heard before my prophecies of trouble. They had not heard before my assurance that it was now upon them. And I had not faced them before with the challenge to meet it with resolution. Businessmen were going to find themselves without goods to sell or materials with which to build or to manufacture, professional men would have to meet the special strains of a paralyzed society, government workers would be called on to double their efforts for relief of the distressed. It was no longer only my job. They now had to take hold.

Drama was heavy in the reception room of the old Palacio. There were present bankers, merchants, planters, lawyers, legislators, members of the Government. It seemed to me as the full story unfolded, and the situation came out in its full significance, that the desired effect was developing. Puerto Ricans were used enough to carrying on their own ordinary businesses and to making a pleasurable allowance of about fifty per cent for quarreling among themselves. An end was asked to this. Had the appeal really reached an emotional level which would govern action? Some indication of that was furnished when Mr. Filipo de Hostos, President of the Chamber of Commerce, asked the first question. Were we ready, he wanted to know, to do justice to the importers, stop the threat of buying in bulk and insure their position? For the first time, the enormity of this attitude seemed to occur to many of those in the room. Dr. Fernós had had enough experience of it now to know what to expect; most of the others had not. They drew away from Mr. de Hostos in quite involuntary revulsion. And by common consent he was ignored and the discussion turned to ways and means. But we knew that the business community was still unwilling to help except at a profit to themselves and a loss to everyone else.

There was one other disappointment. Envoys had been sent to the Republicanos asking their attendance even though they had before rejected similar appeals. The invitation was not even answered; it was ignored. And during this and the following days the raucous attacks in the press and on the radio, becoming more and more personal, went on with a furious concentration which could only come from the most personal hatred. It was clear that this group of Puerto Ricans not only rejected me as Governor, and through me struck at an impalpable control they hated, but
that also they were afraid. No public difference, nothing, certainly, but fear, could generate quite such a sustained phobia. It was to combat the insulting hostility of the Republicanos and to speak above the tom-toms of the press that I resorted to the radio on three successive evenings. Justice Travieso followed with translation. This was an act of public courage on his part. He was a friend of those who had withdrawn from me the ordinary courtesies and had tried their best to secure my removal. Nevertheless, he was willing to co-operate. If, as everyone said, he still wanted to be Governor in spite of having become a Supreme Court Justice, he was jeopardizing support he might need. For his continued public-spirited effort it seemed appropriate to express appreciation in Washington and this I did.\textsuperscript{8}

The addresses themselves were not long. Neither were they in the Iberian temper, which is not impossible for all Anglo-Saxons to achieve, but which is quite beyond my powers. Nevertheless there was evidence of effect. And that evidence grew rather than diminished in the ensuing weeks. What was sought was to put the attacks of the press in such a setting that as they grew worse their effect would diminish. That effort succeeded and there began a slow revulsion which would end some months later in an ungracious abandonment of attack. But that was not at once apparent and my appeal to the public for the moment only led to more fury. Beyond neutralizing misrepresentation, it was only necessary, it seemed to me, to present boldly and sincerely the situation we were in and what it required of everyone. That effort succeeded too: the evidence of it was in the way the struggle would go from then on. The patience and understanding of the common folk of Puerto Rico would be enough to move any man of sensibility as its manifestations, time after time, showed themselves. The people would be kind and forbearing, too, out of all reason. We would not kill the black market for half a year yet; and unemployment would become a harrying fear in every home. Yet they would know, or feel, that we were doing our very best. There would be almost no impatience, say nothing of irritated demands.

Rereading one night about this time Chesterton’s The Man Who Was Thursday, the following passage came up as though underlined in a vivid color, and I copied it into my journal:

The poor have been rebels, but they have never been anarchists; they have more interest than anyone else in there being some decent government. The poor man really has a stake in the country. The rich man hasn’t; he can go away to New Guinea

\textsuperscript{8}Later on I should repay him with interest by endorsing him for Chief Justice. But this he did not appreciate. By that time he would have ceased to co-operate with me.
in a yacht. The poor have sometimes objected to being governed badly; the rich have always objected to being governed at all...
IN THE LAST of my radio talks a hint was given of a coming amendment to Puerto Rico’s political charter. It would be something past due as a reward for devotion to democracy, I said, something universally desired; but voices greater than mine would announce it. There were a good many guesses thenceforth as to what had been meant. I had been cautious, but, as it turned out, not sufficiently so. A good deal of time passed as Washington deliberated and no outward manifestations appeared. My "greater voices" hint became, after a little, something for the enemy to use, a phrase of ridicule; it was repeated over and over as an indication of irresponsibility if not of outright mendacity. There were strong hints that I had cruelly played on Puerto Rican desires without authority from anyone who could bring them into reality. The President’s delay, after everyone, including himself, had agreed, was incomprehensible at my distance; and it left me dangling, on this issue, for months when an announcement would have helped immensely in holding the line. The mistake, of course, was my own. The choice of time as well as of policy was the President’s to make. My anxiety had betrayed me. There was better timing in the matter of the fund asked as a subsidy for food production, though the good luck concerning this was as accidental as the bad luck concerning my other hint. It was decided, in some way, after my final conference in Washington, in fact after I had left, that the President’s emergency funds were getting low and that Congress should be asked to furnish the subsidy. It was agreeable to have the request announced at the White House just as I was promising in my conference with Puerto Rican leaders at La Fortaleza that the cane planters would be compensated for any loss of profits. But I was disappointed to have the request go to Congress, there to be at the mercy of the sugar lobby, of Mr. Bolivar Pagán, of the deployed forces of the Farm Bureau and of all the enemies of the New Deal who desired to embarrass the President whenever possible in ways not so obviously prejudicial to the war as to involve popular resentment. And I had a feeling, which turned out to be justified, that this would be another fiasco. Still the President’s request in itself established the point of my good faith.

That June of 1942, and especially its latter part, found us working into the routine of war and blockade. The incipient hysterias of past months were diffusing themselves beneath the surface. The excesses of the press had gone on long enough to be accepted for what they were—irresponsible and ill-natured thrusts arising from insecurity and fear of change. Because they were understood their effectiveness was diminished. The techniques of civil defense were smoothing out as the result of intensive study and drill. The Army and Navy were beginning now to feel some confidence in their readiness for emergency—not much, as yet, because we were in
the midst of a material shortage and construction was actually having to be slowed
down. There were by now a few army planes, however; and there was definite
prospect of anti-aircraft guns, of coast artillery and of small arms. The worst of all
our troubles, perhaps, was the shortage of gasoline. The War Shipping
Administration seemed to think it had done what it could in assigning one small
tanker (at a time) for the service between Puerto Rico and Aruba. But the four
hundred miles a tanker must travel on this route were infested with submarines;
and sometimes it did not get to us. Our supplies not only of gasoline for a completely
motorized island, but also of fuel oil, on which we were dependent for the operation
of Diesel engines in all the sugar mills and distilleries and half the power stations, to
say nothing of army installations, were already practically exhausted. We were
having too close a view of what happens to a mechanized civilization when one of its
many clever arrangements fails. Perhaps a third of the population—the third which
lives back in the hills—was very little affected. But the other two-thirds were in a
desperate situation.

We formed committees; and our own Supplies Administration set up a rough and
temporary rationing system after the O.P.A. suddenly, and after claiming it, refused
responsibility. But our reserves went down and down. We were like survivors of a
wreck who have a limited water supply and who apportion it for the period likely to
elapse before rescue. Mr. Swope would tell us to expect a tanker in five days and we
would make our allowances accordingly. But there would be no tanker, and no
news. We would then scurry around to see whether any further hidden stocks could
be uncovered; and adding up the whole again we would make a new division,
meanwhile trying to get some definite commitment from Washington. We became
very cynical. We rationed for twice, then for three times, then for four times the
period for which we had instructions. Once in July, when we had done this and gone
the limit, an incoming tanker was sunk in the Mona Passage within sight of land, just
after her escorting destroyer had turned back. Then San Juan, and indeed the whole
island, was afoot; arriving food supplies, what there were of them, stayed on dock
and but little sugar could be moved. A few days later we were brought within hours
of turning off the power from lack of oil for Diesel motors. What would have
happened if all the refrigerators had stopped, lights had gone off in the hospitals, in
the army camps and so on, luckily we did not find out. There always seemed to be a
few more gallons somewhere for absolute needs as we whittled down to essentials.
We were desperately short but we got through by stopping factories, cutting off
electric current for several hours a day, restricting transportation to a few public
busses and so on. Right in the middle of one of these periods we had a hoity-toity
letter from a new agency which had been set up to allocate oil, saying that we were
using too much! We were by now blase enough to laugh and go on with our job. As I
remember, I referred the complainers to O.P.A. and intimated that they could take over any time.

Looking back it seems to have been a good job. Puerto Ricans, even by their best friends, are not thought to be a disciplined people. But when the pressure was really on and fortitude was needed in that summer it was always found. There was less chiseling, perhaps, than in similar, less exigent situations which arose later in the eastern states. Looking back I also recall, however, thinking how queer it was that the political and legislative leaders had no part in this. I note it merely as a comment on the distribution of functions in our society. They simply seemed not to be needed when there was a real crisis and civic work to be done —which is perhaps to be expected, since this was wholly an executive task. Yet they were almost conspicuously absent. Thinking about this it seemed to me that Britain and Russia—our allies—were being wiser than we in one aspect of their war management: the adjournment of politics—even of legislation, except for broad authorization—was far more complete. The head of our Government, who was also the Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces, was being termented with "home-front" problems. The Congress was insisting on staying perpetually in session, yet it was refusing to control inflation, to tax severely, to authorize full service compulsions and so on. It seemed incredible that this could continue throughout the war; yet it would, and it would even rise to a dreadful climax in the election of ’44. Already the drain on everyone’s tolerance was severe. I thought of Wilson and how it had ravaged him. I wondered if even the President’s strength and resilience could carry him through.

In our small area we had the luck, from this point of view, to have the legislature out of session most of the time. It would be necessary to have two special meetings during that year to deal with exigencies for which the executive had no competence. (I never succeeded in persuading the legislators to give me any war powers to speak of, though they cautiously delegated a few to the Executive Council, which was, of course, made up of confirmed officials.) But these sessions had a constitutional limit of two weeks, so that they were soon over. Politics was another matter. Ours was an even worse situation, in this respect, than prevailed in the States. Heated controversy never stopped. Political adversaries fought over war measures just as they did over others. And even in ’42 there were already the unmistakably symptomatic maneuverings of a campaign.1 Of course, in Puerto Rico, something out of the ordinary in the way of a political overturn was taking place. The political dispossession of the privileged and the gradual recognition in government of the hitherto underprivileged was complicated but not stopped by war. The process may

1Elections take place at four-year intervals, coinciding with Presidential elections in the States.
even have been accelerated, since all change comes easier in any period of general
disturbance.

Worry over revenues deepened during this period. Some surplus was being carried
over from the old fiscal year (which ended on 30 June) and the actual situation was
sound. But the blockade was affecting all excise taxes on imported goods such as
gasoline, cigarettes and certain luxuries; and the fruitful Federal rum tax, whose
return to the insular Government helped so much, seemed likely to dry up for lack of
export shipping. Income-tax rates had been raised; but it appeared that the incomes
to be taxed might be enough lower to cancel any gain from higher rates. So the
future, even the immediate future, seemed doubtful.

It was customary in Puerto Rico, where changes in revenue were apt to occur with a
suddenness unknown elsewhere, since they often depended on Congressional whim,
to allow the Governor more fiscal powers than were specifically authorized in the
Organic Act—and these were generous—so that such emergencies could be met. It
has been explained that relations between the legislative and executive branches
were exacerbated by the constant, almost automatic, effort of legislatures to
embarrass Governors. That is not unknown elsewhere. But in Puerto Rico Governors
were "strangers" and legislators were experienced politicians on their own
stamping ground. Enlarged powers would not ordinarily be yielded to a Governor,
because getting them back would require his signature on an act of repeal; once
given, they could be kept. I thought of, but hesitated to suggest, grants with time
limits such as were becoming fashionable in Washington: I had seen too many
struggles for their renewal which were no less difficult than the securing of the
original grant. But it was different in fiscal matters. Legislators in Puerto Rico as
elsewhere very much liked to authorize expenditures for projects (so pleasing
constituents) and very much disliked finding the funds for them (so displeasing
taxpayers). Often, therefore, they enacted bills calling for spending greater sums
than were in prospect from the taxes they had laid. Sometimes, however, Governors
too had optimistic moments, or shall we say weak ones, when they signed such bills.
And gradually there had grown up a body of book obligations in excess of existing
surpluses. Measures had been approved for projects which afterward were not
actually authorized by transfer warrant. Constituents had been pleased and no
actual drain on the Treasury had taken place.

An extralegal custom made this possible. Legislated obligations were simply not put
on the books. They were therefore only phantom appropriations. They would not
materialize to reduce the cash balance unless they were called for by the agency
which would normally do the spending and unless the Governor signed a warrant
transferring funds to an expendable account. When I came into office there were
many millions in authorizations which had never been put on the books. And when I called for a list it appeared that many or most of them were obsolete. Certain projects had already been carried out with other funds; the need for some had passed; or a substitute may have been devised. I asked the legislature to wipe the slate clean. But there were still special interests opposed to canceling numerous of the old commitments. Tender feelings of constituents might be touched even by abandoning phantom projects, it seemed; so nothing much was done.

With increased taxes and more rigorous collections, our revenues, even with reduced excises, increased until our surplus on 30 June was a real one, over and above even all these sterile authorizations. But not much above. And the legislature had passed some mighty measures to carry out the land law, and to establish the Transportation and Communications Authorities and the Development Company. These were to be preferred to bridges, docks and airports which were no longer wanted, even though the legislature had turned its back on cancellation and had not laid sufficient new taxes, and I approved them. The new laws would go into effect, most of them, in August. Mr. Fitzsimmons now saw an opportunity to be of service to our enemies. He could kill off our incipient socialism with a fiscal tour de force. He determined to put all appropriations on the books at once in order of their passage by the legislature, which meant that many old and useless projects would be fiscalized but that there would be no funds for the new purposes. He did not explain why he had not heretofore charged off commitments running back for five years or more. And he did not explain how he was going to charge them without the Governor’s signature on a transfer warrant.

My first intimation of Mr. Fitzsimmons’ immediate intentions came from reading a Puerto Rican paper in Pan American Airways’ waiting room in Miami. In the midst of the emergency there seemed to be in prospect a constitutional fight with the Auditor and the Attorney General. The scheme was, I guessed, to declare all the public-ownership authorizations invalid, since the Organic Act provided that obligations in excess of revenues could be cancelled. My first act on arrival was to call in Mr. Fitzsimmons and accuse him. He put on an air of innocence. He was hurt; but I had little disposition to dissemble longer. One of my discoveries in Washington had been an exposition of alleged fiscal irresponsibilities which he had sent to the Secretary. In this same connection, and unknown to me, he had asked for a solicitor’s ruling on the legality of the Authorities. This, if accepted, would buttress the accusations the Attorney General was making to the Department of Justice. The enemy was building up to impeachment. It was time to take off the gloves.

In these troubles with my nominal but unruly subordinates, Puerto Rican leaders had no part either; they were my own personal headache. It presently got so bad
that there were two wars going on—and the international one was taking less of my effort and getting less of my attention than the civil war in the Government. Then Muñoz chose to start another. It was about the old question of appointments. He had faithfully secured the passage, in a short special session, of legislation which postponed the taxing of oil re-exports for the duration, which, I hoped, would soften Mr. Ickes and placate his oil men. It was after that, and at a time when no other session seemed at once in prospect, that I acted on the health commissionership which was at issue between us. It is not an exaggeration to say that the question was whether this Department, which was the largest, and potentially perhaps the most serviceable in the Government, should be subjected to a reorganization which would eliminate politics and root into it firmly a civil service, or whether it was to be handed over for pure plunder to the políticos. The old Commissioner was gone, now, and an interim management was making a bad situation worse. I called Dr. Morales Otero and told him I was ready to act. He accepted. But after leaving me, a second thought occurred to him. Ole Gandules—Governors—were temporary; the continuing power in Puerto Rico was Muñoz. He decided that if Muñoz would not allow him to be confirmed, his position would be insecure. So he went to see Muñoz, who told him plainly that he was not acceptable. He then came back to me with a refusal.

The negotiations were carried on, as usual, on my part with discretion, but, on everyone else’s, with leaks to reporters, letters to the papers, radio speeches, affirmations and denials. The Liberal leader, Mr. Ramírez Santibáñez, had been informed of my intention, and since party presidents subsist on the appearance of influence, he had announced frequently, during the weeks of negotiation, that Dr. Morales was his man and the forthcoming appointment one of his arranging. Thus, on Muñoz’ refusal a party issue arose which threatened to split the Liberales away from the Populares, who depended on the single Liberal vote to control the Cámara. And a mortal wound was dealt to the prestige of a party leader. I have never known exactly what followed, or what Dr. Morales told Mr. Ramírez. I only know that I was immediately made the object of accusations of bad faith and incapacity. With amazing disregard for fact Mr. Ramírez broke loudly into language almost as intemperate as that customarily used by Coalicionista spellbinders.

The defection of the Liberales’ president was received with jubilation by the press; and for a month he was a hero battling a tyrannous Governor, a courageous son of the patria, taking risks for his honor. I had to bear this double-cross as best I could. Meanwhile Sanidad was disintegrating. Muñoz and I were at an impasse. I tried all the arts of persuasion as well as appeals to good government, but he would not give in. I knew finally that I could not persuade him. And if I sought another independent
candidate, after all the row, he would decline; also if I appointed a *Popular* he would be under notice that the Department was open to political hunting.

I told Muñoz that I felt defeated, not by the reactionaries we had been fighting, not by the falangistas who had been driven into corners, but by his own political incertitude, his lack of sustaining faith in his people. For he finally told me frankly that unless he handed most of the Government’s jobs over to the political leaders he could not be sure of re-election. To that I answered, following the argument, that apart from the fact that it was often better to lose personally than to lose an issue, he was wrong in a practical sense. The people were prepared to follow him, not his subordinates; party machinery was all very well, but he had been elected before against bitter opposition and without any followers fed on patronage. They had been crusaders then. The *pava* had been the symbol of a movement, one in which people believed. That kind of support was still his, and not only as a holdover; the record of his beginnings was good. When his subordinates began feathering their nests, as they were wanting to do, it would quickly be found out and distrust would eat away the loyalty to him now so widespread in Puerto Rico. It was this kind of thing, I said, repeating a phrase of his own, which always turned movements into parties; and the parties then became lethargic and its members self-seeking. After a while some other reformer would be needed. Why not, for once, give people the kind of government we knew how to give them, and knew was necessary if what had been promised was to be effected? I was suggesting that he go over the heads of the políticos to the voters — for once keep a movement going, rather than let it become merely an insiders’ club.

Mine, of course, was altogether too high a line, and if Muñoz had been willing to meet me halfway we might have improved government and still have been sufficiently political to satisfy the worst hunger. But he would not do that. He demanded the right to dictate as absolutely as had Messrs. Iriarte, Balseiro and Pagán of the *Coalición*. And finally I gave up, decided that the time had come to quit. Muñoz was the most disinterested, the most high-minded of Puerto Rican political leaders. If nothing could be done with him, nothing could be done with anyone. On other occasions I had found candidates who were willing to accept without consulting him. Dr. Morales’ unwillingness to undertake the *Sanidad* assignment showed how things had now changed. For one thing the legislation Muñoz most desired had become law, so that he no longer needed to conciliate me. For another, the virtual completion of the legislative program had strengthened him politically; there was no longer doubt that the Populares held a majority (for the next election) over all other parties combined. For still another, the attacks of the opposing políticos, as well as the Chamber of Commerce and the Sugar Producers’
Association, had been directed at me rather than at him; and there was an
impression among middle-class individuals in the island, and generally among those
in the States who had any interest in Puerto Rico, that for the more extreme
measures, which so horrified them, I rather than he could be held responsible.

Apart from the war and the economic crisis which had given me duties if not powers
beyond those of any former Governor, Puerto Ricans could see that Muñoz was
growing in political strength. My suggestion that the next Governor might be elected
had taken away from me all but the most strictly defined political powers. I might
appoint him, Dr. Morales saw, but I no longer had the bargaining strength to force
his confirmation when the legislature should meet. Muñoz could get along without
more legislation; and criticism of me was not, after all, something for Puerto Ricans
to worry about. On the other hand, I could not get along without legislative support,
because the exigencies of the blockade, with its supply problem and its internal
stresses, would certainly make it necessary for me to ask for new legislation in the
future as I had in the past. I had the responsibility for all the multiplied United States
interests in Puerto Rico because of the war; Muñoz had none of this, only his
promises to the electorate, which already were by way of being met.

It has to be said, in Muñoz’ defense, of course, if defense is necessary, that his
attitudes and arguments were the same as those of other political leaders elsewhere
and at other times. It was, as he said, his duty to be elected. To which I retorted that
this was a half statement: it was his duty to be elected in order to do something for
Puerto Rico. It was not to be denied that, as a political leader, he was a complete
success. I felt that the whole argument was futile because the spoils system was,
even if necessary in classic political instances, entirely unnecessary in Puerto Rico.
The Popular movement was a movement, not a political tour de force. Perhaps I
asked too much, nevertheless, in asking that he give up the usual fruits of victory
and, especially, that he ask his followers to give them up.

We were, at this time, clearly entering on dark months; and there were endless
preparations to be made against the most fantastic opposition. Each day required
work to the point of exhaustion; and even though the enemy had plenty of time and
resources for attacks which became more and more personal, I had no time to
consider strategy in relation to them and no means for fighting back. Since I had
resolved to resign anyway when the war would permit, it seemed best just to let
these things go. I made no effort at defense and no moves against our enemies.

Charles had been told of my resolve to quit and apparently his desire to be
aggressively friendly got the best of him. Without consulting me he went to the
Secretary and suggested that Justice Travieso should be appointed interim Governor
at once until the Congress should provide for election. That was going a little too fast. I myself had cautiously suggested that such an arrangement might be made: had sent it in a letter to Mr. Ickes which Mr. Travieso himself carried. But Charles told the Secretary categorically that I was going to quit at once and that he had better act rapidly. The fact was that my own offer to retire had been conditional and, in any case, I could handle my own relations. I was not going to quit a war job if I was needed, even if the effort for Puerto Rican reconstruction was not going well. I was sent for; but the message reached me during our worst gasoline shortage when it seemed likely that every wheel on the island might stop within a day or two and it seemed impossible to leave. But the calls became more imperative and on 1 July I left for Washington.

A few days before this a decisive step was taken in our power fight. Months before we had become aware that the private company thought the vast powers of the War Production Board a likely tool in their struggle. The dollar-a-year men there, they thought, might not only save them from the expropriation they had been staving off, but actually turn over the public lines for them to run. It was certainly obvious that the crisis required immediate and complete integration. Roughly the situation was that the Government controlled the best sources of power—the hydro plants—and the private company the largest market—San Juan and its environs. Actually, although surpluses of power were available from the public water developments, the private companies were using precious fuel oil for their Diesel and steam generators. Much of this might be eliminated.

The savings to be made by linking all the hydro and steam plants in a grid were enormous. A shower anywhere on the watersheds of our well-distributed reservoirs could be turned into power which entered the system and hardly a drop of water need be wasted over the spillways. Working through the power division of Interior, and working fast to forestall what we thought developing in the War Production Board, we persuaded the Federal Works Agency of the necessity to take the private lines and entrust them to our Authority for operation. The President, with what satisfaction could be imagined in view of his long battle with the utilities, signed a seizure order which took the company by surprise. And one day we assumed control.

The Water Resources Authority was a remarkable organization of which I, as Governor, had become ex officio Chairman. The genius of the works was Mr. Antonio Lucchetti. It was he who, with Mr. Curry’s help, managed the seizure and had the subsequent responsibility for fighting off attempts to take back the properties which, of course, began at once and would continue for two years. Mr. Lucchetti had begun a quarter century before as an irrigation engineer on the south coast where
water was brought down from the mountains to the dry coastal lands for the sugar plantations. Out of these operations power developments had gradually grown. Through many legislative battles, and one investigation after another in the Federal Congress, instigated by the private power lobby, he had fought his way. The Popular legislators had rewarded him handsomely by giving him a new law permanently establishing the Water Resources Authority; but until now the courts had found reasons for protecting the private companies from expropriation. The seizure made a bright day in a dark season. It was just after this considerable victory that I started for Washington.

The first question asked by Mr. Abe Fortas, who was now Under Secretary, was whether I wanted to give up the governorship. The answer to this was an unconditional "yes." But when he asked whether in my judgment it would be wise, I had to hedge and to ask who might succeed. He did not allow me to retreat into the area suggested by my reluctance to be a further embarrassment to the President and the Secretary. I was inclined to urge this aspect of the matter, saying that I could see a change coming in Congress and that I should be a more and more convenient target, eligible to receive any brick which might be thrown. Those who were going to oppose me were rich, frightened and shrewd. Hostile Congressional committees would be ideal media for the infection they might spread. My argument along this line was more or less enfeebled by his perception that any change might be for the worse, if not in this respect, then in others. He seemed to feel that opposition in the Congress was perhaps preferable to rebellion in Puerto Rico, although he did not underestimate its probable seriousness. When I objected that there was trouble in Puerto Rico now, he pointed out that it was synthetic, not genuine, that the people were overwhelmingly on the side which had adopted me. It might well be otherwise if a person like Justice Travieso were appointed. I had to admit the force of this. We were obviously gaining support in Puerto Rico and nothing was known of any differences between Muñoz and myself.

Mr. Abe Fortas looked like a boy. A good many people had at various times presumed on this appearance and had had rude shocks. They had found that he not only possessed a talent for governmental management (which his enemies liked to call intrigue, thus showing that a good deal depends on one's valuation of the objectives for which talents are used) but a stubborn will. His toughness, somewhat like Mr. Roosevelt's, did not show itself so much in the means used to gain ends, as in determination to gain the ends by some means—even unexpected ones. He had once worked under Judge Jerome Frank when he had been General Counsel to A.A.A. Later he had been one of the annoyances to Wall Street in the Securities Exchange Commission. And he had been in charge of Interior's Power Division. It was almost
impossible to believe that one who had had these successive posts, to whose controls the business interests now so powerful in Washington must have been actively hostile, could be still persona grata in the atmosphere of 1942. Yet he had been confirmed as Under Secretary without protest. How he did it none of us knew; and a person like myself, to whose most innocent actions there was always violent opposition, could only marvel. The more pains I took to keep out of trouble, the less success I had. Yet here was Abe, a mere boy, carrying on the most outrageous activities apparently without any opposition at all.

The suite of offices assigned to the Under Secretary ran part way across the south front of Interior on the sixth floor. This was high enough for a view across the Potomac to the rising country beyond Alexandria. For the first time, now, this view included not only the Washington Monument on the left and the Lincoln Memorial on the right, but also the fabulous Pentagon Building against the hills on the site of the old airport. This tour de force of General Brehon Somervell, built in opposition to all planning advice, was about as notorious in Washington by now as was Hitler's new Reichskanselerei in Berlin. I looked across at it as we talked and found it somewhat disconcerting, a kind of symbol of the rearranged and newly complicated War-Washington in which I felt awkward and uneasy. I respected the opinion I was getting, not being one of those who feel youth to be an incapacitating handicap. But finally it occurred to me to ask what Mr. Ickes felt. The answer was that since he was always inclined to think Taussig dangerous anyway he had merely been annoyed by his interference. He thought—and Abe smiled—that I ought not to be too worried, at this late time, by the opposition of vested interests.

The use of this old phrase called up a picture of the Progressive past out of which Harold Ickes had come. His generation had spent itself in what even my generation now felt had been futile opposition to "big business," "Wall Street," "malefactors of great wealth." These epithets were perhaps stereotypes now; but they represented old passions and struggles of which Mr. Ickes had borne the heat in a modestly local but nevertheless belligerent way. I had known them too; but my generation had redefined the issues and used other terms. They were, for all that, perhaps the same. We had more of an agreed positive program in contrast to their negative one; but we were not such good fighters and we probably had less public support because our concepts were, necessarily, more difficult. Denouncing "the interests" and "busting trusts" had been much more conducive to increased adrenalin flow than advocating more effective administrative arrangements for specific social functions. Abe was of the new generation. He could not even understand, I thought, the indignations which boiled in the Ickes blood. And he would not be tormented, perhaps, to analyze arrangements and motives as I was. He would merely work smoothly, calmly, in
politically ways, to set up this or that device, to place his men advantageously—in a word to work out, one after another, the agencies which would actually govern the forces of our complicated society. He must think, however fond he might be of us, and I could see that he was, that we were as foolish and as irascible as children. And it was true that, before Abe’s advent as Under Secretary, Mr. Ickes had been the bad boy of the Administration, always talking out of turn, careless of the antagonisms he created—a true curmudgeon, as he would say—and that now he had become amazingly a public darling, hardly ever attacked any more even by the Hearst press.

It was I who felt young and incompetent before the day was over. It was true that I was one of the forerunners of Abe’s school. I had been a governmental deviser in theory as well as practice. But I had a legacy of Progressivism of the old sort. I had fought the utilities; I had run head on into the food monopolies; I had talked as well as devised. And it was obvious that Abe felt the talking—although it may have relieved my feelings—had counted for no real good. He might be right. I gazed at the Pentagon Building and sighed at the prospect of taking up my task again—I had had for a moment the prospect of release. I hated to let it go.

I saw Mr. Ickes later. He had, meanwhile, adopted the expedient suggested by Charles of sending Justice Travieso back to Puerto Rico—crossing me on my way north—as a "special representative" with a message to be read at the traditional ceremony before the Capitol on the Fourth of July. I had expected to make an address on that occasion and had prepared a careful statement outlining my view of the relations which ought to exist between Puerto Rico and the United States. When I had been called to Washington I had left it with Mr. Gallardo, the Acting Governor, to read for me. Ought I to withdraw it and let Justice Travieso have the day to himself? I had not been able to decide this without knowing what the Secretary’s "representative" was to say. My situation before leaving San Juan had been equivocal. If Washington dispatches, sent by Mr. Edelstein to the newspaper which had been crusading for my removal, were true, what Justice Travieso was going to announce was that the President intended recommending to the Congress legislation providing for an elected Governor; also that he himself was, meanwhile, to be Acting Governor. All that made an attractive picture. Incredible as it seemed, I knew Charles well enough to know that it was not impossible. It did not imply ill will toward me; merely a romantic imagination. It gradually dawned on me that Mr. Edelstein had his story from authentic sources. I was not surprised therefore to find that Mr. Ickes and Mr. Fortas were disturbed by Charles’s representations; and it was true that Justice Travieso had come bearing a letter which indicated my willingness to step aside. They had not been able to communicate with me, either, confidentially, since the Army and Navy, at least, had all the lines tapped. They were
not too much impressed by Charles's visions, but they were upset and confused. So, time being short, they had sent Justice Travieso off to preside at the ceremony on the Fourth, not with the announcement Charles had wanted, but with an innocuous message which was certain to be anticlimactic after all the press reports of the sudden change. The San Juan newspaper had, in fact, been almost indecent in its jubilation. This was not made less, of course, by the fact that Justice Travieso belonged definitely to the rightist group. It obviously seemed almost incredible luck that their struggle should be won thus easily and they were disposed to make the most of it. Their celebration of victory was elaborate and even somewhat arrogant.

It was this more than anything else which had changed my mind. Simple disgust with those who happened to be taking what I felt was unfair advantage of a popular movement had carried me too far. Muñoz' unwillingness to stand for good government did not, after all, affect the fact that this was a people's cause. It needed those who could be faithful and persistent to purge it of parasites and furnish it an administrative machinery capable of carrying out its mandates. Those who could do it existed. I had found many; and there were certainly more, even among the political leaders themselves. So I determined to go on, even though there should be more trouble ahead, and even though it had to be done without great hope of success.

There was no longer any doubt that Congressional opinion had been seriously undermined by the persistent work of the various lobbyists working with the Resident Commissioner. Ever since the passage of the bill to take the water-supply services from the municipalities, Mr. Bolivar Pagán had been emitting daily squawks of pain and working more industriously than ever before at the business of my removal. My "radicalism" was being enlarged on—it was "fascism" now, "communism" being thought a little too respectable since the Soviets had become our allies. It was being industriously put about that I was responsible for the wartime troubles in Puerto Rico, for the lack of shipping, for unemployment and so on. There were horror stories about the flight of capital from our "experimental fantasies," about the indiscipline of labor under my tutelage, about "extravagance and waste" in government. These last, curiously enough, were linked with criticism for not spending greater sums for education, for public health and similar purposes.

Currently and specifically I was being blamed for the shortage of fertilizers and for the failure of our program to produce more home-grown food. Mr. Pagán was perfectly well aware that Egloff, Moscoso, Villamil and I had fought for months through the bramble of obstacles set against the regular flow of fertilizers; he knew that Villamil had made three separate trips to Washington. The last thicket of troubles in this matter was an international committee for allocations. We had
finally got our way over the dead bodies of the British bureaucrats who were determined to have all the fertilizers for their own possessions—mostly on lend-lease. He knew this as well as he knew that ship losses were still rising in Caribbean waters; but these were, as assertions, too convenient to forego. They were at least facts. One had only to impute responsibility. Daily the Congressional Record bore witness to my nefariousness and incompetence, sometimes a re-print from the Puerto Rican press, sometimes the speech of a Coalicionista político, sometimes a resolution of the Sugar Producers’ or the Farmers’ Association, or again an A. F. of L. union. All these were "independent" expressions, as contrasted with those of the "fanatics, anti-Americans and fascists" who, strangely enough, were warming to my support.

I began to see, about this time, that the opposition was making a mistake in strategy. And it consisted in a phase of their activities which obviously the strategists valued highly. They ought to have kept Washington and Puerto Rico separate and incommunicado, whereas they thought it smart to play back and forth all the time. They forgot that Puerto Ricans would recognize the fantastic hollowness of practically all the allegations and pretty soon begin to feel themselves involved. Instead of blaming me, they began to blame those who attacked me, for Puerto Rico’s failures in Washington. If it was kept up I could see that, whatever the reactionaries in the Congress felt, I should have widening approval in Puerto Rico.

A good example of this was furnished by our attempt at persuading Congress to furnish subsidy funds for food production. I had hoped to persuade the sugar producers by paying them for growing food as much as they got for growing cane, since it was obvious that no appeal to patriotism was going to be effective. I thought they might abandon Mr. Pagán and his Coalicionistas and join me in persuading Congress to appropriate the funds. I should have preferred to have access to the President’s emergency funds; but since we had to go to the Congress, it might be an opportunity for the prospective recipients of the benefit to come over. I had heard that some of them wanted to do this; so we had prepared the way carefully and the forecast was that there would be no difficulty.

On 9 July Captain Olmstead of the Agricultural Distribution Agency and I appeared before a Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations. To be sure, action on a similar request had been turned down by the House Committee on representations from Mr. Pagán. We thought, however, that his loss of favor for this had been severe enough so that he might be at least neutral. Olmstead and I were supported by official representatives of the War and Navy Departments who were there to testify that military necessity required an increase of food production and that this was the way to get it. The Subcommittee consisted of Senators Hayden, McKellar,
O’Mahoney, Thomas and Nye. The atmosphere was friendly and helpful. But by afternoon Mr. Hayden had called his Interior friends to tell them that we were turned down. It seemed that Mr. McKellar had been appealed to by Mr. Pagán, who had said that I wanted the fifteen millions for "a political slush fund." Mr. McKellar, ready to believe the worst about me anyway, and sympathetic, moreover, to pleas against Federal funds being dispensed under any aegis but a Congressional one, had made an issue of it. Mr. Hayden and the others did not credit it, and they were regretful; but their feelings were not strong enough so that they cared to oppose the irascible Senator from Tennessee.

I was just leaving for home. But Mr. Douglas promised to write every Committee member, and the people in Agriculture agreed to do what they could. Mr. Ickes would begin, he said, with a press statement and urged me to continue, in Puerto Rico, a campaign to convict Mr. Pagán of responsibility for the shortage of food and for the loss of fifteen millions in benefit payments. Muñoz would join in, a little later. Mr. Pagán and his cohorts—this is the point I wish to make—could not refrain from rejoicing at their victory—a celebration which backfired; for from this time on the Coalición lost ground rapidly. Its leaders would never recover from having so blatantly sacrificed their people for a partisan advantage. The consequences of this error would not become plain until the beginning of 1944 at the inscription of new voters for the election in November; and by that time it would have become merely one of a series of similar mistakes. Waves of sympathy and support began at once to wash into La Fortaleza, some of them from the most unlikely sources. The Coalición had done for me what I could never have done for myself. They really had made me an approved executive. Up to now Americano Governors had been more or less tolerated; none had been regarded with affection. It was impossible to miss this—to me—strange and unfamiliar general attitude among the people. I might worry about what Washington thought or said of our work, but from this time on I should not have to worry about opinion in Puerto Rico.

This fact would penetrate most circles in Washington only against great resistance—excluding Mr. Ickes and Mr. Fortas, of course, and a few other individuals. If there was evidence of support for me, it was regarded either as manufactured or as artificially induced by Muñoz' efficient political machine. The Coalición continued to be received even by the bureaucrats in Interior, and listened to gravely; and I continued to be challenged by the most outrageous allegations. I should be required a dozen times in the next few months, in the midst of our terrible ordeal of blockade, to work out elaborate answers for such charges. And they would have to be answers supported by evidence, with affidavits, original files, and so on. Finally we should have to give up months of the time of many valuable government
workers to this task alone; but that would be when the Congressional investigations got going. We were now in the preliminary stages.

It was while I was in Washington—it was, in fact, on 4 July—that the story of the elective governorship broke, to the annoyance of officials in Interior and at the White House. It was an occurrence for which no one was to be blamed. I had engaged, after a long search, a publicity man whose heart, I thought, would be in the right place. He had written one or two understanding stories and was, besides being experienced, a member in good standing of the Washington staff of one of the largest press associations. I should never be able to get him to understand that he was not a personal press agent for me but was rather expected to convey the plans and hopes of Muñoz and his group both to Puerto Ricans and to Continentals. I ought to have known better than to have expected from a good reporter anything but reporting and I ought to have been more careful in explaining the conditions of government service—the first of which is that the superior officer announces policy. He had thought that since I had suggested the elective-governorship I ought to get credit for it. I had weakly agreed.

The difficulty with this attitude was—and throughout my public life I have tried unsuccessfully to get publicity men to understand this—that I had no use for personal credit. What I needed was to have the President father my idea. The publicity during that week reached every corner of the country and made it impossible for the President to proceed as we had hoped he would do in recommending action to the Congress. His own delay had, of course, been responsible. The story had been lying around for months waiting to be picked up. It was a good one too, at that juncture of the war, with our need to send a clear message to the subject people of the world. So no more than a tip was needed. But it should have been the President’s story and he had a right to time it as he chose. The result was that, although Mr. Hull stood with us, saying that Puerto Rico ought to have more self-government, and the President could not deny that such a project might be in prospect, he felt that he had to put it away indefinitely. And it would not emerge again for some time to come. Nevertheless Puerto Rico now knew; the ridicule about the “voces mas altas” came to a sudden end; and my support among the most deeply patriotic Puerto Ricans was greatly strengthened. It was only a question, now, of waiting a little longer.  

10 July 1942. A birthday spent in the air Charles, Abe and I had dinner together last night. Abe is to carry on the unfinished matters I could not see through. Obviously we shall have to take new measures on the food supply. I have urged that black

2See the New York Times, 4 and 6 July 1942, and Time of the same week.
markets are out of control and reserves exhausted. (Why people are so patient I don’t know.) Also, Abe will have to act for me on Commission matters. Travel is getting difficult and being away is risky. Reading and writing: a piece about Puerto Rico in the New Republic this week. And much of today I have spent reading Max Eastman’s Heroes. Such a strong, fine work. He’s always a little perverse, as though none of the subjects he tackled are quite good enough to test his abilities and he must make things more difficult. It’s a clear, tough style, even if one is not quite certain of sincerity. I’ve read a good many books between dusks and dawns this past year. And this is the best.

11 July. A day’s enforced stopover in Miami. Uncouth as Miami Beach is in season, out of season it has pleasant associations for me. Grace and I have spent our only real vacations here and in Key West—taking them at this time and coming here to escape the terrors of hay fever elsewhere in the East. The sea, today, from the roof of this hotel is as empty as the sky. The hotels are mostly full of soldiers in training. They’d better hurry, for the war is just out here in the Straits. I myself have flown over burning and sinking ships; and the shore here is black with tanker oil and littered, in places, with debris.

It cannot be denied that the war goes badly to this moment. The empty sea is an illustration of this. Our Navy cannot now protect our merchant ships; and in Washington it was still being said that the Admirals were refusing to approve a small-ship program.

Our own problems press. Still I must say that some progress has been made. Douglas, for the War Shipping Board, has just agreed (by letter to Ickes) to recognize priorities which we may work out, and, if necessary, to license for enforcement. This is the result of several meetings between us. Now we must have control of exports from Puerto Rico as well as imports. That is a matter in which we shall have to deal with the War Production Board, according to Abe, and no progress is to be recorded yet. As things are, Dickey says, the Sugar Producers have the Board "fixed"—meaning, I hope, persuaded. I spent a lot of time on that, this trip. But it had to be left unfinished.

Matters in dispute between Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Fitzsimmons and myself are coming out satisfactorily. In my first talk with Abe, I found in his possession a long complaint, with voluminous exhibits, from Mr. Malcolm to the Department of Justice. The documents were intended to show that my conduct did not become a Governor: I had not followed his advice in acting on bills, in short, and a lot of liberal legislation —"socialistic"—had, in consequence, been approved. Later I talked more about this with Abe and with Mr. Felix Cohen, now the Acting Solicitor. Abe’s summary was
that Mr. Malcolm didn't seem to agree with the legislature's philosophy and mine. He thought use was going to be made of it in Congress, although he didn't think Malcolm realized all Justice and Interior together had against him. Still he thought a man so vulnerable would hardly come out in the open. But this makes two dockets of "charges"—Fitzsimmons' as well as Malcolm's.

Mr. Cohen's letters to the Secretary, drafts of which I saw, and which in due course will get to me for publication, uphold my course in every particular, both as to law when I differed with Mr. Malcolm and as to my right to proceed, if necessary, without his approval. It will be pointed out to Mr. Malcolm that he is only a legal adviser and to Mr. Fitzsimmons that his office is under the Governor's direction. Abe wants to have Mr. Malcolm removed.

The current trip has, however, been disappointing in not getting us much further along on the war plan. This I summarize often, as I run over it in my head, as follows: (1) to get all the shipping we can honestly ask in spite of the war's demand and to see that it is used for necessities only; (2) to make sure that all the return shipping we can get is used to bolster the Puerto Rican economy at strategic places; (3) to get such changes in various orders and regulations as will free us to meet the growing problems of unemployment and rising prices; and (4) to conduct an energetic food-growing campaign so that at least no one shall starve.

It was for this last that the fifteen millions was wanted and it is hard to accept defeat. But Pagán and the sugar growers do not have to live in Puerto Rico. For them to say "to hell with food," as many have to my face, is easy when they do not have my responsibility. There is one thing I must note, however: those who persist in their opposition will know that there has been a battle before they win.

12 July. Empty sea below—too empty. As we flew out there were two smoking wrecks within a few miles of land.

This blockade cuts our income from rum enormously. I shall have to have more revenue or cut the budget, discharging employees, etc. But what will the legislature do, if I call a special session, now that Muñoz has, as it seems to me, thrown away control in the conflict over Sanidad?

14 July. The atmosphere in San Juan seems to have changed a little for the better in spite of the continuing aggressions of the Auditor and the Attorney General and of more vicious (if that is possible) attacks in the press. Muñoz and the others on our side seem less apathetic, more disposed to assess the effects of war realistically and acknowledge that local politics is now submerged in larger issues.
Muñoz came close to apologizing yesterday—although no retraction was actually made. He said that he felt we ought to spend more time together; and that it would be well if we talked of other things than those on which we were certain to disagree—such as my fantasy that a real civil service could be established in Puerto Rico. I said, picking up this point, that I didn't want our disagreements to center in this, although I thought an effective civil service essential to what he was trying to do with the Government. No one, I said, has fewer illusions about the limitations of any system than I. And I repeated what an old personnel officer in Agriculture once told me, that civil service only assures an organization that it will get the best of the worst. My quarrel with him should center in something else—that he would not permit the defined objectives of his movement to embody themselves in organization and would not realize that their attainment required not only devoted leaders but a highly trained body of minor administrators and employees. His insistence on political appeasement was defeating every hope he held and alienating his best talent. I told him again, as I had before, how much I admired La Guardia for throwing over all organized political support. Not that he did not play politics, for he did that constantly and not too well either; but that he did not let any bosses undermine his municipal services with employees who owed loyalty to themselves rather than to their nominal chiefs. There was, in consequence, discipline, after a while, throughout the New York service, something which was lacking in Puerto Rico.

It was not true, I repeated again, that he owed or would owe any large number of votes to political leaders. They did not support him; rather he supported them. They could all desert him in a body, as La Guardia had proved, and he would still be as strong as ever, perhaps stronger. . . .

This is getting to be a familiar argument between us. He is a man of conscience, fundamentally. He means to improve the lot of his people; and since there is no other way than the one I am insistently showing him, he must come around. . . .

15 July. We had a long conference with Mr. Rafael Buscaglia, the Treasurer, who is more optimistic than I about revenues and feels that there is no need at present for reducing the budget. I myself am inclined to doubt whether most Puerto Ricans—including Muñoz and Buscaglia—realize the significance for this island of what is going on outside. I feel that things are getting worse and will continue to get worse for perhaps a year. This feeling is based on an estimate of the time required for planning, building, tooling and delivering the materials of war and of training armies to use them. I foresee disasters because of unpreparedness, far beyond any yet experienced.
16 July. The war goes badly now even for the tough Russians. Evidently the materiel we got to them last winter was not much. And an African debacle seems staved off only for the moment. On the whole Washington was as pessimistic last week as it had been foolishly optimistic a few weeks ago. The scattering of our weak forces, beyond what seems necessary or reasonable, is perhaps the worst of it. We are attempting to build up some eight great armies besides supplying our allies from what the President calls "the arsenal of democracy." It is an effort, I am afraid, beyond possibility. There is a lot of the usual Washington jibing at the awkwardness of the new agencies for war. All of it may be justified, yet I recall all the old agencies tackling the New Deal ones in exactly the same way. But even granting no more than the normal inefficiency of haste and pressure, it may still be a task we cannot accomplish. It is frightening to contemplate building, without grant of time, systems of bases and armies capable of striking at long-prepared opponents in the South Pacific, in India, in China, in Alaska, in Egypt, in the Near East, in the British Isles and in the Caribbean. I have only to look at the scale of the work in our sea to be staggered at the multiplication of it in other areas.

I cannot help feeling, although I am willing to grant the industrialists the miracles of production which, relieved from the weight of the profit motive, they have before achieved and will again, and although I am willing to believe that our facilities and personnel for staff work will be very good, that we are spread too thin and are very vulnerable. If I were asked where we could economize or even abandon our effort, I should probably have to name India, Australia, and China—perhaps Alaska if worst should come to worst. But this is useless speculation, I hope. If a determined enemy does not, within the next year or year and a half, so penetrate our homeland, after reducing Africa, the Caribbean and the Atlantic bastions, as to paralyze the production and training program which is now beginning to roll in majestic proportions, we shall then have the power to press in upon their vitals. It is the coming year that we must fear.

I said most of this in a lecture at George Washington University back in the fall of 1939. My audience did not follow me then. Partly they were pacifistic, partly they were optimistic, but mostly, even if they were intellectuals, they were unrealistic. They did not appreciate the scale, the weight of modern conflict, or what we had to do to meet Germany and Japan toe to toe and slug it out. They know now. Most of them will be in it one way or another, for most of them were young, and perhaps their illusions will, after all, have done no great harm.
ONE DAY in the latter part of July in 1942, waking early as usual, I spent an hour on the West Terrace overlooking the harbor. We had a submarine net now, running across from the walls of El Morro to Palo Seco, and a small tender was anchored at the center. Its crew swung back some three or four rods of net at dawn and closed the gap again at dusk. Their wash hung out in the sun and we were beginning to regard them as neighbors. Infrequently the gate stayed open as darkness arrived; and we knew then that presently a furtive ship, silent as a shadow, would creep into harbor, another perilous journey done. This had happened on the night before; and faint outlines had told us that the South Atlantic task force was in again. We could expect to see Admiral Jonas Ingram later in the day. He was a family favorite who always came for a meal or two when he could, and who often bore gifts. Last time it had been the larger part of a quarter of beef, the first we had had for some time. The old Omaha was his flagship and I could see her swinging in the channel with her three or four destroyers lined up around the Coast Guard point. Even though it was early there was movement out on La Isla de Cabras, where rapid filling was making a causeway to the mainland, and a sizable hill was growing whose insides we knew would consist of a twelve-inch battery.

In the week since I had got home, no merchant ship had come in. The whole sweep of the horizon had been empty through the long days, save for the patrol boat which crossed and recrossed the entrance to the channel a mile or two at sea. Whenever a shower let down its curtain we hoped its lifting would reveal a ship or even—and this would seem marvelous—a convoy. Having a terrace which commanded the harbor mouth was beginning to be a doubtful privilege. There was constant temptation to watch for the faint outline of arriving ships; but the strain of the deficit which only their coming could fill was slowly growing worse. Watching was becoming a habit to be broken; for on the higher terrace there was an even better view and I was waking frequently to get up and search the sea. I might, of course, be told the expectations by Admiral Hoover. But I did not want information about ship movements, thinking no one ought to possess any except the very few operations officers whose business it was to protect them. At this time, moreover, information even in the Navy was not too good. We had a few patrol planes, but they were old Army B-18’s, short-ranged but dependable; and we had some YP boats (called "Yippees" in the Navy) which were converted yachts and not very dangerous really, although it was amazing how they frightened the submarines.¹ The Navy was

¹A good short account of the campaign of '42—'43 in the Caribbean is that of Mr. Fletcher Pratt: *The Navy's War*, Harper and Brothers, 1944, pp. 164-83. Mr. Pratt obviously had his information at first hand and his understanding of the strategic problem was adequate
actually, in spite of itself, coming around to a small-boat program. These Yippees were the first of them.

The Tenth Naval District was now in process of being enlarged administratively into the Caribbean Sea Frontier. Admiral Hoover had established three sectors with headquarters at Guantánamo in Cuba, at San Juan, and at Port-of-Spain in Trinidad. This was a beat as long as that from Maine to Florida, full of islands between which ran passes giving access to the Canal—and, as we were just really beginning to realize, to the refineries at Curacao and the oil fields around the Gulf of Maracaibo. Later a fourth command center would be established there. The frontier would then be a truly international one, involving Cuba, Haiti, Santo Domingo, the British, the Dutch and the French, to say nothing of the countries of Central America, as well as Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil. Naturally the extension of armed protection required agreements and involved frictions which were not the least of Hoover’s troubles. And more and more as the summer deepened, and protection improved on the North Atlantic, the submarines were coming down our way. They were a familiar ghostly phenomenon. We never saw one; but we felt their presence constantly. I will not say that we got used to them; but they were sinking a ship a day or thereabouts in our waters, and the survivors were all over the place. So there was nothing strange any more about the awareness of their presence.

Puerto Rico itself was becoming less important in the Sea as the Admiral began to receive equipment, although it was still headquarters and had its own importance on that account. I saw him less often now; and, some time since, the daily meetings in my office had stopped. For now he had a command plane—although General Collins would have to wait another year for his—and he was away a good deal. He was a difficult man to like, his thorniness being registered in his name throughout the Frontier. Genial John, they called him, with a slightly bitter, perhaps typically American, mixture of respect and resentment. The respect was for his everlasting vigilance and rigid discipline; the resentment was for his Spartan habits which gave no room for barrack tales. He refused to have even a single intimate in uniform; and in other ways his reputation for coldness was impeccable. His Rear Admirals had charge of the sectors; Weyler at Guantánamo, Robinson (later Chanler) at Curacao, and Ollendorf (later Robinson) at Trinidad. They were held to the strictest accountability.

About this time Ollendorf at Trinidad was setting up what had become a standard operations office. Admiral Hoover had not yet given in to the idea at San Juan. One was in fact already being planned, however, by his subordinates to be set up in the bowels of the old fortifications at San Cristóbal; there, in air-conditioned depths, with some one hundred feet of earth and masonry overhead, Army, Air Force and
Navy would front, in separate wide cubicles, on a pit in which a graphic miniature of the whole frontier would be visible, convoys moving on the sea, mobile forces on the land, even humble schooners beating down from Nova Scotia with dried cod, or up to Barbados with rice from the Demerara. The ample information pouring in would keep it current to within four hours at the most. But now the Admiral still worked in a slightly dressed up barrack down by the San Antonio Channel, one of the hottest locations in the city and nothing to compare even with the army headquarters which were built around a patio on the El Morro elevation and caught the full dry wind from the sea. The Admiral could work that way. He could sleep, when he had to, on the cot beside his desk, and he could keep the whole frontier in his mind’s eye because he had a photographic memory. But his helpers were not so well equipped.

Sometimes, being thoroughly civilian, I could mediate furtively between the Admiral and his younger officers, rather, I think, to his amusement. He knew that I had some feeling for the many youngsters, fresh from the freedoms of college, who were undergoing the first compulsions of discipline. He was over-harsh, I thought, and not inclined to allow for callowness. If he resented my interferences, he did not actually say so. I persisted with some caution. One such case was that of a very junior lieutenant named Philip Willkie, very much the son of his father, who was finding life restricted on a patrol boat off our harbor. There was nothing the matter with this lad except that he was a little sloppy about his clothes and that — like his father — he talked expansively and continuously; but these were two attributes which annoyed his superiors. I don’t believe even he will ever know how close he came to punishment which would have been for nothing, really, and could have done neither Navy nor Willkie any good. As much as anything else, his crime may have been that he was the son of a prominent citizen. For it is a natural tendency to bend over backwards in disciplining the sons of the well-known. It was characteristic that in similar—even somewhat more serious—circumstances Admiral Ingram did not even consider punishment for one of the Roosevelt boys. He was a damn good fighting sailor, said Jonas, and he wasn’t going to break his spirit.

It was impossible not to have enormous respect for the young men who manned the Yippee boats, the later PC’s and the patrol planes in our sea even if some of them were informal and unlicked. The tiny boats had power but little else; often — and especially just after the Navy gave in on small craft — they were dangerously overengined and loaded with something it was hoped would be injurious to submarines. For, at this time, there were not enough depth bombs; and anyway depth bombs were perhaps more perilous to the frail wooden hulls than to the

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2This operations center functioned until April 1945.
enemy for which they were intended. So the lads went everywhere on our sea in
their unaccustomed navy uniforms hunting a deadly enemy clean out of their class.
Their shore stations were still unfinished, and most of them, when they were
complete, would be little more than standard huts on strange subtropical islands as
little as possible like home. But they brought the U-boats to a standstill.

Certainly the Hoover discipline could be a little modified under such circumstances.
There was something Elizabethan, as Mr. Fletcher Pratt noted, about these amateur
sailors—it was hardly a regular navy show. It made a vivid picture to think of the
dozen boys in a PC boat heading into Englishtown harbor and going ashore for an
hour to see how Lord Nelson and the Duke of Clarence had done their job. The
shipyard and careening basin were in a narrow indentation on the south coast of
Antigua; when the frigate ship was finished, the Englishtown establishment became
obsolete overnight; and somewhat later the British Navy simply moved out, hardly
taking the trouble to dismantle. Ever since, the mast yards, the shops, the rope lofts
and the Admiral’s House, once the seat of the famous West India Station, had lain
deserted. Many young Americans must have explored this museum piece of a
vanished heroic day; more of them must have circled it in their patrolling planes,
and landed on its water. I often wondered what they thought—or if they thought at
all—of their predecessors in the Caribbean as they walked the narrow ways of that
toy port. I wondered equally what they thought as they strode with untropical
energy through the old streets of San Juan, so many times the object of battles. Were
they conscious of renewing an old tradition?

They flew daily, hourly even, up the Sir Francis Drake Channel between St. John’s
and Tórtola, down which Sir Francis came to take, if he could, San Juan from the
Spaniards. For San Juan then, as now, was a kind of halfway place, a base in the sea,
to protect the commerce flowing between Mexico, Central America and Spain.
Puerto Rico’s currency had been, in fact, Mexican and Peruvian gold; the
conquistadores had supported her to insure their communications with home. She
was so important to the protection of the galleons that the aggressor nations—the
British, the Dutch and the French—were always trying to capture the place.
Sometimes they succeeded—both had held it for an interval and been driven out,
apparently, by "Admiral Yellowjack." Until, finally, the Spaniards had built El Morro
and carried away Hawkins’ leg with a shot from its bastion. After that she had had
more peace.

I thought Admiral Hoover and his colleagues had too little respect for the
descendants of the tough Spaniards who had outlived yellow fever when neither the

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3 The Navy’s War, cited above.
Dutch nor the English could, and who had repulsed numerous other piratical expeditions than those which overcame their resistance—that, for instance, of Abercromby. None of those roving young mariners in the Caribbean in 1942 was Puerto Rican. The Navy still would not take them. But the Army was, somewhat reluctantly, shaping a different policy. It would be foolish to contend that there was not a prejudice in the Army against Puerto Ricans. The Continental officers, of course, maintained that it was an attitude based on facts. The facts cited were that Puerto Ricans were largely not only illiterate but natively unintelligent; that they would not fight since they were faintly disloyal; and that the educated among them made poor officers because they would not lead instead of drive. On the whole the Army was against Puerto Rican recruiting, except for a limited service, and it was intended to confine this service to garrison duty at inactive posts.

Even if I was a layman, I argued a good deal about these matters with my military friends. It was apparent that nothing would be done about the Navy since the President and Mr. Knox had both tried and failed. But the Army was to modify its policy, if not its beliefs, in course of time. The battle conduct of the Filipinos was something of a shock to the more hard-bitten army men; in 1942 the policy of taking only volunteers was seen to be a mistake and the regular procedures of selective service were adopted. Volunteering had got mostly those to whom army pay and security were attractive. But when selective service began to be used, the opposite mistake was made at first. By setting standards too high, a considerable percentage of the most skilled and highly educated young men were drawn off in the first thousands, leaving only less desirable material for later drafts. The result was the constitution of uneven units and the exhaustion of officer material. It was found, as time went on and the new techniques of jungle training and bush fighting were developed, that Puerto Ricans were not such bad soldiers after all, that, indeed, they had some qualities which were unique and valuable for the purposes now developing. But the reluctance of the continental army men to accept them as equals left a resentment which would never be altogether overcome.

This sense of injury led to a far less enthusiastic service than might have been secured. For the tradition of the Puerto Rican militia was an old one which might have been built upon instead of sneered at; and the Puerto Rican officer might have been got to father his men in the American tradition rather than to make servants of them in the Spanish fashion, without the misunderstandings which would torment relationships throughout the war. The Army might have remembered that it was trying to fight a professional war—that it did not—speaking of the West Point and National Guard officers—have any deep conviction about the issues. Nor did it have any very great feeling that the whole Nazi philosophy was wicked. It admired the
Prussian military machine too much. Somehow, in the deep divisions of American life, much of the middle class had become skeptical of the conception of Democracy which stood here opposed to the Fascist-Nazi dogma. And the Army was decidedly upper middle class. Before long, it would have grown too large for any generalization like this to cover its attitudes. But in our small area I saw only too plainly in those days the fraternization of the army men with the Puerto Rican better element. Together, these pseudo-aristocrats discussed the shortcomings of the lower classes and agreed on their vast inferiority. In the middle of 1942 policies were still unsettled. But everyone knew they were not satisfactory, and that some new methods would have to be tried. The Army was taking men away from Puerto Rican life. The war was not, as it ought to be, an expression of a people's ideals, a service for the defense of the objectives they instinctively believed in. It was becoming something apart, something strange and alien, something in which Puerto Ricans had no real interest. I saw it as part of my job to work at overcoming this, at changing the Army's mind and methods as well as at holding Puerto Rican loyalty. But it sometimes seemed to be made unnecessarily difficult.

This was one of the few matters in which I differed from General Phillips. He was a fair-minded spectator of the Puerto Rican scene. He had something of a grandstand seat at El Morro, where he was now Chief of Staff of the new Antilles Department. He was close to, yet not involved in, local affairs; and he did not disguise, even from Puerto Ricans, that he had a very poor opinion of their capabilities. Of course, he approached this judgment as an army man with the standards natural to his experience, and it had nothing to do with his sympathies. Many islanders were his friends, and so excepted; but he told them frankly that their class as a whole was lazy, spoiled and full of false pride. As to the workers and farmers he rated them, as potential soldiers, at about the level of the poorer stocks in the Southern states. He cited not only the Army's pre-induction tests and high rejection rate but also poor performance in training. I felt that these were exaggerated. And that he allowed too little for the soft and overindulgent family life in which his officers had grown up, and for the easy contempt in which they had been trained to hold their poorer neighbors. As for the soldiers themselves, they often came to camp barefoot, straight from bohíos with dirt floors and no furniture; they were unaccustomed to any sanitary facility or to tools other than the universal machete; they might never have touched a machine of any sort, or even have moved a vehicle with wheels. They had, in fact, stepped out of the Middle Ages into a mechanized army. No wonder it took a long training to bring them into functioning in their newly aseptic, rigidly disciplined, mentally demanding life. No wonder, even, that the suicide rate was high among those who could not make the accommodation and could find no other way to escape the contradictory compulsions which bore in upon them.
In the summer of ’42 the Army was installing its heavier coast artillery and enlarging its anti-aircraft protection. It was using new air strips and carrying out most of the sea patrols vice a navy which had a few old PBY’s (Catalinas) and very little else —the new PBM’s (Mariners) were still months in the future. It was also training a mobile force, to be based on a central camp and ready to repulse an invasion on any beach. That central camp (O’Reilly), between Caguas and Naguabo, was just being begun. For the moment Tortuguero and Buchanan, both intended for other specialized purposes, together with temporary installations elsewhere, had to do.

Those of us who lived in San Juan were somewhat entertained by the ingenuity of the anti-aircraft companies who settled down in vacant lots, in back yards, on roof tops—just any place where a good shot could be had at enemy planes which might dive on the concentrations, within the harbor, of ships, docks, oil tanks, warehouses and military headquarters. There were dozens of huge searchlights with attendant machinery which moved out in the daytime and came back at night to the same location. There were complicated spotting and listening devices; there were wicked-looking guns. At night the searchlights tried their beams, sometimes many of them at once, and perhaps a plane went up for a target and tracer bullets were shot at its trailing sleeve. We were getting used to having the pyrotechnics every evening, early, as the various outfits tuned up for the night. And at La Fortaleza we had a special performance, now, every few minutes throughout the night, from the great lights on the fortifications which swept the harbor searching for any unusual activity and playing along the submarine net on the watch for disturbances.

Out in the swank Condado district and the more suburban one in Guaynabo, the boys settled in with their paraphernalia, surrounded it with sandbags, and proceeded to camouflage the whole with all the artistry of professional decorators. Sometimes they went further and imitated houses, walks, streets and the like in such ways as to be more than ever heroes in the eyes of neighborhood children who frequently had to be forcibly restrained from joining in what they obviously regarded as a game. It was, in fact, a field day for half-grown boys who made their new neighbors embarrassingly at home. As for the larger girls, all the results to be expected followed, and many a delicate problem had to be solved in grave conferences of civil and military authorities.

There had been a time when continental soldiers and Puerto Rican civilians had had a good many rows in which police and M.P.’s often had had to interfere; and sometimes the conflicts of jurisdiction and mutual irritations had been serious. These conflicts had seemed to run in series. In Mr. Swope’s time they had been difficult largely, Mr. Swope had said, because of military martinets who refused to
co-operate. Certainly it proved to require no more than mutual resolution on the part of General Collins and myself to bring friction almost completely to an end. Soldiers still drank too much on leave. Puerto Ricans still used knives on continental boys who fooled with their girls. But I let it be known that punishment would be severe; and the General let it be known that soldiers would be punished too. And the quarrels ceased to be incidents requiring diplomatic exchanges; they were settled at the police-court-guardhouse level as they ought to have been.

On this July morning there were some decisions to be made. I faced now the most difficult months of the Puerto Rican crisis. I had agreed to stay on the job here; consequently the comfort of prospective resignation, which had been an unacknowledged stay during the difficult spring just past, was now removed. With the resources now on call I had to work through the strangling blockade in this island outpost. It would have been hard to accomplish with solid support from home; but to do it under the constant threat of treachery, abetted in Washington, and creeping ever closer to the sources of assistance, was asking almost too much. It was this, of course, which had determined my request to be relieved. If, however, I were required to go on, and if this was really the President’s wish, I must tot up my resources again and lay the best course my judgment could find. I ran over the headings of the policy now shaping itself in my mind.

This could really be summed up by saying that the people of Puerto Rico, the nearly two million ordinary folk in the little wooden houses of the city and rural slums, must remain loyal to the cause. They must, not only because it was convenient for the nation which possessed their land, but also because it was their cause; and no irrelevancies must be allowed to tempt them away. They must be kept true to the United States in spite of the rebuffs from the farm-lobby puppets in Washington. I must convey to them the good will of the President whose emissary I was, rather than the ill will of those others who hated him and sought to destroy his policies. They must be made, so far as I could accomplish it, to feel that the struggle going on in the South Pacific, in the Atlantic, and here in the Caribbean, for which their young men were being taken, and for which their island was being transformed into a fortress, was indeed their struggle. It must be shown to be theirs because it meant the salvage of a way of life which gave poor men equal opportunities, which admitted no racial discriminations, which recognized children’s right to food and education just because they had been born into the world; which recognized, too, old people’s right to be cherished just because they had done the work of the world until they were tired. And a man must have the right to stand on his feet and not have to beg for his family. I knew these people well enough to be sure that these were the benefits they asked of authority. But that was what Mr. Roosevelt held out
to them—if his voice were not drowned in the selfish clamor of vested interests, and if his compromises did not have to be destructive.

I resolved to take the chance that the mass of the people who were, it could be granted, the least capable, the most easily confused; who were, moreover, poor; but who had for once a leader in Muñoz who, whatever his weaknesses and errors, would never sell them out and who would try, as long as his strength lasted, to embody their aspirations; I resolved to take the chance of being on their side openly and aggressively with all the penalties it involved. It was not too late to go the other way. I could make a deal with the reactionaries—but that was, for me, impossible; if the President wanted me to stay, that was his choice too. Without being more provocative than was necessary; without using the tactics, in other words, which were going to be used against me, I should go straight down the path which lay so clearly ahead.

There was a difficulty: it would not be possible to keep the Puerto Rican upper class with us in this effort. And it was from this class that leaders of all sorts, including army officers, must come. It had begun to seem, however, that this upper class could be broken into, that many of its individuals, moved by various motives—one of them, perhaps, the perception that theirs was the losing side:—would join with us. This was especially true of lawyers, doctors, merchants and others, who had made up in the past the now-disintegrating Liberal party. No one who had been a Liberal could be a Coalicionista; there were historical antagonisms as well as ideological differences which made such a change of affiliation impossible. And there would soon be no party home for them except with the Populares. This influx of moderates would be a good corrective for the extremists in that group. Meanwhile dozens of them began to work sympathetically with us. Later on I should find an Auditor, a Commissioner of Agriculture, an Attorney General, several judges, and many minor officials among them. It was already practically impossible to secure the appointment of a Popular to any post for which Washington was responsible. The F.B.I. office in Puerto Rico which was asked to investigate invariably found something against even the best of them. If it did not appear that they had once been independentistas it could always be claimed of a Latin that he had ideas of personal morality which departed somewhat from those of Mr. Edgar Hoover. When it was alleged, in some of their reports, that certain candidates for office who seemed to me competent and suitable frequented habitually a certain café in the afternoon, it seemed to me to be going too far. But everyone in Washington pulled a solemn face

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4The F.B.I. method of maintaining lists of responsible citizens whose opinion is asked concerning both issues and men inevitably has certain results. The citizens are always men of standing, wealthy family. They always deplore change or the threat of it and suspect those who want it. It is a short distance to the invention of faults in those who inconveniently do not have them. The resulting
about it, and he was crossed off the list. I myself, however, had some difficulty in appointing anyone other than a Popular to those positions within my discretion because of the necessities of insular Senatorial confirmation; and when I resorted to the longer list of capable people among the Liberales, I had bargaining to do.

But the Liberales as a party were "retiring their confidence" from me as a result of the Sanidad fiasco. Characteristically there was no blame attached to Muñoz; the barbs were all sunk in the gubernatorial flesh. The importance of this lay in the fact that the loss of the vote they controlled in the lower house made it impossible to secure legislation; and by now I was desperately wanting a special session to make fiscal rearrangements. For the rum tax was yielding little or nothing anymore; and neither were the taxes on gasoline, cigarettes and other imported articles which had bulked large in our revenue receipts. It could be seen that even if the Liberales and the Populares eventually accommodated themselves to one another, the delicate balance would always be in danger of being upset until the elections in far-off '44 should finally expose the numerical weakness of the one and the strength of the other.

After pleading with Muñoz for weeks to act decisively in this matter, and getting no satisfaction, I finally acted. First, at the beginning of August, I appointed Dr. Fernós to the vacancy in Sanidad. This looked like a Popular victory; but I had such confidence by now in Dr. Fernós' integrity and shrewdness that I felt certain he would prove a political boomerang. He had old scores to settle too; he had left Sanidad, as Assistant Commissioner, years before under a Coalicionista pressure which had included an intimation of incapacity. If I knew Puerto Ricans at all by now, I said, he would be more than anything else anxious to show the falseness of the old allegations. In this I was quite correct. Sanidad improved under his management; but his support among the politicians rapidly disappeared as they discovered his relative intractability.

My next step was to create several vacancies on the theory that they would prove to be temptations. I could do this because I had a holdover in Agriculture and because Mr. Benigno Fernández García could always be appealed to in a good cause. He left Labor and went to the Presidency of the Board of Tax Appeals simply because I asked it of him. It happened, also, that there was a holdover in the chairmanship of the Public Service Commission so that a vacancy could be created there. I now had these three major positions to be filled, as well as the commissionerships of the Planning Board, with all the minor patronage they implied. I simply sat quietly by

compilation by the naive young men of the F.B.I. is one which is not only prejudicial on the side of conservatism but actually worthless in fact.
my bait to see what would happen. I hoped it would not be too long delayed, because now revenues were running below monthly expenditures, but I was determined not to let this pressure appear to worry me.

My scheme was a little upset by having to fill the Public Service Commission chairmanship for protection against the Farmers’ Association who were incensed by a bill I had just signed making the sugar centrals public utilities and so subjecting them to regulation. But otherwise things were left to develop. The ninety-day bills from the historic regular session of ’42 were now going into effect, also, and there were numerous appointments to be made. Boards of the Authorities, and of the Development Company and Bank had to be filled; and the new University Board had to be selected. As I contemplated this feast I thought Muñoz would come around; and sure enough he did. The Liberal climbing down would take somewhat longer, but it, too, would eventually happen. I began to think I had learned some, at least, of the lessons of political management in Puerto Rico.

On 12 August Mr. Bolivar Pagán, having returned from Washington to fish in the troubled waters, made a long radio speech excoriating me in the vilest language allowable on the radio; in fact, even the wide latitude allowed in Puerto Rico was exceeded once or twice and he was interrupted. Denunciations were making me somewhat self-conscious. Any number of minor Coalicionistas were using a daily radio hour largely for the purpose. Mr. Malcolm had devoted a sarcastic period to it; now Mr. Bolivar Pagán—it was becoming the fashion. Even Mr. Ramirez Santibáñez, who could have nothing against me except that he and Dr. Morales between them had made a fiasco of the appointment to Sanidad, joined in producing a rambling rant of formidable duration. If he had a grievance it was against Muñoz.

"Sticks and stones," I said to myself, "will break my bones; but names will never hurt me." All this fury in Puerto Rico was nothing to worry about; it was probably advantageous, being far more effective in consolidating support among the people than collaboration from the same sources would have been. I had long since, in fact, ceased to have any concern about happenings which originated in the opposition and which were intended for the local stage. The stereotypes were fixed. The Coalición políticos were the tools of the reaccionarios—the sugar producers, the comerciantes, the pitiyanquis, the gallegos; and it was just as well to have them speaking out. It was well enough understood, moreover, that the effectiveness of our reform measures was to be measured by the vitriolism of the attacks. But something else was afoot by mid-August which promised real trouble because it was happening in Washington.
Sometime before this Mr. Malcolm had followed his long brief about my scandalous radicalism to Washington in person. I now had a request from Mr. Fitzsimmons for leave. There was somewhat more than this: for he exhibited a letter from Mr. Swope requesting that he come to Washington "for consultation." Those two were not going to Washington in August for their health, and Mr. Swope was not collaborating without encouragement from somewhere. This somewhere, I suspected, was among his former colleagues on Capitol Hill. For the deterioration of our relations there was, by now, serious, if even a fraction of what could be read in the United Press dispatches was true. As Mr. Fitzsimmons left, the San Juan newspaper began a new campaign of vilification—or, rather, intensified the one which had now persisted for almost a year, shifting ground from time to time but never altering in tone or objective. The burden now was that I was about to be required to answer serious charges preferred against me in concert by the Auditor and the Attorney General. Mr. Ickes, it was said, was at last convinced of my incompetence, and I would not last much longer. I had a little low pleasure, in view of all this, in being able to publish on 18 August the Departmental Solicitor’s opinions upholding my position vis-à-vis these obstreperous opponents. But, amusing as the disconcerting releases were in the midst of another classic press campaign just reaching the stage of pundits’ comment and editorial essay, I knew well enough that what a Departmental Solicitor might say was of no importance to a Congressman—and especially one who was allergic to what was now being called "Tugwellism."  

From this time on for more than two years I should live in an atmosphere of Congressional displeasure, expressed in one way or another, with as many ingenious variations as several old political heads could devise in the odd moments they devoted to Puerto Rico or to me. And all my work would have to be carried on

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5This was the expression used among others by Mr. Lou Maxon when he departed from O.P.A. in July 1943 to go back to his Detroit public-relations business amidst stories of large stocks of bootlegged food cached in his hunting lodge against days of even greater restriction. But before that, as well as after, it was a kind of bogey word to indicate enmity toward "business," "the profit system," "private initiative," "free enterprise." As such it was not too inaccurate, since I had pointed out often enough the practical inutility of the system described in this way. But detractors never liked to stop there; and it was their excessive choler which betrayed them. For I might not too exag-geratedly be described as a "socialist," perhaps, though not of any orthodox variety; but not as a "communist," a "fascist" or any other kind of totalitarian. I believed in state action certainly, but also in the dignity of the individuals who compose the state and for whose welfare it exists. But so, also, did most of the common folk of the United States as well as of Puerto Rico—a fact which, I believe, caused the choler of those who attacked me. They were attacking me because they feared and hated the people and did not dare say or do anything about their real objectives. So they attacked me—and, of course, others like me—until they dared come out openly and attack the President who was, of course, the principal in the affair. For he was the people’s man par excellence. And he believed in using public instruments of all kinds for their good; a belief which extended even to the control of "business" when necessary and shaping it to the public service.
not only without sympathy or assistance from the Committees of the Congress under whose tutelage the island possession was kept, but often against open and active hostility. This would be less true of some individuals than of others; and some committeemen could even be set down as friendly, but they were always in a minority and seldom active in assisting. It should be said in fairness that they would often be galvanized into action in practical matters at the insistence of Puerto Rican business interests. So they would help in dogging the War Shipping Board until our blockade was at least lightened; they would contend that we ought to be allotted a fair share of fertilizer; they would investigate discriminations against the Puerto Rican sugar and rum industries; they would even make at least a gesture toward influencing the War Production Board to allow us certain critical materials for the first of the Development Company's projects for industrialization.

The need to expedite the Development Company's operations was being underlined daily although it was obvious that none of its operations could be undertaken in time to meet this particular crisis, if indeed it would suffice for any later on. This one would have to be met in other ways. Unemployment was increasing at a terrifying rate. And we undertook again to convey to our Washington colleagues that contemporary occurrences were having an effect on Puerto Rico which was the reverse of their effect on the continent. So, for instance, the pressure for the production of war materials was resulting, in the States, in an enormous expansion of industrial activity. But no war materials were or could be produced in Puerto Rico. And the orders necessary for channeling materials and man power into war plants and away from civilian goods were, with ruthless and irrelevant energy, being extended to us. We were paralyzed. My plea for exemption on projects requiring only local materials to relieve unemployment had been made months before but had gone unanswered by the War Production Board. The daily accretion, now that the sugar zafra was over, of thousands of unemployed was becoming, cumulatively, a problem which it seemed impossible to postpone meeting for long. For, added to the fact that they had no employment, the workers were suffering more and more from the ever accelerating rise in the cost of living. Their seasonal earnings would be much more quickly exhausted than in an ordinary year. We were now beset too with troubles incident to the nation's passage from a free to a controlled economy. A system of this sort depends for success on its full implementation; the danger lies in interims in which some functions have been stopped and those which should be substituted have not been begun. We were in that stage now as a consequence of slowness to agree among various Federal agencies.

Our worst block lay, as usual, in a Federal official, in this instance, the one who was in charge, in Puerto Rico, of the operations of the Agricultural Marketing
Administration. He was apparently one of those individuals who, when they find themselves in government, think it natural to serve the interests of profit makers rather than consumers, and the large-profit makers at that, whose interests usually run against those of the smaller, even if more numerous, enterprisers in the same line. He displayed unmistakable signs of wanting to join the crusade of the opposition. This disposition was shown in various ways but notably in refusing to co-operate with our efforts to regulate imports, to enlarge the distribution of free food, and check the rise in the cost of living—unless this could be done under his exclusive management and especially without the intervention of insular officials. The Supplies Administration was now trying to feel its way into its function as agency for distribution to the regular food trade of staples brought to us in bulk by the Agricultural Marketing Administration. This was in pursuit of the agreement made in June. But the Federal agent soon began to insist that the insular agency retire from the scene and allow him to handle the distribution. He proposed, in other words, not to recognize the agreement made by his superiors in Washington. The allegations on which this refusal was based were that the Supplies Administration was grossly inefficient and riddled with politics.

It became apparent, also, that a Mr. J. Bernard Frisbie, who was chairman in Puerto Rico of the Department of Agriculture’s War Board, so called, felt that this was a convenient issue on which to make a bid for power. We had uncovered in him another champion of the élite who thought he might be allowed to manage things in their interest if the present regime were unseated. It was presently becoming a race among half a dozen Federal officials to see which could make most impression on those who were conceived to be the real dispensers of favor. Among minor officials who never before had had much attention, say nothing of approval, to have their least word or action magnified into a great public benefit by the press and to receive resolutions of approval from the biggest businessmen in the community, was encouragement not to be resisted. It was soon only too plain that the situation would have to be dealt with.

Here again it was not a matter for any concern in Puerto Rico. What gave fiction its reality was the fact that it was being seriously regarded as fact in Washington. There were a hundred times more businessmen in Puerto Rico who benefited by the breaking of the great importers’ monopoly than lost by it. They would eventually follow their interest and come to our support even if for the moment they were afraid to oppose more powerful businesses. And there was never any doubt about the people. They were being squeezed between loss of wages and rising prices. But the importers, and the great firms in the States with whom they had relations, were bringing to bear an immense weight of disapproval which was adding itself to the
already formidable pressure from the farmer lobbies and those of the A. F. of L. With Mr. Bolivar Pagán, using the resources of the sugar producers, drilling daily on the Congressional sore tooth, Tugwell, it seemed inevitable that our Washington troubles would multiply instead of diminish during the coming months. It was not a prospect which even the most confirmed crusader could have faced with pleasure. And it is perhaps not to be wondered at that Federal officials not only followed their instinct and deserted the gubernatorial ship, but that they sought to do it in such conspicuous ways as would establish claims to reward when the day of accomplishment arrived—that is, when a new Governor had to be chosen. About this time, late in August, as the flow of goods literally dried up and stopped, so turning our concern over blockade and dwindling supplies into certainty of exhaustion and frantic search for substitutes, there were several events whose concurrence had a bearing on the future. The first of these was the beginning of retreat on the part of the Liberales which would logically lead to re-establishment of the majority in the Cámara necessary to the fiscal reorganization which daily became more pressing. Envoys were being sent to discover how offended I was at the attacks on me. It was indicated that if I would admit that I had been wrong everything could be fixed. I was amused, but also I had learned something, so I replied in a way which I thought would be understood: that I was mortally offended, that I too had a dignidad to protect, and that so far as I was concerned it was a matter of no interest whatever what the Liberales chose to do. Thus setting the scene I went on to indicate, however, that I was about to make some important appointments—such as the Commissioners of Agriculture and Labor, as well as a number of judges, and if the Liberales expected any consideration they had better apologize in a hurry. So for weeks to come things would not adjust themselves. But the signs of their embarrassment were unmistakable and I stood firm.

I was standing firm, however, on an uproarious foundation. For late in August the Treasurer—again without consulting me—began suit against the newspaper which for a year now had been so violent, for the payment of back taxes, the total of which, together with all the penalties, to a paper facing the possible exhaustion of its paper supply and loss of advertising revenue, caused an almost hysterical reaction. When, partly in amusement at the writhing and partly in resentment at the long campaign of calumny, I made a careless remark in a speech in Ponce "that, in spite of its attempts to oust me, it might disappear from the Puerto Rican scene ahead of me," it was seized on for the campaign to end all campaigns of abuse.

The enormity of this prolonged squeal indicated the despair out of which it arose. In spite of all the outward circumstances I began to feel more confidence in my ability to win through politically at the same time that I was feeling most discouraged.
about the blockade and our ability to survive its rigors. At the end of August things were so bad that I sent Egloff in haste to Washington, not daring to be away myself, with instructions to urge the desperate nature of our crisis and to indicate how much worse it was being made by the flagrant refusal of Federal officials—especially those having to do with shipping and the supply of food—to co-operate in any way. They were going to block everything until I was replaced; then their recommendation was to be that controls be abandoned and supply functions returned to the private importers.

On the day Egloff left, a letter from Abe urged that I ought to come myself and clear up the supply situation. I considered carefully but decided first to let Egloff try. We seemed nearer to settlement of the legislative impasse and, as a matter of fact, the improvement continued to the point of a visit from Mr. Ramírez Santibáñez—under the excuse of courtesy to the emissaries from the Office of Defense Transportation who had now arrived and for whom I was giving a luncheon—in the course of which he excused his recent opposition as a riposte to my refusal of appointment for Dr. Morales Otero when Muñoz’ opposition had been discovered. The truth was, of course, quite otherwise, whether he had been misinformed or not. But I thought it in the interest of peace not to probe the defenses of his dignidad.

Meanwhile Mr. Rupert Emerson, who was now one of the regional directors in Washington for O.P.A., arrived and we began to explore, in San Juan, the matters Egloff was also working on in Washington. The boundaries between O.P.A. and W.P.B. were still fluid. Both had new and ambitious bureaucracies whose jealousies were endless and unrelenting. Within a few days Mr. Kenneth Galbraith arrived and joined the conversations. I was by now aware that an investigative committee of O.P.A., taking all Puerto Rico for its province, had recommended a War Administrator who should have charge of all insular war activities. This committee had done its work without consulting me and had made recommendations so provocative that they were not published. The effect would have been, however, to make the local O.P.A. representative Governor in all but name. This would, I pointed out to Mr. Galbraith, make a half dozen of us if the military commanders were included; for Mr. Frisbie clearly regarded his functions as extending over those I thought were mine; so, equally clearly, did Messrs. Malcolm and Fitzsimmons; and the agent of the Agricultural Marketing Administration appeared to think it unnecessary to accept directions even from his superiors in Washington. There were probably other contenders too, whose ambitions would be roused by such suggestions as were known to be contained in the Crawford (O.P.A.) report. Mr. Paul Edwards, the local director for O.P.A., would not be among them. He thought the whole business absurd, and he was, in any case, about to resign. He could, he said,
get no support or direction from Washington and felt so foolish and futile that it was impossible to continue longer.

Mr. Galbraith was not much deterred by this, having no doubt of his ability and that of his colleagues to manage Puerto Rico’s part in the war successfully. But he had overlooked our Organic Act, and so had the Crawford Committee, which specifically entrusted the functions mentioned to the Governor. That, I pointed out, was I. I was proceeding as best I could through the administrative tangle thrown up by the new agencies in Washington and the opposition of ambitious Federal agents in Puerto Rico. I suggested that if O.P.A. would stop the rise in the cost of living, which was its specific business, that would be an ample contribution. Until it had, or until it had some plan which seemed to promise effectiveness for this purpose, it had perhaps better not try to take over everyone else’s duties in addition to its own.

I said, however, that the loud complaints made about insular attempts to control prices and secure supply were out of order until the Federal agencies had done something. I pointed out that our efforts were piecemeal, temporary and professedly stopgap. Some scores of the absurdly inflated personnel of the O.P.A. office were watching, analyzing and reporting on the operations of our very busy insular office. Put them to work on prices, I suggested, and leave us alone. I promised to withdraw the whole insular force on the instant O.P.A. became effective as measured by the cost-of-living index, which was not only rising but rising at an accelerated rate. However, Mr. Galbraith went off to Washington presently and complained to Abe that the insular agency was inefficient and political. This was too much. For this was exactly what was being claimed in Puerto Rico. So Abe, in effect, had a trial and I was condemned.

In the midst of the most difficult situation I had ever faced, I was let down everywhere by those whose support was essential to any kind of success. It is not so hard now to excuse Abe. The people in Agriculture were supporting their man; O.P.A. was saying that we were a crowd of incompetents who were interfering with their business; Malcolm, Fitzsimmons, et al. were pressing charges; Mr. Bolivar Pagán was fulminating. I was so much the object of general enmity that it seemed impossible I could be right and all these choring opponents wrong. In a cable summoning me to Washington to answer charges, Abe did not qualify his opinion that the war organization I had so hastily thrown together and which had labored with so much devotion—even if awkwardly—to carry our people through the crisis, was "political" and "inefficient." A Governor, I felt, simply could not be treated this way by his home office. This kind of squeeze play repeated so often, made any kind of effective work impossible. If any Federal official, refusing to follow the policy laid down by me in Puerto Rico, could appeal to Washington and have me reversed on a
private showing of partial evidence and without even advice to me, I was going to be so busy with defense of my own decisions that I should be able to accomplish nothing. My situation, I could see, was the same as that of other Governors, except that I had to deal with an unusual crisis, and I could realize now why so many of them had fallen back on sheer caution when they were bullied by Federal representatives whose functions they ought to have controlled and were, at the same time, aware of less than active support in the Division of Territories or its predecessor offices.

There was also the peculiar complexity of our colonial arrangement in which the Governor represented the President but carried on his administrative relations through a Division of the Department of the Interior; and in which two or more Committees of Congress were determined to maintain direct managerial relations, and in pursuit of this determination systematically enfeebled the Division by maintaining its appropriations at an absurdly low level. In consequence, a Governor did not know what he owed to anyone but the President, how far to go on his own, how far to consult the Secretary, and what confidence to give the Congressional Committees. It was an impossible setup; and my present situation was the result, really, of trying to operate antiquated machinery, which even originally had been unsuitable, in a crisis. It must be confessed that I arrived in Washington with a very free flow of adrenalin which I proceeded to turn loose on all my annoyers.

It was soon settled. For Abe, as I have said, may have been young, and may have had a policy of appeasement, but he also had humor, perspective, loyalty and generosity. A morning-long talk in which I began angry and ended gentle, and he began certain and ended apologetic, settled our own differences. And together we went to work to better things in the only way it could be done—to labor at them everlastingly, to whittle away the obstacles and persuade everyone that we had a policy which was, if not right in their eyes, still ours to be responsible for and the one we were determined to see through—so determined that they might as well cooperate.

THE CONVERSATION with the Under Secretary on 15 September 1942 was not recorded until forty-eight hours later when I was back in Miami. I noted then, however, that reference had been made most vigorously to the impracticability of interfering from Washington in relations between the Governor and insular representatives of Federal Departments. Unless absolute and unquestioning support could be counted on nothing would ever be settled in Puerto Rico because appeal would invariably be taken. And since there were many such officials, a Governor could not be put on trial at the behest of each of them in turn—that is, if he was to
carry on the other affairs of his office. He would be permanently on the defensive. My experience, and that of my predecessors, showed, also, that when this kind of thing began, everything else stopped; everyone’s interest centered in the struggle. It was, admittedly, one of the weaknesses in the relationships between the Possession and the Federal Government that a multitude of Federal bureaus should be set up as similar ones are in the States, but that Puerto Rico should be so remote that officials should conduct themselves very differently. This remoteness was exaggerated now in time of war and specifically because of the blockade. This accentuated the difficulty. The Federal officials were, indeed, pretty much on their own, not only because of remoteness but because of the preoccupation of their chiefs in Washington with the frantic readjustments being made to the war. But there was the added fact that in its relations with Maryland, for instance, or Oklahoma, the Federal Government did not need a policy—all were treated as citizens not of a state but of the United States. But with respect to Puerto Rico the United States did require a policy, not only because of the unsettled relationship between the two but also because, whatever that relationship was conceived to be, in fact Puerto Rico was not part of the United States in the same sense that Maryland and Oklahoma were, nor were her people regarded as having the same rights and duties. They were citizens but they shared differently in this common privilege.

This last was a point which was always being forgot. Some officials tended to treat Puerto Rico as a state, some as a foreign country, and some, unfortunately, as a region and a people who, while not of us, were still eligible for any sacrifice in our interest, The State Department’s attitude that Puerto Rico was readily available in any deal in which it happened to need a quid pro quo, illustrated this difficulty.¹ The diversity of treatment showed, it could be supposed, that we had not even developed a tradition of noblesse. The British, the Dutch or the Portuguese never behaved in this way. They might exploit subject peoples indirectly; but they never equivocated about their status or sacrificed them carelessly. They never allowed different agencies of the Central Government to maintain diverse policies; and it would have been unthinkable in a genuine colonial system for a Governor to be

¹Charles undertook, about this time, by intervening with Mr. Hull, to modify this. And in one or two small instances, he would succeed—for instance, in 1943, in the matter of free imports from Cuba of the type of tobacco grown in Puerto Rico. But in the most important case of this kind, which would arise in 1944, the old course would be followed. The negotiations for the purchase of Cuban sugar and molasses would reach a certain stage; the Cubans would demand as part of the price that Puerto Rican production of rum be limited; and the negotiators for the United States would readily agree. That they were wholly ignorant of the importance of rum taxes to the Puerto Rican economy would be incidental. This instance had more importance than others but its pattern was merely typical. The agreement reached in Havana would be enforced by a W.P.B. order limiting Puerto Rican production to the previous year’s total—a year in which blockade, somewhat modified, still existed. Puerto Ricans naturally felt that the use of such a base added insult to the injury they had already suffered.
subjected to virtual trial at the behest of bureau representatives within his jurisdiction. It might be an evidence that we were not colonial that it could happen with us; but, as a practical matter, and in the circumstances, this was scarcely a virtue. I had a right, as Governor, and therefore as the embodiment of the United States’ sovereignty in Puerto Rico, so long as that sovereignty existed, to require complete confidence and support. This was not, either, so much a privilege as a necessity. In ordinary times it might be a Governor’s right but not a condition of governmental existence. Now we were at war; and its pressures magnified all the old sins of irresponsibility. What I had to have in order to get through the crisis, even if it could not be granted ordinarily, was unquestioning support. If I could not have it, the situation called for the selection of someone who could command that kind of respect.

Abe was, I think, not convinced that he could not manage Puerto Rican affairs from his Washington office; but he was convinced that I meant business. Much as I disliked it, in principle, because I ought to have had trust and belief beyond challenge in my home office, I came equipped with files, affidavits, original evidence. It not only convinced Abe but also Captain Olmstead. This in turn resulted in a more positive achievement at which, catching up on my notes in Miami, I was obviously pleased. For in two days and nights of work, revised agreements covering all supply problems had been completed. The result was a much simplified program. The whole responsibility for the purchase, the delivery in Puerto Rico, and the distribution to merchants of food products, was to be assumed by the Agricultural Marketing Administration.\(^2\) I had volunteered the withdrawal of the insular agency which had had charge of distribution to merchants after arrival. Departmental jealousy had been the most difficult obstacle. Interior still had made no use of the fifteen millions granted immediately at the outset of war as a result of my plea to the President. The agreements called for using this as a revolving fund for financing distribution to merchants, and a quarrel seemed in prospect between Interior and Agriculture as to how much control Interior was to have as a result. But Interior’s desire not actually to spend any of the fund (thus adhering to Mr. Swope’s theory that it was intended to revolve) finally controlled and an amicable arrangement was reached.\(^3\)

Also there was another, equally favorable, change. Space allocations for shipments from Puerto Rico were to be managed in Interior; but the assignments were to be

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\(^2\) Later the Office of Distribution, and still later the Office of Supply.

\(^3\) This principle of Interior’s was later modified, however, upon my showing of the increase in prices and the dangerous development of black markets. It was agreed to subsidize a few staple products so that the prices then existing could be maintained.
made by our General Supplies Administrator. We would now be in a position to see to it that necessities had priorities, even if there were less profit in them. Complementary to that, the War Production Board was on the way to ceding local determination of outgoing space allocations. I should now be in a position to state a complete policy for getting through the war which met, more or less, our peculiar needs and promised at least to use all the facilities available in the most effective way. This I summarized:

1. Purchase by the A.M.A. and distribution to merchants of staple foodstuffs, and the control of their prices by O.P.A.
2. Subsidy for a few products to stop the rise in living costs and to kill the black markets.
3. Control of shipping space, both outgoing and incoming, in the interest of the most efficacious use.
4. Government purchase of the sugar crop for the coming* year, at any rate, and of remaining surpluses at the year's end.
5. A price-guarantee program for home-grown foods, so that growers could know in advance what they could expect.

This, of course, was apart from the insular contribution which I visualized as increased taxes used to pay for such works as could be undertaken to relieve unemployment and for an enlarged program of home relief.

At the end of the notes made in Miami, there was written one brief paragraph of impressions, got, I said, "from those to whom I talked in Navy, Army, War Shipping, and Agriculture. The outlook is discouraging and the atmosphere depressing. There is much defeatism, that is, a feeling that we are losing, and losing from not using our great resources well. Washington was never so full of jealousy, backbiting and jockeying for position and for power—a really disgusting spectacle."

This observation may have had its source somewhere in my system rather than in fact. I had been ill for several weeks. And when I got back to San Juan it soon became clear that I had a bronchial pneumonia. There was then an interlude in the Naval Dispensary under the ministrations of Drs. Sylvester Daly and Arnim Wilson which I still regard as an oasis in the desert of the blockade. For the blockade had now ceased to be partial and had become complete. During the month which ended just as I emerged from hospital, futilely forbidden to work for some time, only one cargo ship came into harbor, and only half of its consignment was for civilian use. As a matter of fact that ship came at about the middle of a period of forty-one days during which we had no other arrivals.

That it is quite impossible to convey the atmosphere of those weeks I am well aware. No one who has not lived on a populous island with its customary
communications cut can appreciate the peculiar collective claustrophobia which assails the whole population under such circumstances. Our island, being so far from self-sufficient, the actual fear of being without food was always in these days present in some degree. People had been reminded of this possibility whenever they had tried, and had been unable to procure, less necessary supplies during several months past. But now we ran out of rice and of beans, and soon there was little flour and no dried fish. Actually there were about three months when there was not enough of anything; and six weeks when the staples of the Puerto Rican diet were not regularly for sale. Such a condition is ideal for hoarding and for the support of black markets. It is also ideal for fear to seat itself deeply in many minds. The Agricultural Marketing Administration developed its program as rapidly as it could. A new Director was appointed—Mr. Edward A. Bash—and he began to assemble his staff. But until the first of the year his operations would not be effective. All this time the sugar planters were opposing the home-growing of food and the Chamber of Commerce was vilifying everyone connected with the government program of procurement and distribution. There was, in consequence, much confusion and genuine misunderstanding of what it was we were trying to do. Measures which were necessary because of the emergency were represented as part of our "communistic" program and many even of the more reasonable and moderate among businessmen were led to support the opposition. The antagonism to the administration which existed in San Juan government and business circles was almost palpable. I was under Republicano interdict anyway and many government employees naturally belonged either to this party or the Socialistas. Add to these the businessmen, the planters, the bankers and the A. F. of L. leaders (who were still furious at their loss of prestige), and it can be seen that there existed a formidable screen of hostility between our group and those for whom it labored—the obreros, the agregados, and the remote jíbaros in the hills.

Muñoz was, however, coming around. It took something like this crisis to bring out his really superb quality of loyalty, his unwavering integrity and his devotion to the people. The war measures having to do with supply, distribution, security and so on were things which were happening within his jurisdiction but with which he had little to do; and no politician likes to be pushed aside. Yet he did not resent our developing a program on which he was very little consulted and for the success of which he could claim no credit. He might well have hampered us; and if he had, we should have failed, because at that time everyone else was opposed. Instead, he rallied his local leaders to a campaign of education and active support. On the day I left for Washington early in September, moreover, he presented me with a petition of faith, signed by the incredible number of 314,000 citizens. The news of this preceded me to Washington and all those compañeros were present in spirit as I
negotiated for more power and better support. People are impressed by such occurrences even against their wills. Mr. Bolivar Pagán said at once, of course, that it was a Popular trick, that the signatures were faked, and that the authentic ones were mostly those of minors. Muñoz sat tight, for, as I later learned, he, Mr. Ramos Antonini and others had anticipated all this; and the signatures were indeed authentic, made so by weeks of house-to-house collection. This was the first evidence, in fact, of the overwhelming approval which was developing among the people. The opposition sought frantically to prove that it meant nothing; but they knew well enough that it did. So did officials in Interior. The opposition might be more vocal, it might control the press because it had all the wealth and so on, but there is no way, in our system, to beat overwhelming support among the voters. One who has it has everything; one who does not have it may have effective lobbies, hordes of public-relations experts, even ownership of the press and radio—and he still has nothing. That was what our opponents had in Puerto Rico, nothing!

True they still had something in Washington. They had, for instance, the reactionary Democrats. The bracketing of these with Republicans was not new; the need for appeasing these members of his own party had tormented the President from the first and prevented him time and again from carrying out policies in which he believed and which were popularly demanded. By now, however, this faction had grown much more powerful. By seniority—because Southerners had been there even in Republican times—they had succeeded to most important Congressional Committee chairmanships. And with an election coming on in which it was anticipated that many Northern constituencies would go back to their Republican affiliation, it was more than ever necessary to hold them to such adherence as could be bargained for. Luckily they were professedly for the war and would not oppose measures vital to it; but this made them more anxious than ever to humiliate the President by defeating him on domestic issues. They were about to enter on a systematic massacre of any remnants of the New Deal they could detect still surviving. And it was more and more clear that I was regarded as such a remnant. Not only that, but the regime in Puerto Rico looked suspiciously like a small New Deal in itself and as such would have to be stamped out on the first convenient occasion.

One way to do this would be to take advantage of the provision in the Organic Act for Congressional veto of measures enacted by the Puerto Rican legislature, a device so alien to our governmental system that it had never been used. Until now its use had never even been suggested. But there would be found a number among the Committee on Insular Affairs who would nevertheless actively seek reversal, by this
method, of Puerto Rican legislation. Another way would be to kill any and all appropriations for Puerto Rico so long as I remained as Governor or the legislation to which there was so much objection remained in force. The signs were unmistakable already that both these possibilities were being explored. We had in fact already experienced the loss of hoped-for appropriations, though it could be argued that they might not have been forthcoming in any case, considering the fact that there had only once in all Puerto Rico’s history been a substantial special grant, no matter what the need, for which the Congress was responsible.

As soon as I could resume work the task of carrying out our various war plans was undertaken. The first—that of getting all existing agencies down to work—was made easier by a visit from Captain Olmstead, who, when he saw at firsthand what we were up against, undertook to have all the A.M.A. machinery in operation within thirty days. This was the beginning of the end of our supply crisis. For when he returned to Washington he became our most tireless supporter. He would, indeed, stand with us against the importers’ monopoly when my colleagues in Interior would weaken. And he would steadfastly insist that the milk be supplied which would keep my wife’s milk stations in operation throughout the whole crisis.

The situation in the Division of Territories bettered itself about this time by the replacement of Mr. Swope by Mr. Benjamin W. Thoron; it was worsened, however, by the policy forced on the whole Department as a result of the Congressional election. For as soon as it became known that the President’s enemies had made substantial gains it became necessary to conciliate the very Congressmen who were the most determined opponents of our efforts in Puerto Rico. From then on Puerto Rico and the program of reform just developing became an object for constant explanation and defense. And if, every once in a while, I felt and said that appeasement was becoming ruinous, it was perhaps because I was too tender for Puerto Rico and not sufficiently appreciative of the special problem which I myself presented. The enemies in Puerto Rico lost no time in finding their natural allies on Capitol Hill. They had tried and failed in the executive departments—one of their latest failures being the departure of Mr. Swope. But they shrewdly saw—or thought they saw—a reactionary tide setting in which might carry them once again into control. They had no scruples. They did not care what means they used or what allies they made. They might injure the Government of Puerto Rico and cause immeasurable losses to the public: such considerations were not even calculated

4 Mr. Crawford of Michigan was most active in forwarding the proposal, but Mr. Cole of New York was a close contender.
5 This was the one already referred to which was made just as the war began but which had not yet been put to use.
over against regaining their strategic economic monopoly. They would oppose any funds for relief which were not put within their disposal; they would press for return of procurement to the importers, knowing that this would re-establish scarcity, re-create black markets and cause the increases in living costs to be accelerated. It would be an utterly selfish and cynical politico-economic movement. And it would go on and on. . .

6 October. Yesterday the President appointed Justice Byrnes as Director of Economic Stabilization. The comments seem to indicate that he is supposed to be a kind of controller of prices, wages, supplies, etc. A very queer choice, and, it seems to me, a little desperate, indicating more than anything else the success of the Congressional war on the President, sure to be intensified after election.

The Russians are holding out, against all human probability, at Stalingrad. The Marines have a thin foothold in the Solomons.

7 October. In spite of our perilous present situation the future ought to be a little better. At least the governmental hindrances are being removed and the new agencies in a mood to work together. Olmstead leaves today; but Mr. J. B. Fahy comes as Interior Supply Officer, evidence of Interior’s desire to dissociate its operations from those of the insular Government which, in spite of everything, is still considered "political and inefficient" on the showing of local Federal officials. Conferences with Mr. Davis, now the O.P.A. director, indicate a greater willingness to do the job the organization is supposed to do and leave the other agencies alone. Up to now O.P.A officials have had unconcealed ambitions to manage all the war agencies in Puerto Rico, including the governorship (always excepting Paul Edwards). But prices, which are their business, continue to run away—at the rate of five to six per cent monthly. Such increases put an incredible strain on the economy. Now that we are in the slack sugar season, with military construction slowed for lack of supplies, unemployment is rising at an accelerating rate. Men have no jobs and no income and the cost of living has become scandalous—some 60 per cent above what it was a year and a half ago. To this can be added the fear spreading everywhere of actual exhaustion of the food supply. We have had no rice for some time; and I am afraid that everyone knows how short we are of all the other staples.

8 October. The Chamber of Commerce, fronting for the importers and supported by the sugar lobby, is actively working for a Congressional "investigation." I suppose I should not be indignant, after all the struggle, to have it said that I am the cause of all the results I have predicted and worked to prevent! I am blamed for unemployment, for the shipping crisis, for the high cost of living, for black markets, for the exhaustion of food supplies. And who blames me? Those who have fought so
viciously against every attempt I have made in the last ten months to prevent or to ameliorate these very situations. Sometimes I find that a capacity for indignation which I had thought exhausted still exists!

The other class of things to be done in the crisis—aside from straightening out the supply and shipping situation and controlling prices—is to provide for unemployment relief. The W.P.A. still exists on a reduced basis. If I know the Congress, this will be taken away—probably giving as excuse that I cannot be trusted with it. I have nothing to do with its administration, but that will be a convenient excuse for throwing us adrift in the stormy weather of war. We, therefore, have to do something here. And, indeed, there is no reason why Puerto Ricans should not pay more taxes and provide more relief out of their own resources. It is for this purpose and for these reasons that I feel almost any sacrifice should be made to establish such a control of the legislature that the necessary measures can be passed.

It is also necessary to enter on postwar planning, if any is to be done. I shall not be here then; but I have a duty not to leave my successor without any preparation. Also, since the insular debt stands almost at the limit (as well as the debt of the municipalities), reduction ought to begin during this period of enforced inactivity.

10 October, Frank Knox here for a day or two. He stayed at Hoover’s house but we gave a dinner for him last night. Asked Lovett (since he is, as so often, Acting Governor, Harwood being in the States) over from St. Thomas; and had a few civilians; but, of the twenty-five, most were our army-navy friends.

I was most attracted by what seemed his instinctive Tightness. In an argument with Collins, who advanced a strange theory of how the country could be unified and its present deep divisions cured, apparently by force, he hotly defended the civilian and voluntary point of view. He was even sharp about the limited view of our military people and pointed out that they had been wrong in every judgment of political importance since the war began—including Russia, which was about as bad a boner as an army ever made.

I got from him some reassurance about the broad foundation being built—the wide spread of our activities. He thinks that the period of defenselessness is about past and argues that, while almost any one of our theaters of war might have been reduced up to now, it has become much more difficult to do it in the future. I hoped that if we had the luck to establish ourselves everywhere, we should have the intelligence to move from our bases capably. He thought we should but said that of course we were amateurs and had some hard lessons coming. Altogether he was reasonable and soberly responsible. When he left he asked if he could do anything
for me or whether I wanted to tell him anything confidentially. I said that we were making out all right, that Admiral Hoover left civilian affairs to me and that I had every confidence in him so far as defenses went. I asked him to give my respects to the President and tell him our sector was safe.

ii October. In a three-sided conversation the other evening with Philip Willkie and Tom Phillips, I was able to get an interesting view of Phillips’ mind. He remarked, concerning democracy, that when our perspective was long enough, we should see that we had really given up to dictatorship along about 1929. He referred to numerous Congressional failures and the need, in crisis, for executive action. I sat thinking of the phrase Brooks Adams used for one of his titles, "the degradation of the democratic dogma," and ventured the suggestion that we were feeling for the modernization of antiquated democratic machinery rather than reaching for totalitarianism. But young Willkie, who talks a little too fast for his mind, reacted violently to Phillips' provocative remark. He was somewhat incoherent, however, and Phillips went on to say, when he was allowed, that the age in which we lived was very much like that of Augustinian Rome in this—that all the forms were preserved but all the reality lost. I objected to identifying "concept" with "reality" and said rather that reality should create the concept if either term was to be useful in discourse. But it seemed that what he had in mind was simply a prediction that we should not be able to go back to town-meeting decision. I thought that a bad illustration since the town-meeting technique already lay far behind us. What I wanted to be able to see was whether we should be able to preserve its successor—representative delegation. I thought not unless there were some unlikely acts of self-denial by the Congress.

I contributed as another bit something of my approach in several articles to the obsolescence of geographic representation and the fact, becoming more obvious, that only the President represents the "general good"—or the "national will.55 I thought we were learning to delegate authority, reserving certain broad powers to the sovereign, the people—such as that of changing leaders. The present rising Congressional opposition I saw as a fling against the inevitable. Whether all this was good or bad we could not decide in a conversation. And I am not sure they agreed on the fact.

13 October. Civilian defense has by now become so confident that its units yesterday paraded in various towns. I made a short speech about civilian duties in a war like this. We have, so far, not done badly in a year of constant danger and in spite of being bled nearly white.
14 October. Our troubles do not clear. I suppose they will not, and that the war will be a continuous series of crises, each to be met as best it can be done without much chance of planning. Unemployment, inflation, exhaustion of supplies (including gasoline and food) reached a point of desperation long ago. We live on less than would have been believed possible some time ago. No rice for weeks; beans at triple their nominal price and few left; no dried fish or meat—or very little. People live on a scratched-up diet and there is widespread lack of sufficient food. I have done all I can think of; but it is impossible not to feel responsible.

We have cement; and we can make tile; but we have little else to work with; and anyway it is virtually impossible to get construction permits from the W.P.B., even when we guarantee to use only local materials. This restriction is driving all my officials to despair. We lack customary materials; we could do much with what we have; but we are not permitted to do anything.

Still almost no ships; still a discouraging distribution of the supplies contained in those which do come—the percentage of necessities is a little higher, perhaps, but not much. It was a blow yesterday to get a list of higher prices on A.M.A. foods just when it seemed that we might have the mechanisms at last for stopping the fearful rise in the cost of living. We are protesting to Olmstead; but unless Interior will use its fifteen millions for subsidy nothing can be done. Abe may be weakening on this. I have tried to convince everyone that a very little subsidy does a lot of stabilizing—see, for instance, the British experience.

15 October. It seems incredible but work is slackening at La Fortaleza. We have—or seem to have—done what we can and we must see it through on the lines we have now laid down. We still have several disturbed nights every week—alerts, I mean, which cost hours of sleep. But we are used to an empty horizon, and no longer strain after ships we know will not come. I finally succumbed and asked for information to be sent me—of a restricted sort. It did relieve the tension. I am pleased with the staff we now have—Moscoso has gone; but I have others like Descartes, Sturcke and Egloff. I can always call on Bartlett. And in spite of not having an Attorney General on whom I can rely, Curry practically serves as one—a good one too. And Everett Brown is a steady dependence as Executive Secretary. At best it may be a pitifully small force for such times and such a job; but it is good; and it does. The Federal agencies are not so bad now. Edwards was always helpful; Bash now co-operates; Fahy, representing Interior’s distrust, nevertheless lives with us. I should note that my new military aide, Captain Angel Martin, takes a large part of the social burden inevitable to a Government House—even in times like these, for we have more rather than fewer visitors who have to be entertained, and suitably so, lest they be offended—and Mr. Thomas Hayes, borrowed from the University to be my
Secretary, is indefatigable. Besides this, Fernós bolsters a weak spot in Sanidad and I shall soon be able to appoint Villamil to Agriculture. Things are not yet perfect but they are better.

16 October. I must admit that I have had a new experience in opposition. I thought there were limits to the lengths a man might go in feeding his ego at his fellow workers' expense. I know better now. I also know how a great labor organization may be used for an evil purpose, posing as the champion of good causes while it uses pressure for less publicized ends. The former Coalicionista Commissioner of Labor—in General Winship’s cabinet—who is the Insular head of the A. F. of L., and who seems to have thought himself eligible to be my Commissioner of Labor too—perhaps fearful that his reputation as a labor leader may suffer because of loss of membership—has got a long, vicious and incredibly false resolution adopted at the A. F. of L. convention in Toronto. He had tried and failed to get the same resolution through the insular convention. I had had no idea that the national organization would lend itself to such a purpose. But I must admit that to one who has regarded himself always as a friend of labor, this seems like a stab in the back.

Hearings are again being held on the fifteen-million-dollar bill which Bolivar Pagán succeeded in holding up before on the plea that it would be used by me for political purposes. Swope and Fitzsimmons appeared. Fitzsimmons advised the Committee, obviously with Swope’s concurrence, that a War Administrator ought to be appointed for Puerto Rico. I am writing to ask Interior whether this was with official permission and if not what is proposed to be done about such indiscipline. Olmstead also appeared. According to the press here, the main feature of his testimony was his assurance that I would have nothing to do with the administration of the fund.

Yesterday was a bad day on another front. Curry assures me that almost certainly the Economic Stabilization Order of the President will prevent the effectuation of the Minimum Wage Board’s 35-cent increase (per day) for sugar workers. The strikes of last spring were settled on my assurance that any award made by the Board would be retroactive. This will mean a loss of millions for these workers: I should not blame them if they made a tremendous protest.6

Still a worse blow fell today: Cope, now the War Shipping Administration representative here, received orders to load no more tobacco or rum. This is the sugar lobby’s work. If it sticks it will take away from us about half the Government’s monthly revenue. Much—most—of our local relief work is financed from this

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6 The order, after strenuous representations on our part, was interpreted to permit our settlement. But the Puerto Rico Supreme Court later found a way to prevent the payment—through a technical defect in the hearings.
source. These things happen one after another, without consultation with us, and without any concern for Puerto Rican interests. This, for instance, arrives without notice or hearing, by way of orders to a regional office here. There is no recognition of its effect on our economy or government. Half our income is lost as an incident to some remote and irrelevant decision. How can we make a budget; how can we plan at all; how, indeed, can we administer the Government with such enormous whimsical forces determining the essential bases for decision in spite of our best efforts?7 There are at least a dozen agencies in Washington, some of them quite new bureaucracies, which can dispose of the Puerto Rican interest quite simply at any time. We have no organization for combating the tendency to sacrifice us.

17 October. Yesterday the President was asked in his press conference whether any change was contemplated in the governorship here. He answered, "No!" But he did not elaborate on it.

Yesterday, also, Senate Committee hearings were held on the fifteen-million-dollar bill. The occasion was made one, I gather from the press, for unrestrained attacks. The most fantastic allegations were made; some of them were wonderfully imaginative, and must have originated in an extremely creative mind.

22 October. Yesterday the Villamil appointment to Agriculture was made. I hope it may serve as part of the Liberal-Popular reconciliation; but Mr. Rodríguez Pacheco, who is an extreme reactionary, even if he pretends loyalty to the Liberal leader, is dissatisfied. He wanted me to appoint Mr. Antonio Texidor, whose attitude is quite like his own. The other day Dr. Arrillaga came to lunch with me. He is nominally a Socialista but thinks his party leaders are mistaken and ought not to follow their present line. He is willing to cooperate, and, indeed gave me some intelligent advice: for instance, that the forthcoming special session be called with no more than two days' notice lest Mr. Bolivar Pagán hurry home from Washington— not, he says, that it will make any real difference but that it will cause a row.

23 October. What next? The most unexpected sources are being exploited by the opposition: today it is the Public Health Service. The Surgeon General has withdrawn all Federal funds from Sanidad. This is obviously a political move, influenced by Dr. Garrido Morales, ex-Commissioner, and Dr. Bolten, the local representative, who shares the usual attitude of Federal representatives here that they should supervise the insular Government. It is embarrassing to have to report this to Interior— buried suspicions are apt to be disinterred. But so far as my

7This order seems to have been inspired by continental distilling interests working with the sugar lobby. But they had gone too far. After some time, we got it modified; then it was abandoned altogether.
investigation shows it is completely unjustified. Dr. Fernós has not been at Sanidad long enough to be judged by his actions. This is suspiciously convenient to the Coalición in its current effort to provoke an investigation by the Congress.

25 October. Two complete days spent in feverishly trying to accommodate our operations to the loss of Federal funds for health work. Finally called a meeting of the Emergency Fund Committee which appropriated enough to carry on until January. Meanwhile we have protested to Dr. Parran and to Interior. I expected worse press treatment than we got. It is doubtless a bad story in the States, however, which is what is wanted. The more I go into the facts, the more unjustified and arbitrary the action seems. Sanidad is badly managed; but it is better now than formerly, and Fernós’ policies are an obvious improvement over Garrido’s.

Every day now our press plugs for "investigation of Tug-well’s maladministration"—maladministration is defined as "favoring a minority group." Of course, it is never said that this "minority group" of Muñoz’ has to confirm most appointees whose salaries are more than $1,200—an absurd abuse of the confirming principle, obviously aimed at reducing the gubernatorial power, but nevertheless fact. Those who are pressing for "investigation" are the very ones who, having been in power for more than a decade, fixed these restraints on the Governor. They are now indignant that he cannot break his manacles and come to their rescue. My dilemma amuses Muñoz, who talks about "Ole Gandule" whenever I bring up the subject. He says of course I am all right but "Ole Gandule" may arrive next week—who knows? If I do not give something to the Coalición I shall be "investigated" as "partial." If I do I shall get no appointees confirmed.

I hear from Mr. Robert Sher (whom, if things get to the stage of a genuine inquiry, I have asked to represent me) that the Truman Committee, to whom our opponents here first appealed, has looked into it and lost interest. It appears, however, that Senator Chavez is pressing, at the behest of de Hostos, in the Insular Affairs Committee. Tydings seems reluctant. But it now seems so likely that something will come of it that Grace has insisted on organizing for the preparation of a history, with documentation, of our war regime. We have often gone too fast for good record-keeping—we had to! But she is determined to put it all together in authenticated form. I am far too busy to do this, but she has the thorough and tidy traits necessary and will do a good job of it. She has Moscoso, Bartlett, Sturcke, Curry, Descartes, Egloff, Hayes, Martin, and others all working at it.

57 October. Yesterday, against strenuous opposition from Muñoz, I went personally to the legislature with my message. This may have been just a bit of braggadocio, but I must admit to not enjoying the whispered comments that I was afraid when I did
not go personally to address the regular session last winter. Apparently, Muñoz was concerned about the possibility that one of the opposition's thugs would take a shot at me. If they want to go that far, however, they have plenty of other opportunities.

All went well in spite of his fears. The Coalición members walked out in a body as I came in. But the gallery was Popular and I was received with an ovation which succeeded catcalls for the departing Senators and Representatives. Their going had an unmistakable air of retreat which must have been pretty galling. Of course, the continental press will be fed the correct story—which was why the walkout was conceived.

It was a showdown. Those who left were a minority. Dr. Arrillaga stayed; so did Rodríguez Pacheco, though those who went were more of his mind, really, than those who stayed. But he is obeying party rule. General Esteves of the State Guard and Lieutenant Martin, my military aide, were my escorts, and we made quite a show. A joint committee met me in Judge Travieso's office and escorted me to the House, where the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House introduced me. When the cheering subsided, I read a brief of my message and Mr. Gutiérrez Franqui, Clerk of the House, then read it in Spanish. Another committee escorted me to La Fortaleza, where we had a collation.

28 October, Things seem to be arranging themselves for an expeditious session. But the Coalicionistas are by now so savage that they may resort to any tactics.

29 October, Abe did not seem to realize, when I talked with him on the telephone last night, that we had been without rice for more than three weeks in spite of all my letters and cables.

We now have queues. Dealers are so short of staples that they hand them out as favors, keeping most of their stocks out of sight—a new kind of black market, and one infinitely worse than one which merely boosts prices. It has, of course, caused some riots and will cause more. O.P.A. is still supine.

Abe called me to ask my judgment again about the immediate removal of Malcolm which Justice and Interior believe necessary. I said that, for myself, I could get along with him until January; and I understood that he had agreed to withdraw then. I thought it might complicate the threatened Senate investigation since Malcolm is a Michigan Republican and may have tie-ups with Senator Vandenberg as well as Justice Murphy. I asked him about the Senate inquiry and said we heard alarmist reports about its being intended as a "smear Tugwell" business. He said that was so; and that Interior had made attempts to put the Senators right. But I got the impression that nothing much has really been done. Perhaps nothing can. I have a
feeling that there is a whole crowd now determined to "get" me, on manufactured evidence, if necessary. It is a feeling much like being very empty but not having hunger. It must be the same feeling that Jews have in Germany; or Negroes in the South.

30 October. The Senate yesterday referred the Chavez resolution for investigation to the Committee on Accounts. This may have shelved it, if the Administration has decided against permitting a Republican field day. It was Senator Barkley who objected to immediate consideration.

Dr. Fernós and Mr. Santiago Iglesias are in Washington and I have asked them to do what they can to inform Congressmen and Senators; but this is obviously too large a matter for any facts to influence now. I have written to the Vice President. The Secretary erupts occasionally but it is not doing any good except to show his own decency.

The legislature is getting down to work and passing the measures asked of it. I have argued Muñoz out of a bill creating a public-utility status for farm land and one reforming the jury system, both on the ground that we should keep this special session to the relief, revenue and refinancing plan for which it was called.

The prospects are that Republican gains in the Congressional elections will be considerable. I may then expect to be "investigated"—that is, smeared—in earnest. Anyway Grace and the rest are working on our "white paper."

4 November. In the elections the Republicans have made great gains in the Congress. Evidently the issues which might be thought to weigh most heavily on people's minds were submerged in various kinds of soreness at the war restrictions, now becoming real. This is, of course, a guess. But the restrictions necessary to war are like "economy"—everyone is for them until his own perquisites are touched. Then he is sore, wants special exemptions and when he does not get them looks for a scapegoat, etc., etc. Just, for instance, as I am blamed here for unemployment, high prices, food scarcity and so on—the things I worked to prevent—and by those who ridiculed our preventive measures, delayed them, and defeated them when they could. These people are now the hoarders, the black-marketers, the seekers for special exemption. Incidentally, they are my bitterest enemies. So, all over the States people are sore at the President for their own lack of foresight and his rightness; for their failure to help prevent and for the consequences of blindness. That is the kind of Congress it will turn out to be. And I am sure it will give all of us a bad two years.
I must say the legislature here is functioning smoothly, for which I give myself some of the credit. It looks as though we might be outfitted with laws to last through the war.

7 November. The legislature is doing all we have asked. Word from Abe that Malcolm is being "removed" at once.

On Sunday 8 November I was up in the night and turned on the radio, spinning the dials across the short-wave points. Incredibly, I thought I heard the President’s voice—but speaking in French! It was the African landing; and it was the President, telling the Frenchmen in Africa that we came in friendship and asking their help. It was, of course, the great day of the war for us and only slowly did we take it in. I went over to look at General Collins’s maps and to talk with the excited group at headquarters. Already they had their charts mounted and were speculating on the next move. It seemed certain, they said, that there would be a big battle south of Tunis; they hoped it would come soon. They were perhaps a little optimistic, more so than when, a few days later, it appeared that we ought to have landed further east and, in consequence of this, had lost the race for the hills at the base of the Cape.

Nevertheless the reflections of that week told us all that the strategic value of Puerto Rico in this war was greatly reduced. Unless something unforeseen happened, our rear was now secure. No longer would it be possible for the submarines to destroy our Atlantic force, and for the Germans to pour down the west coast of Africa, cross unmolested to South America, there to organize a campaign against the "soft underbelly of America." Mr. Churchill’s use of this phrase with reference to Europe made articulate for us what we had most dreaded—that the broad top of South America might provide a staging base for the penetration of the Gulf of Mexico and our own heartland. In the course of such a grand maneuver the Sea Frontier would have been invested and Puerto Rico would have become an offensive outpost for the enemy rather than a defensive one for us. With luck we should have the initiative now and Europe’s underbelly would take the blows our own might have suffered. We might use the advantage awkwardly, with all we had to learn, but we had it and unless some disaster intervened we should keep it.

In the exaltation of relief after the long ordeal of the blockade, I spoke out. The Chamber of Commerce and the sugar producers would understand now, I said, why the Governor of Puerto Rico, as the representative of the United States, had been unable to protect the profitable business of the importers. The gathering of the great invasion fleet in the midst of terrible losses had resulted in a scarcity of ships for civilians who, if they tried, could after all raise their own food. That was war; and they had better learn to accept it. The files showed, we were gratified to find, that as
we had pressed for more ships during the last months, every message from La Fortaleza had been carefully prefaced: "if they can be spared from the uses of war." The ill-tempered demands of the Chamber had made no such reservation. It was to be hoped that Senator Chavez would note the difference. All this was a little bombastic. The invasion was as much a surprise to me as Pearl Harbor had been—more, indeed, for I should have thought it much too soon to expect such a move, especially as the action on the Egyptian front, although more hopeful, seemed far from decisive as yet. But my aggressive statement kept the Chamber of Commerce quiet for a while.

Out in the Pacific a momentous two months had closed and we were just acquiring enough information to assess the significance of their events. The Navy was being very closemouthed and we still thought the defeat at Savo Island on 8-9 August had been more disastrous than in fact it had. We were getting accounts now of the whole Solomons campaign, which, after the loss of the Jarvis, Astoria, Vincennes, Canberra and Quincy, apparently through lack of precaution, had been such a bloody business for the Marines on Guadalcanal. It now appeared that the battle of the eastern Solomons had gone better, but it had been a confused action between land- and carrier-based planes of many types and its lessons had not yet become clear. It did seem to have destroyed the initiative which the Japanese had held for nearly a year. The battles at Midway had helped in that. That Japanese expedition in great force had undoubtedly been intended to repair the mistake of not having taken Pearl Harbor and was perhaps intended to head, after that, for Panamá. It was obvious that our commanders in the Pacific must be doing wonders with small forces. Now that we knew of the vast fleet of transports, supply ships, and protecting warships

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8 How little we knew of current developments—that is, how slowly information spread in those thick, stricken days—is clear from a note I made in mid-November that Tom Phillips feared the whole Solomons business was going to end in our being driven out, and that if this happened, everything in the Pacific was again in jeopardy. That is to say, unpredictable movement would be resumed until something decisive happened again. But these remarks were only a few days before the Solomons results were announced. As a matter of fact on 11 October and again on 26 October great battles had been fought. On 23 October the Japanese had made their supreme effort on Guadalcanal and the exhausted Marines had fought them off with almost the last of their vitality. The sea battles finally stopped the "Tokyo Express" which had so regularly run reserves and material down the "slot" to Guadalcanal. We had lost the Hornet and the Enterprise (badly damaged)—which meant practically all our carrier strength. But the South Dakota had proved what a well-armed battleship could do. She had been attacked by twenty-four dive bombers and nine torpedo planes and only one had got away, though she, too, had been hurt. Soon the Marines would be relieved, soon the fleet's reinforcements would be ready, and our offensive would have been established. But "soon" meant months, after all. And those months would have been fatal if the Japanese had known that from the Battle of Guadalcanal, 13—15 November, they had preponderance until late winter. Lost or damaged in that action were Laffey, Cushing, Sterett, O'Bannon, Atlanta, San Francisco, Portland, Barton and Helena. "The Battle of the South Pacific," said Admiral King's report (in April 1944), "in spite of the heavy losses we sustained was a decisive victory and our position in the southern Solomons was not threatened again seriously."
which had been gathered for Africa, what had happened in the Pacific seemed miraculous. For we could already see that the Japanese had reached their furthest penetration and that they would not only not get Australia but that MacArthur would keep his foothold in New Guinea. Panamá, after Midway, and especially after the battles of the Solomons, ending with the naval action off Guadalcanal in which our losses were heavy but the Japanese losses worse, was, as we gradually came to understand, safe.

We were left, as we saw it from the Caribbean Sea Frontier at the end of November 1942, with only submarines to fight. We no longer needed to anticipate amphibious action on our beaches. It was unthinkable that such an enemy offensive could be mounted with all the Germans had to think about in Russia and in Africa. For the miracle of Stalingrad was now looming like a Christmas star in the East and all the Western world was praising the Russians and beginning—just beginning—to ask what the Russians had got to make them not only heroes but brilliant in battle as no other armies were, at least on our side. For at first it had seemed that they had merely adapted the classic tactic which had been used against Charles XII and again against Napoleon—defense in depth with its corollaries of immense sacrifices and a scorched earth. But it now began to appear that they were thoroughly modernized as to equipment and led by a group whose military genius was more than equal to that of the Prussians. They were a full match, it seemed, for the Wehrmacht which our admiring generals had believed the most formidable military machine of all time.

We could now lift our eyes from war, we thought, and per-haps even rest a little. I note an interlude toward the middle of November, although it cannot have been much longer than a week end—for my own worst ordeal was still ahead—when my wife and I and some friends went up to the hills for the first time in more than a year. The silver spears of the cane caught the light in waves as we drove through the blossoming country. The largest sugar crop in history was readying for the cutters in January. And the fallen bloom of the bucarets covered stretches of the road with a soft burnt-orange carpet which whirled up be-hind our wheels. Drifting showers lay like thick woolly blankets upon the cool hills. It was the Caribbean fall which is so much like spring in other lands.

People in the country, though, were badly off. In the market place at Cayey an old woman carried away her week’s supply of rice in a torn piece of paper—it made a pitiful little heap on the counter as she counted her pennies. But she was lucky to get

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9We were too optimistic. The Japanese could have taken the offensive in a big way at any time that winter.
any at all; the storekeeper must have dug it up from under his counter for an old customer. A jíbaro came in with a couple of bags of charcoal and two bunches of plantains on his burro; he was pleased with the little fortune they brought him until he discovered that he could have no rice, that beans were thirty cents a pound, and that dried fish was being doled out in scraps which hardly outweighed the chavos they cost. He concluded sadly that he might as well have stayed at home and consumed the plantains.

But it was a good year. The rain was well distributed. The tobacco crop was small; but henceforth it would always be small, since the land was so worn. Coffee was just being picked and promised a paying yield for the first time in years. The malangas, the tainias and the yautias spread their large leaves over more ground perhaps than ever before and, together with breadfruit and plantains, would at least provide starches for everyone. The price had gone away up; but at least such provisions existed. And the high price was more for city people anyway; a jíbaro had ways of procurement and methods of trading unknown to others. The sugar crop, it could now be seen, would run over a million tons. That meant work and work meant income. And I knew, what others had not yet found out, that my plea for Army-Navy co-operation in lifting our holdover and the new crop would be successful. There was not yet the demand for sugar which would develop later; and the old psychology of opposition to offshore areas still existed in Washington. But to my argument against supply ships going home empty there was so little rational opposition that I was sure to prevail. I had, in fact, already been told so. The sugar which had seemed a burden a few weeks ago was now a treasure.

It seemed to me, as we rested those few days above the pools of green light in the valley and watched the storms blow out to the west, that, no matter what happened now, the democratic way of life had been preserved. It was so much one man’s work as to seem an incredible fortune that we should have had him as we had had Washington and Lincoln. The war might have been fought in the fields of Alabama, Texas, Louisiana, or Georgia, part of it, and the other part on the Pacific plain. It would now be fought in Europe and far across the Pacific. How many Americans appreciated that? How many thought now of the bitter battles the President had fought at home in order to keep the war abroad, battles with his own shortsighted countrymen which took all his political genius and his Dutch determination to win? I recalled that the Congress in 1940 had voted the selective-service law by the frightening margin of one, and of what that struggle alone among all the others must have taken of the President’s strength. I thought, too, of the tour de force, which had seemed so risky, when he turned the problem of production and supply over to the great industrialists who hated him and who, many of them, had opposed all his
domestic policies. It was clear now, in the fall of ’42, that production would be sufficient. His coup had succeeded. We still had not done what seemed necessary to distribute our man power to its most effective uses; and the farm lobby seemed likely to defeat the heroic attempts Mr. Henderson was making to stop inflation. In fact, it looked as though Mr. Henderson himself would have to be sacrificed. And there was still complaint to be made of most of the new war agencies, especially the War Production Board. But these were so trivial, and so easily remedied if put into perspective with what might have been our situation! If we had bickered among ourselves another year, South America would have been lost—so, incidentally would our Caribbean outposts—and the enemy would have been building an attack from bases which now were ours!

The President’s reward had been humiliating defeat in the elections; for, although it was mid-term, and no one suggested that if he had been a candidate he would have been himself defeated, still the virtual disappearance of a supporting majority in the Congress (most of the Southern Democrats were by now actively hostile) made it seem impossible for him to carry on. Not only the war would be on his shoulders now, but a Congress determined to harass and defeat all his policies. If this had happened two years earlier it would have lost the war for us. Thoughtful people were appalled at the inability of the American electorate to see beyond its small miseries to the great issues they had put in jeopardy. Luckily most of the plans had been laid, most of the laws were in force; momentum ought to carry us through, no matter what the Congress might do.

The gamble had been won. We were now secure all around the European enemy. And in the East there seemed to be a stop at New Guinea in the South Pacific. The Japanese might go for India again in the spring, and it would be clear then how far the defection from Britain had gone. The situation in the Aleutians was still shrouded in the fogs which covered that sector of the world; and all China was in chaos. But other than these doubtful areas, our side had a growing advantage. It looked, indeed, as though the vast weight of materiel coming from the new war plants and the old retooled factories of America was gradually giving our side the precious initiative which is so decisive in large-scale war. As to our own preoccupation in Puerto Rico with one phase of the global struggle, it even seemed to us, as we cautiously assessed our situation, that we might hope to be relieved.

Convoys were fairly organized; they were getting more and more protection as they moved out from Key West and along Cuba’s northern coast to the Windward Passage. Losses were still enormous in our waters; but they were enormous partly because they were less in the North Atlantic. The great supply trains to Europe were safer. And if the routes to Murmansk and through the Caribbean were taking heavier
losses it was because the new defenses had not yet been spread widely enough. They soon would be. We had planes now. There were just arriving squadrons of new PBM’s, a newer sister of the PBY. These "Mariners" were better ships for long-range naval patrol than any yet designed, better even than the famous Catalinas. The young pilots who were learning to master them said there were still a lot of "bugs" to be got rid of; but basically they were beautiful, majestic ships. The arriving squadrons now were roaring over our bay from dawn—and before dawn—far into the night. The pilots were learning. They lifted them slowly, with an enormous outpouring of power, out of their long runs into the wind, guided them grandly into slow curves over the hills and set them down again on the water. As we watched we learned to tell the old pilots from the new. The new lads had trouble getting the vast birds up on the step without rocking; they hit too soon and too far forward when they came down. But a more experienced handler could take his boat into the air in a run like an eagle’s and land again like a feather drifting to earth. The Mariners were slow in the air, built for range, to protect convoys on their long journeys, but the defeat of the submarine lay in their multiplication. Before long we should be aware that the subs had all gone home; when they came back they would be armed with new anti-aircraft guns. The Mariners and the new escort ships were forcing a change in tactics; and while the change was being prepared, we should gain an advantage which would be decisive. Yes, we could see the end of our blockade somewhere in the row of months which lay ahead. The worst, just possibly, was already past. The great patrol ships, hour after hour, into the twilight and on into the tropic dark, roared across our terraces and settled onto the bay. They thickened during December until they were a numerous flock. They were an undertone to our life: a constant reminder of war, but of a war which was being won.
THE TURNING POINT for the battle of the Caribbean can well enough be placed at November-December 1942. That fall was a turning point, too, in our civilian battle; for from then on the draining out of food surpluses from every place of storage—warehouse, store or home—gradually stopped and soon became a steady restoring inward flow. From December there were rice and beans, and we should not lack them again. Prices, too, began to come under control: that month showed less rise in the cost of living than any month in more than two years. It seemed possible that at last we might stop this terrible pressure on the workers. After the middle of November ships came again and we had something like half a normal month’s tonnage in December. This was true, too, of army-navy supplies so that the military construction projects could resume full momentum. The heavy fall plantings of food were being harvested; the large coffee crop was in and the cane zafra would soon begin. Relief and optimism lay over the whole island like a benison. It was not after all such a hostile world for an island people.

It was definitely a hostile world, however, for me. I had taken the lead, as was necessary, in the measures which had brought about such relief as was now being felt. I had always been in a hurry; I had often been impatient with those who got in the way and those, even, who merely held back. And there was a rising hostility on this account which joined the tide of reaction in the States. It looked as though the flood might wash me out of San Juan like a chip on a hurrying stream. Mr. Malcolm was summarily removed by the President early in November. On the day of his removal he attacked me in a broadcast speech which, however, failed to live up to its advertisement. The burden of his complaint, aside from the sneers, was that I had not taken his "legal" advice—meaning, of course, that I had a different social philosophy. Mr. Malcolm’s chief claim to fame in the legal line, so far as my lawyer friends were aware, was that he had once written an opinion as Chief Justice in the Philippines which had been upheld by a majority in the United States Supreme Court.¹

It was, in fact, in studying this case, and the opinions on it, that I first became aware of something which, merely as an informed citizen, I should have known all along: that the Philippines had developed an economic program in all respects similar to that which had now been independently devised for Puerto Rico. I gave some study to its history; and the more I studied the more discouraged I became. This was not because what the Filipinos had done had failed—on the contrary it seemed to have succeeded—but because General Leonard Wood, whom I had hitherto carelessly

¹This was, of course, the Springer case, soon to be dwelt on more at length.
accepted at the usual valuation as one of our better public administrators, had been
sent out after it had got going to stop it and had at least partially succeeded. The
question grew in my mind whether an executioner would not be sent to Puerto Rico
presently to carry out a similar mandate from the Republicans: certainly it seemed
possible that they might win in '44; and equally certain they were of the same
sentiment as had supported General Wood's crusade; and if they did not win in '44,
they might in '48. The Wood enterprise had been legitimized by Mr. Malcolm's
opinion, although not until after the Governor General had ceased to care. This
helped to explain Mr. Malcolm's attitude in Puerto Rico.

This Philippine experience is so relevant that even though it happened at the other
side of the world and a score of years back in time, it will pay to digress for a look at
it. Remember first that both Puerto Rico and the Philippines had been Spanish
colonies; also that they were island economies, largely based on sugar; also that
there were many *Americanos* in business; also that there were rapidly growing
populations which were land-hungry, largely unemployed, and only a generation or
two from slavery. These likenesses make it seem less strange that they should have
taken similar measures for reconstruction.

From 1913 to 1921 Francis Burton Harrison was Governor General. That period, it
will be noticed, covered the period of the war and it was, in consequence, an
unusually prosperous one; it was also one in which the Government itself built up
considerable surpluses and was encouraged to undertake an ambitious
reconstruction. Harrison was evidently very sympathetic to the Filipinos' ambitions
to improve their lot. This on the one hand involved gradual relinquishment of
American political supervision, and on the other positive measures for improving
the economy. He was unable to see any reason for perpetuating absentee
monopolies; and he could find no entrepreneur except the Government itself large
enough or interested enough to enter on the necessary program of industrialization.
He consequently approved the establishment of several government financial
institutions and developmental enterprises: among them, the Philippine National
Bank, the National Development Company, the Fidelity Bond Premium Fund, the
Manila Railroad Company, the National Coal Company, the National Petroleum
Company, the National Cement Company, and the National Iron Company.

Having belatedly learned of this startling analogy to our own effort, I began now to
recall, from casual reading, the old quarrels of the period. Naturally I got hold of
what literature was available, including Harrison's annual reports. It was amusing,
in Puerto Rico, to run across his comment on the first election in 1919 with the
enlarged suffrage granted in 1916. There had, he said, been no serious disturbances
in spite of all the noise; but it was true that public opinion was "inflamed by unjust
and often grotesque charges by defeated candidates that they have been robbed of election. On the whole, the elections may be said to have compared favorably with the usual elections in free countries of the world. There is, however, need of a more willing acceptance by the minority of the results of the popular vote. Unless this lesson is more generally and more convincingly driven home, there exists the germ of danger for the future. ..." That could equally well be said of Puerto Rico—in fact I had said something like it—as had other Governors. But here there was the added incentive to election losers that Washington was closer to San Juan than to Manila, and that a Governor's political enemies in Puerto Rico, or even lobbies with interests at stake, could always find members of the Congress who were willing to support disaffection, regardless of its effect in the Possession.

But most of all I was interested in those parts of the report which referred to the economic projects. From it, I beg leave to quote, much shortened, the relevant parts:

The land laws restricting the amount of public lands which may be acquired by an agricultural corporation to 1,024 hectares, have undoubtedly discouraged certain forms of investment. Moreover, the country is just emerging from a condition purely agricultural, and is now engaging in industries both for export and consumption. . . .

Against the initiation of the present self-government in the Philippines the greatest objection was made by local American businessmen. The theory among them seemed to be prevalent that government by strong arm, with the aid of the military establishment, was their only security; that for the Government to make friends with the Filipinos was not only a sign of weakness, but a threatened disaster to American business interests. This may be explained not only by the traditional and historical relationship of Northern races with dwellers in the tropics but also by the natural timidity of invested capital at any proposed change in affairs, especially in the case of those who had built up a considerable business without the investment of any appreciable initial capital. . . . Hesitation to risk capital was due to the widespread and fairly successful campaign in the United States of the advocates of indefinite retention of the Philippines. Since it was necessary to their case to prove that the Filipinos were inexperienced in self-government, they argued that they are incapable, by depicting them as head-hunting savages. In any event American capital was reluctant to enter the Philippines and still is hesitant. Even the customary government steamship line and cable running from European countries to their colonies is missing.

Large opportunities for investment in sugar, hemp, copra have been cautiously and halfheartedly embraced by Americans on the argument that conditions were "unstable"; they have also hesitated over the development of coal and oil fields.
Smaller branches of tropical investment have been practically neglected, and remain so until today, such as quinine, castor oil, kapok, coffee and tea, in spite of the advantages offered in some of these by free trade with the United States. Other branches of industry have not been developed, such as paper, brick and tile, leather, and the canning industry. . . .

The Philippine Government, in default of (private) investment, has, in the desire of promoting the development of the country with its own comparatively slender resources, attempted to encourage various industries. In 1916 an act was passed guaranteeing 5 per cent dividends in certain new industries . . . but no advantage was taken of it. The Government has thus been gradually launched upon government ownership, not only of public utilities but also of certain other businesses. This has provoked sharp criticism on the part of certain American business interests. The undersigned is in favor of public ownership of public utilities, but the natural conservatism of the Filipinos might have delayed government ownership if private investors had come forward. It thus results that the Government is now managing various corporate enterprises, either as a majority stock owner or in possession of all the stock.²

Governor General Harrison resigned on 5 March 1921, obviously because of the change in the national administration. The Report for 1919, quoted above, however, shows, even though the characteristic opaqueness of the government document, a man of great quality, kind, selfless and tolerant. There shows, also, a deep resentment that the "American business interests" which had prospered without "appreciable initial capital" should now be campaigning to prevent further development lest it touch their prerogatives. I wished that I might have known him, and have been able to exchange experiences.

There was a good deal in the Report, not quoted here, about status. It was obvious that Harrison, encouraged by President Wilson, was looking forward to greater self-government, and that much of the motivation for the economic measures being taken was in preparation for a time when the Filipinos would be cut off from the free American market. The analogy with Puerto Rico twenty-five years later was nearly complete. It was, in fact, so close that I wondered whether the future in Puerto Rico could be read in subsequent Reports or in other accounts of Philippine development. Going further, I learned that after Harrison's resignation a special mission composed of General Leonard Wood and W. Cameron Forbes had been appointed on 20 March "to investigate." President Harding's letter to the Secretary

²Annual Report, 1919. This is very similar to the account to be found in various of my own public papers in 1941-42 as reasons for the Puerto Rican program.
of War referred only to the status issue; but the letter to the mission from Secretary Weeks, specifying its terms of reference, was broader. There was a hint that the last administration had not been an effective one; and the investigators were asked to determine what changes were necessary. The economic situation was to be reviewed as well as the question whether, if the Filipinos were granted more self-government, they could maintain their freedom.

Neither in the letter of the President nor in that of the Secretary was there an intimation of what was to come, although there must have been an understanding. For the Report of the mission and subsequent instructions to the succeeding Governor General (who was to be Wood himself) were a sustained double diatribe against the liberal treatment of the Filipinos and "government in business." It was evident that an election on the American mainland had settled a matter of policy for the Filipinos wholly without their consent.

General Wood was sent to put these socialists in their place; he was to be the hatchet man for the American reactionaries. I must quote briefly from his Report:

The general administration of the Philippine Government in 1913, the period of its greatest efficiency, was honest, highly efficient and set a high standard of energy and morality. Inherited tendencies were being largely replaced by American ideals and efficiency throughout the Philippine personnel, but the time and opportunity were too short to develop experienced leaders and direction in the new English-speaking and American-thinking generation . . .

. . . The public services are now in many particulars inefficient; there has occurred a slowing down in the dispatch of business and a distinct relapse toward the standards of former days. This is due in part to bad example, incompetent direction, to political infection of the services, and, above all, to lack of competent supervision and inspection. This has been brought about by surrendering or failing to employ the executive authority of the Governor General and has resulted in undue interference and tacit usurpation by the political leaders of the supervision and control of departments of government vested by law in the Governor General.

Everything, in other words, had been all right in Republican times but had gone to the dogs with the Democrats. This is the kind of document it was. The picture of the future Governor General is not difficult to fill out—a man who was a martinet, intolerant, arrogantly superior, and cocksure of his Tightness.3 There followed a review of the affairs of various branches of the Government and of the enterprises in

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3It was evident that General Wood dominated the document. Forbes, who had preceded Wood as Governor General, and whose administration was so highly praised, was, nevertheless, much less aggressive and forceful.
which it had engaged. Especially the Bank, which had evidently been not only unfortunate in running into depression after the war boom, but had also been badly managed, came in for severe toplofty criticism. "In our judgment," said the investigators repeatedly, "the Government should . . . get out of and keep out of business." The prejudices of the American business community were reflected not only in the conclusions as to the inferiority of the Filipinos but in the recommendation that for an indefinite period American supervision should be continued. Not only that, it was to be continued under a strengthened Governor General who would "have authority commensurate with the responsibilities of his position":

In case of failure to secure the necessary corrective action by the Philippine legislature, we recommend that Congress declare null and void legislation which has been enacted diminishing, limiting, or dividing the authority granted the Governor General under the Jones Act. We recommend (also) that in case of a deadlock between the Governor General and the Philippine Senate in the confirmation of appointments the President of the United States be authorized to make and render a final decision.⁴

Among other interesting features of the findings and conclusions is the recognition of governmental developments in the Philippines similar to those with which those of us who were Governors in Puerto Rico had had to contend. Evidently the "native" legislature had found ways to "diminish, limit and divide" the executive authority until there was very little left of it. And evidently they had even got hold of the appointing function through stringent restriction on confirmation. The Philippine investigators saw, as I did, that modern government cannot function without an executive. Seeing that, there are two choices of policy: either the executive can be restored to power by the application of external pressure, or the causes which led to the emasculation can be removed. Wood and Forbes chose the first and asked Congress to uphold a stiffer colonialism. Harrison (and I) had chosen to advise the giving of greater responsibility, and specifically an elected executive, in the belief that this would result in the restoration of the necessary administrative powers.⁵ Not being a "foreigner," an elected Governor would not need to be hamstrung; or, at least, his hamstringing by políticos would not be so popular with the people, since the legislature would not then be the only representative of the "native" population.

When General Wood went to take office he was presented with a letter of instructions which stressed the desirability of liquidating the Government's

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⁴Report of the Special Mission to the Philippines, 8 October 1921.
⁵Thus escaping also the "politics" inherent in legislative attempts to invade administration.
investments in all economic enterprises; and when he made his inaugural address on 15 October 1921 he repeated what had been said in the Mission's Report: "I believe the Government should keep out of business." He reiterated this in his first message to the legislature. And on 6 December in a letter to the Speaker of the House he said it still again. All this insistence on the liquidation of a policy which had seemed to Harrison the only means of approaching industrialization is, of course, a reflection of the change from the Wilson policies to those of Harding, from Democratic to Republican. The business interests were in control. But in General Wood they had a servant whose zeal was almost missionary.

The Philippine people were naturally confused and reluctant. They could not understand why the passage to "normalcy" in the United States should require of them the reversal of a policy on which they had entered hopefully and in which they believed. The chilly General, after the friendly Harrison, seemed a phenomenon out of the past. He chose as his administrators army officers and as his advisers the American businessmen who had hated Harrison. That they were dealing with a man who was anxious to display his abilities in the service of business they could see; they could not see that he was hoping for a higher office and that his energy was to be accounted for in this way. In their confusion the legislators sent a mission of their own to Washington. It might as well have stayed at home for all the effect it had.

Developments followed this general course until 1923, when a crisis occurred in the conflict between the Governor General and the legislature. The Filipinos, being naive in their approach to a Government with separated powers, and knowing only that the legislature represented them as against a hostile Governor, supported the legislature in resistance to Wood's attempts to put the executive back into position for effective functioning. There was a provision in the Organic Act (much like that in the Act for Puerto Rico providing for an Executive Council) which established the cabinet as a corporate Council of State. To this body, rather than to the Governor, the legislature entrusted the powers and funds necessary to the executive. The members of this Council were, of course, appointed "with the advice and consent of the Senate." Not being aware that American experience had led to the atrophy of the "advice" part of this phrase, and, indeed, interpreting it out of context and literally, the Senate (which is to say the party políticos) were not backward with "advice." They presented, as time went on, smaller and smaller ternas from which the Governor must choose if confirmation was to be forthcoming. This, of course, led to the impossible situation (which also existed in Puerto Rico) in which the members of the Governor's Cabinet functioned almost independently of him, directed by the political boss of the moment. In the Philippines the situation was made worse by inclusion, in the Council, of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.
That this was a bad, even an impossible situation, no one could deny. It was one, also, which to an arrogant and intolerant General would be a constant affront. On 17 July 1923 the entire Council of State resigned, saying to the Governor: "We have observed for some time past that it is your policy and desire to intervene in and control even to the smallest detail, the affairs of our Government, both insular and local, in utter disregard of the authority and responsibility of the department heads and other officials concerned." On 24 July 1923 the legislature ratified the action of the Council and on 17 October, sitting in joint session, asked for the removal of Wood—also, incidentally, that, pending the granting of independence, the post be given to a Filipino. Wood naturally reported this to Washington and received an immediate message of support. This message intimated, however, that Wood may have gone too far in his war on government in business and was reminded that "the legislature must determine whether these enterprises are to be carried on or not."

The controversy was clearing up. Wood had succeeded in getting rid of some of the Government’s businesses; but others—most, in fact—were still in existence and were again prospering. That phase of the controversy thenceforth became less important and governmental questions became crucial. These were of the most intense interest, of course, to me, as I read about them, because of the close comparability with the Puerto Rican experience. The transition from Spanish to American government had been only partially successful. The Puerto Ricans, like the Filipinos—and in almost exactly the same ways—had found it possible to go on with the Spanish spirit within the American forms. The formal executive had been sabotaged; in his place, the politico of the moment had found ways to control the bureaucracy. Since he was not responsible, this control had led to disregard for civil service, to political determination of appointments and to an inefficient government service. I was watching with interest—as well as pain—the sufferings of Muñoz in the position of caudillo. He had high ideals of government; he was, I thought, loyal to me as a man of like mind. In fact, he was caught in the system. The old agencies of government were staffed with political appointees; the bureaucracy regarded him as its head, rather than me; we should, with what we had, be utterly unable to carry through the program he had hoped to execute. Yet he felt he could not afford to give up his control. He fought me insistently to keep in tact the political machine. Moreover he now continually called in cabinet members and gave them orders without consulting me. Confusion from this cause was getting worse and worse.

I could sympathize with the indignation General Wood had felt over the frustrations he experienced as executive. His original ambition to get the Government out of business had changed gradually to one of restoring the executive to its normal functions. From 1923 on there was war between himself and the politicos.
As was inevitable in our unresolved colonial uncertainty, the quarrel was adjourned to Washington. On 8 January 1924 the Speaker of the House and the two Resident Commissioners addressed a letter to the Congress:

Permit us to bring to your notice that period of seven years [1913-20] of this relationship [between the United States and the Philippines], in which the Filipino people enjoyed a large measure of autonomy. Outside our country it was a period of upheaval and disorder; within it was a time of peace, of public tranquillity. . . .

What we feared . . . has come to pass. Governor General Wood has set at naught all understandings . . . and has ignored the assurances given them by the late President. He has . . . deprived our Government of the key and the nerve center of the former autonomous administration—the counsel of the Filipinos. He has surrounded himself with a secret Cabinet composed of military and other extralegal advisers, which has encroached upon the legitimate functions of the Filipino officials in the Government.

. . . He has disregarded the rights of the Senate in his exercise of the appointing power. . . . He has endeavored to defeat the economic policies duly laid down by the Philippine legislature. . . . The theories and principles underlying Governor Wood's action are utterly repugnant to . . . Philippine autonomy. . . .

President Coolidge replied to this on 21 February 1924 with characteristic smugness. There were, he said, no grounds for complaint against General Wood. He volunteered the dictum, also, that the Filipinos were not ready for independence. So it went on, Filipinos appealing to anyone in Washington who would listen, General Wood reiterating that "the railroad, the sugar centrals, the coal mines, cement plant and other properties" should be transferred to private ownership. By 1926, however, the Governor General was much less concerned about the fact that they were governmental than about the Board of Control which governed them. This Board had been set up by the legislature; it consisted of the Governor General, the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, a fatal minority for the executive. The Governor General's report for 1926 said:

For many years it has been the opinion of well-informed men that the various acts of the legislature creating a Board of Control ... for the management of these companies and voting the government stock were illegal in that they violated the Organic Act which places supreme executive control in the hands of the Chief Executive. After mature deliberation, therefore, this question was referred to the Attorney General of the United States and the Judge Advocate General of the U. S. Army for an opinion.
Their opinions... confirmed the belief that the Board of Control was illegal and consequently an executive order was issued abolishing the Board and placing the entire responsibility of voting the government stock in the hands of the Chief Executive. As was to be expected, this order met with opposition on the part of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, and in order to settle once for all this important question, proceedings were instituted to determine its legality.

Both the Judge Advocate General and the Acting Attorney General having upheld the Governor General’s contention, subsequent developments were reported for 1929:

The Governor General issued an executive order (in November 1926) abolishing the Board of Control and announcing his intention to assume control of its functions. Following this announcement stockholders' meetings were held early in 1927 and the Governor General, voting the government stock, elected Boards of Directors. The two former members of the Board of Control likewise held meetings and elected Boards of Directors. Quo Warranto proceedings were instituted before the Philippine Supreme Court seeking to oust the Directors elected by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. The Supreme Court by a vote of six to three handed down a decision on 1 April 1927 completely sustaining the position of the Governor General. . . .

This was the decision which Mr. Malcolm, as Acting Chief Justice, had written and which had been sustained by a majority of the United States Supreme Court.

The Philippine Government never "got out of business"; the public corporations went on, with ups and downs, but surviving and in general serving the purpose which Harrison had hoped they would. On that issue Wood, Forbes and their Republican colleagues were defeated. Perhaps if Wood had lived and had been able to pursue his crusade after the Supreme Court had given him power to dominate the enterprises he might have disposed of them to private interests or even have disbanded them altogether; on the other hand, being in complete control, he might have been seized with the desire natural to executives to do an effective administrative job. He might even have enlarged their activities. They were, in fact, still being enlarged in 1941, when several new public corporations were created.

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6Then Mr. William J. Donovan.
7Wood had died on 7 August 1927 while in the United States, still engaged in feuding there with the Filipino políticos.
8Government of the Philippine Islands v. Springer, et al. (277 U.S. 189). The Springer case, which involved the coal company, and a similar one which involved the Philippine National Bank, are to be found respectively in 50 Philippine Reports, 259-348 and 348-380.
Mr. Malcolm’s opinion, if read carefully, shows two biases—to uphold the colonial Governor General and to serve the businessmen. In upholding the Governor General he was required only to take an orthodox view of the separation of powers; and, since the Governor General shared his economic prejudice, the other bias was served concurrently. In saying that the legislature could not vote itself executive powers he was, moreover, on entirely safe ground, merely recognizing an elementary principle of our system of government—not only elementary but basic, since to depart from it would require corollary modification in many other respects.

This was the part of the opinion which was upheld by the United States Supreme Court, Justice Sutherland speaking:

The Organic Act, following the rule established by the American constitutions, both state and Federal, divides the Government into three separate departments—the legislative, executive and judicial. Some of our state constitutions expressly provide in one form or another that the legislative, executive and judicial powers of the Government shall be forever separate and distinct from each other. Other constitutions, including that of the United States, do not contain such a provision. But it is implicit in all… And this separation and the consequent exclusive character of the powers conferred on each is basic and vital—not merely a matter of governmental mechanism.

The Holmes-Brandeis dissent to this was a literary masterpiece, beginning with the majestic sentences: "The great ordinances of the Constitution do not establish fields of black and white. Even the more specific of them are found to terminate in a penumbra shading gradually from one extreme to the other." And this statement is so true of any human statute or institution that as a rule liberalizing the law it has become famous. But Sutherland was correct, nevertheless, in a practical sense, for Holmes and Brandéis had invited legislatures to assert aggressively the advantage they undoubtedly have in our constitutional system; and if this had been followed as a rule we should within a few years have had chaos in a great depression and, still a few years later, in perilous preparation for war during a period when the Congress turned on the President and opposed him even in measures we now know to have been essential to the nation’s very survival. This was one dissent which, however famous it may be among pseudo-liberals, we were fortunate not to have had become a majority opinion.

So Mr. Malcolm was right in his best-known opinion—not, one may suspect, for good reasons! The Governor of Puerto Rico in 1942 was pursuing a general policy just the reverse of that of Wood in the Philippines in 1921-27. In pursuing it, however, he needed the same executive powers the court had granted Wood. But if
Mr. Malcolm had to give them they would never be granted; he was now saying that such desires were "dictatorial." But Mr. Malcolm had not changed sides, really; he still did not believe in government in business and if he had to choose between private business interests and the Governor whose legal assistant he was supposed to be, he was determined to oppose the Governor. He would report him to the Attorney General in Washington; finally he would denounce him openly. He probably thought it unlikely that the Governor had influence in the capital any longer; and he could be certain that business interests were strong in the Congress and the executive Departments. He was to an extent right about this last; but not right enough. On 11 November his summary removal was announced from the White House. And it followed, of course, that it would be only a matter of time until Mr. Fitzsimmons was also removed—unless, with his colleague gone, he chose to change his ways. This matter I should have to watch during the months to come.

The Philippine experience, so briefly summarized here,\(^9\) not only had amazing analogies with that of Puerto Rico, it had also an ironic connection through the appointment of Mr. Malcolm to be Attorney General, thus carrying over many of the issues and quarrels in more than a theoretical sense. In studying the invasions of the executive by the legislative branch, wondering how the damage already done could be repaired and how more could be prevented in future, I became more and more certain that unless Puerto Rico was allowed to choose an executive rather than required to accept an appointed one, there would be more and more of these aggressions and consequently a more and more inefficient and politics-ridden administration. The mixed Board of Control in the Philippines had had already a counterpart in Puerto Rico in *La Comisión Económica* as far back as 1921. That, too, had been a Board for carrying out essentially executive functions on which the legislature had maintained a majority. All Governors down to Leahy had acquiesced in it. In 1939, however, an opinion of the Attorney General had encouraged the Governor to ignore it, citing the Springer case; and the comparison had been so clear that no challenge of the opinion was made.\(^{10}\)

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\(^9\) There is a considerable literature for one who cares to explore further— not only the official *Reports* for each year, but several books such as the Autobiography of Francis Burton Harrison; The Philippine Islands by W. Cameron Forbes (1928); The Philippines Past and Present by Dean C. Worcester (1930); Orphans of the Pacific by Florence Horn (1941); The Commonwealth of the Philippines by George A. Malcolm, 1936, and so on.

\(^{10}\) An amusing instance of Mr. Malcolm's bent was furnished by this Attorney General's opinion which was prepared just before he entered that office. Governor Leahy was about as popular with the *Coalicionistas* as I later became. The Acting Attorney General, Mr. Enrique Campos del Toro, later to be Attorney General himself, anticipated that Mr. Malcolm would be their friend rather than the Governor's and that he might change principles in midstream, so to speak, if it suited their convenience. Accordingly the Springer case and the Malcolm opinion were conspicuously cited as support for the Governor's position. Nevertheless Mr. Malcolm did change sides. (See opinion of E.
I had inherited, however, a similar situation in the Emergency Fund Committee. This fund had been set up some years before as a hurricane reserve. When I took office it was practically nonexistent, having been used for grossly improper purposes—such as the purchase of irrigation bonds, for instance; and I thought it ought to be built up to a size which would be really useful in an emergency, and kept carefully liquid. By amending the law and adding "war" to other emergencies we were able to use it for the purchase of medicines and other equipment for civilian defense, for the establishment of a blood bank, and for venereal-disease control. In spite of such calls on it, it had by the end of 1942 increased to a total commensurate with the use which might be made of it; this had been accomplished by providing for the transfer to it of savings in the budget. In itself it was an interesting device and a very necessary one. But it, too, had a mixed Board which at times I felt ought to be challenged as Admiral Leahy had challenged the Comisión Económica. I was restrained by two practical considerations: if the legislative members had been removed, the legislature might have refused to allow the fund to grow; and besides, during my term, no attempt was ever made to misuse it or to prevent its use when it was needed—practically all allocations from it had been unanimous, almost routine. But I always anticipated later trouble. When I discussed it with Muñoz, as one of the legislative aggressions which ought to be straightened out before the elective governorship took effect, he refused to be interested. He preferred to put it off and intimated that there might still be more "Ole Gandules." I could not repress an undoubtedly malicious hope that he would be Governor sometime so that he might suffer some of the consequences of his vigilant distrust of Governors. There would be further occasions for similar emotion.\(^\text{11}\)

With this emergency fund, controlled by a Board which apparently would continue to take my advice as to its use, and with the new taxes provided by the special session of November,\(^\text{12}\) the fiscal situation seemed secure even though a bill for local relief was passed which would require large expenditures. The tax legislation had involved a heroic struggle on Muñoz' part with the well-to-do in his own party as well as with Mr. Rodríguez Pacheco, the Liberal in the Cámara who was the one-man majority. Mr. Rodríguez was a merchant and a large owner of rental properties. How his vote for higher taxes was secured I never knew, but he made no secret of his

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\(^\text{11}\)This law was declared unconstitutional in July 1944 by a Republicano District Judge just before the hurricane season. Since the Supreme Court was in recess we should be without an emergency fund and at the mercy of disaster for the whole season.

\(^\text{12}\)A 5 per cent Victory tax was provided as well as an income tax which was closer to continental standards.
anguish. This bill was made worse than was necessary by making it retroactive for the calendar year just closing, something to which there is always stiff objection. It seems unfair to have paid once and to have felt one’s obligation discharged only to be asked to pay again. Muñoz, however, had his teeth in the tax root at last and he shook it hard. I had warned him that, as things appeared to me, we were likely to lose all Federal assistance. He was determined not to be short of funds.

That Federal help would be withdrawn was perhaps a cynical judgment to make in advance but it proved to be justified. I arrived at it not only from feeling the displeasure of the Congress myself, but from judging that concentration on the war would turn officials back to the customary neglect of a Possession which had no representation. Besides, now that the African invasion had begun, anyone could see that the Caribbean was going to decline in importance. And in such an emergency as war, the distribution of funds was going to be on a strictly utilitarian basis. I could foresee that my arguments for further assistance, citing the war’s reverse effect on our insular economy and the need to maintain loyal sentiments by displaying concern for the Possession’s distress under blockade, were going to fall flat in the Washington of 1943. So, luckily, we had the foresight to begin the organization of local relief even when we had small resources, an action we would be glad to have taken when, during the next few months, we should lose one after another of the Federal assistances extended under the New Deal. By then our revenues from the tax on rum would be mounting, and we should be able to finance generous measures of our own to take the place of Federal help. But this would be more by luck than good intention on the part of anyone in Washington.13

This Federal assistance had, as I have indicated, amounted in one way or another to about the same sum year after year for a decade—more by chance than arrangement. But by now the insular economy was fatally dependent on its receipt and much more so because of the blockade. I naturally felt that the least my home government could do in this time of crisis was not to deprive me of any advantages I should have had at any time in the past ten years. Blockade with consequent food scarcity, unemployment, inflation of prices at twice the continental rate and the long anxious battle with submarines seemed enough handicap; add to that hostile

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13A succession of events constituted the chain which led to this good fortune: the capture of the East Indies by the Japanese; Mr. Jesse Jones’s failure to have built up a sufficient stock pile of crude rubber; the necessity for making rubber from alcohol; the stopping of beverage alcohol-distilling in the United States and devotion of this capacity to alcohol for rubber. All this, when it had gone on for some time, made a unique market for West Indian rum. Why was not our molasses taken for alcohol-making? In time it would be and under provocative circumstances—as part of a deal to acquire Cuban molasses, a supply large enough to be of real importance, as Puerto Rican quantities were not. But now there was not the shipping to move it. And it was being run into the sea.
Federal officials and a malicious press; further add the concentration of hatred from a class of landed proprietors and their hangers-on who were resisting the loss of privileges—take it altogether, the difficulties seemed enough without knocking the props out from under the economy completely. Yet as the sub-tropic winter came on, that actually appeared to be happening. On 5 December I read in my morning paper that W.P.A. was to be liquidated at once. I had had no other notice!

This might not have been so bad if rum revenues had by that time increased. As a fact, however, they were still infinitesimal. The rum existed; but containers for it could not be had; nor could it be shipped. It might not have been so bad, either, if the subsidy bill had passed. This would not have been much but it would have been a start. I had had a vision of great activity and much employment resulting from that subsidy. But on 17 November the Agricultural Committee of the House approved it only on condition that none of it should be spent as long as I was Governor. My attempt to take the San Juan water system away from Mr. Bolivar Pagán's political machine had proved costly. Or were other influences more important? The Farm Bureau, the sugar producers, the continental lawyers, and the A. F. of L. lobbyists had been busy with the Southern Congressmen who dominated the Agricultural Committee. Unexpected as it was, and discouraging too, it was possible to understand. But I had not thought it would be unanimous as it appeared to be. This meant that not only prejudices were involved but lies too. Some fair-minded men had been persuaded to take an action so extreme that it would only have originated in persuasion that the Puerto Rican administration was dangerous to an interest dear to Congressmen. What could it be?

Muñoz was cynically certain that even if I offered to resign, the funds would not be forthcoming: the prohibition against me did not carry a guarantee of favorable action upon compliance. Some reason was always found for not helping Puerto Rico; this was only another. But it was part of the most considerable of all the seasonal "offensives"; for, just before and just after the explosion of this big mine, others

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14 "We fought for and were ultimately granted 10 per cent of outgoing space lor other-than-sugar cargo to be administered by the local War Shipping Administration agent. We got it over the dead bodies of the sugar producers' lobbyists. Rum is concentrated bulk, of course, and so this was a satisfactory solution. It would not have been if other exports such as pineapples, oranges and other fruits and vegetables had not already been lost because there were no more refrigerated ships.

15 "The bill so adversely received by the Committee was not our original request for food subsidies; this was a substitute measure introduced by Mr. Bolivar Pagán after hearing from his Puerto Rican constituents. He evidently had thought at first either that they would not know or would not care and that his little sabotage in the interest of the sugar producers would go unpunished. He did not enjoy life in Puerto Rico under blockade and had not been home for a long spell. The reaction was so violent that he assumed an air of innocence and said that the original bill had been "antagonistic to sugar." This was a tactical error. Most of Puerto Rico was "antagonistic to sugar"—if by that one understood sugar producers.
equally destructive were exploded. The Senate decided to investigate; and it established a subcommittee with Senator Chavez as Chairman. The first act of this group was to entertain the preposterous assertions of Mr. Filipo de Hostos, President of the Chamber of Commerce (who, in fact, spent most of that fall in Washington). Mr. Malcolm, after his removal, made tracks for Washington and turned up under the sponsorship of Senator Vandenberg in the guise of an able servant of the Government, grown old in the Territorial service, who had been victimized by the dictatorial Tugwell. He had fought against the socialistic (and/or communistic) regime in Puerto Rico and had been sacrificed for his principles.

We were kept very busy that fall. Since the certainty of a Senate investigation the "seminar" of those interested in defense had been meeting frequently and a White Paper was swelling. By the middle of December our case was ready. On the eve of the setting up of the Chavez Committee, Abe still thought the whole thing could be turned off. Senator Lucas was Chairman of the Audit and Control Committee to which all proposals for investigations were referred. And he was not known to be unfriendly. However, even after the Secretary had opposed the proposal as "taking advantage of the war for political purposes," which it certainly was, it nevertheless was approved. It was, however, limited to "economic and social conditions." The Senate Democrats, in other words, had given a mild warning to Mr. Chavez that he was not to wander widely. The Administration still had some working control.

Nevertheless I felt called on to present my resignation again:

I wish to assure the Secretary, and through him the President, that if conditions make my resignation desirable, it is always available. It may be that I can serve more effectively elsewhere. Judgment on this ought not to be guided by personal considerations, but by what is best for policy. I do not enjoy being a center of controversy; and it is justified only if the controversy is important.

This seemed to have touched the Secretary and he issued a hot denunciation of the Resident Commissioner:

This political attack in time of crisis upon the representative of the United States Government in Puerto Rico is in reality an attack upon the people of Puerto Rico and upon the peace and security of the United States. I express my deepest sympathy to the people of Puerto Rico for the action of the Resident Commissioner and assure them that in spite of the obstacles he places in our way we shall do everything possible to see that the splendid program which has been worked out to sustain them in this critical period is carried out successfully.
He went on to say that both he and the President were unequivocal in their support of me. This was so good that not even the Puerto Rican press could smother it entirely. But it had no effect whatever on events in Washington. Continental papers were now giving acres of space to the campaign. The advertisers and public-relations lobbyists were in it again. Stories began to float around that we were suppressing all brand names and were intending to drive out of Puerto Rico all American merchandisers. These were pure inventions but they were repeated day after day in the press and in Congressional speeches. They seemed to support the charge of communism somewhat more specifically than any facts which had hitherto been cited—which, of course, was the reason for their invention.

There began also to be intimations of House action of some sort. This talk, as usual, began with "impeachment" and watered down to "rebuke." But there was no restraint noticeable anywhere; it was an all-out attack. It seemed that my old friend Senator Byrd was at this time interested too. He had a personal instrument at the moment for axwork on the New Deal, a Special Senate Committee on Expenditures of the Federal Government which the continental lawyers were hopeful could be extended to the Puerto Rican Government—just how, it was a little difficult to see. But the Senator from Virginia from then on for several months would float in and out of our orbit, a kind of pudgy specter, always about to lay a heavy hand on our "extravagances and communistic experiments." Actually one day about the middle of December, "a high-up army officer," as the naive Mr. Fitzsimmons would describe him to Mr. Everett Brown, the Executive Secretary, with ill-disguised hopefulness, would descend on the Auditor and demand extensive information about insular expenditures. I rather felt that this was just part of the war of nerves; and anyway I had not been notified of it officially.16 So I took no other precautions than to suggest to the Secretary that he inform Mr. Byrd of our willingness to co-operate: there was no need for secrecy and gumshoe work. The "high-up army officer" required the Auditor's office to work overtime and through a wee k end, which is very painful to Puerto Rican governmental employees. The cause was so agreeable a one to the Auditor and his flock, however, that the pain was cheerfully undergone. The army officer who did not report to me neglected also to report to General Collins; and after a while he disappeared again. We never heard any more about it except that Mr. Fitzsimmons' supporting newspaper soon had the story—a good one, this time, easily blown up into a prospective pillorying of me before an outraged United States Senate.

The continental press seized it. And now that the thing had at last caught on, the fires were fed daily. One could almost have predicted that a special correspondent

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16I never was notified; and I never saw the emissary.
for the Chicago Tribune would show up shortly. He did; and a little later the Scripps-Howard people sent a really expert crusader. Miss Martha Gellhorn came through about that time on a trip for Collier’s. But her reporting was exact and in her article on Puerto Rico she spoke of the “little private war” on the Governor “being carried on by the press and the políticos.” The righteous indignation of the “press and the políticos” at this was a classic exhibition of hypocrisy. For days they were unable to let it alone; they bit on it like a man on a sore tooth. One might really have thought they had come to believe in their own inventions. This, however, was about the only slip. Time delivered a nasty indirect slap at my wife; so, incidentally, did Mr. Drew Pearson. This seemed a little extreme even for the purpose in hand; but by now she had done so noble a job that she, too, had to be encompassed in the smearing lest her good reputation should mitigate the bad one so successfully being fitted to me.

Aside from her other qualities this lady had the unusual combination of a soft heart and a tough mind. The soft heart made her painfully aware that some hundred thousand children in Puerto Rico under the age of seven were not getting enough to eat. This is literally meant: they were not getting enough to grow on. The average physical retardation in this group averaged 20-25 per cent. This tragic fact conveyed to the tough mind something more than awareness. It seemed impossible not to do something about it. The simple, direct and efficient way in which that something was done can furnish instruction to anyone wise enough to study it. Social devices for a necessary and appealing cause can always be found.

Let us look at it a little further (although I have admired it so long that admiration has doubtless become prejudice). She had no funds, and no organization. She merely perceived that those children needed food—predominantly, at that age, milk, cereals and eggs. But she also perceived that the upper- and middle-class women of Puerto Rico were chafing under the Spanish traditions which forbade any useful employment; and that the volunteer work of feeding children could be exempted from the ban, thus releasing a flood of energy. All she had to do, then, was to bring together the hungry children and the women’s ability. She found dried milk and eggs to be part of the still-continuing Federal program of free food distribution begun long before as a way of disposing of surplus farm products. She talked Captain Olmstead (and anyone else she could reach) into concentrating on milk, oatmeal and dried eggs. And presently the women of Puerto Rico under her leadership had a chain of four hundred simple stations which reached into every island barrio.

Any child could come, just because of childhood, and have a meal every day. It is a nice comment on the zeal of these volunteers that they realize that children get

17 “These were, respectively, Mr. Charles Leavelle and Mr. S. Burton Heath.
hungry on Sundays as well as other days. Sometimes it was only milk, sometimes other foods were added by the women's ingenuity. Often the children sat on rows of boxes with bowls in their laps; but not always, for the women had their own ideas about decoration as well as sanitation; and sometimes there were tables and benches. The indispensable minimum was no more than a facility for sterilizing containers; but often there were proper dishes and flowers, and scales for measuring progress. The haughtiest matrons in Puerto Rico, who would not come to La Fortaleza on a social occasion because the Tugwells were friendly with the Populares (among other offenses), came habitually to spend many hours a week at stations they regarded with a mixture of maternal solicitude and jealous ownership. I do not exaggerate when I say that I have seen tears in the eyes of the hardest-boiled newspapermen on visits to these stations. The children came at the appointed hour, sometimes alone, sometimes with older brothers or sisters, and stood in line with the heartbreaking obedience of malnourishment. Sometimes there were two or three hundred. When they were admitted they sat in expectant rows waiting for their glass or their bowl. The hunger of children is not a thing men like to see; it brings home too crudely our social failures. These tiny creatures came out of the slums or the dirt-floored bohíos. A touch of genius in organization, a call to the sources of solicitude in women, an appeal to governmental administrators—these had sufficed to create something which expressed love for those who are to come after us and faith in their future beyond the superficial appearance of failure.

It made one think that sometime these and other children like them might not only have daily food, but homes and schools and opportunities to express the genius to be seen in so many of those dark eyes. The contemplation of this success against all the handicaps of war, indifference, administrative inexperience, and so on, always made me very humble. It had been done without a governmental dollar, so to speak, only a provision of governmental food, and without anyone being paid or in any way profiting from it.

No one was openly going to attack this work. The feminine half of the Puerto Rican population would have punished painfully such an outrage. Nevertheless it was too successful and too closely connected with me not to be attacked indirectly. I am not going to dwell on this—on the motives of Time or of Mr. Drew Pearson and others. They did not affect the work and the lady was indifferent. I mention it in passing as one of the lower manifestations of human nature in my long experience. I want also to make an acknowledgment: one of the proprietors of the newspaper which attacked me so long and so viciously was almost religious in his devotion to this cause. My wife and he labored together harmoniously to support it; he helped to raise a voluntary fund for better utensils and fuel for sterilizing them. We met thus
on common ground. Ultimately he would become at least tolerably reconciled to the Tugwell regime; and it was partly because of this, I suspect, that he would modify his paper's attacks.

It is easy to say of this that giving children daily bread and milk does not solve any problems. What people mean who say this is, I suppose, that the sources of income are not enlarged and that if it came to an end tomorrow the children would be foodless again in their slums. Perhaps I felt that way once. If I did I hope I never mentioned it to my wife, because she must have thought it masculine and superficial. I came to see that this large company of women were doing something which, as they knew well enough, was wholly complete in every day. A child fed is a child on the way to where children go. A father who brings home food to his family does no more than this organization was doing; and who says that a father's providing solves no problems? These women had discovered a way to repair a social failure; they were prepared to work at it as long as the need existed, for this was essentially women's business. They were in league with government, men and fathers as individuals having failed to put the rising generation on its way. And they had no intimations of superficiality. Neither, as a matter of fact, had I. I thought it the best piece of social engineering, outside a few jobs of war—and those had a destructive purpose—that I had ever seen.18

Just at the end of November the whole Puerto Rican struggle shifted to Washington. The fall offensive was coming to a decisive stage. There must have been fifteen or twenty Coalicionistas making daily rounds on Capitol Hill. Among them was Mr. Balseiro, who by now swelled like a frog and became slightly purple at the mention of my name, and Mr. Coll y Cuchí, whose talents had so impressed the Senators at the hearing on my confirmation; also Senator Padrón Rivera, whose specialty was a demagogic allusion to the style in which Governors lived at La Fortaleza. These were supplemented by a newspaper proprietor and by representatives of the comerciantes and of the Farmers' Association.19 But for once those who were friendly were in Washington too. Muñoz, Ramírez Santibáñez, Ellsworth, Pinero and several others finally went. When Muñoz got to Washington and settled down in a corner of the taproom of the Hotel Washington, he was very effective. Newspapermen and women, minor officials, Latin-Americans of all sorts clustered

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18 In 1946 the program would still be operating, having been kept going with private funds. And the women volunteers would still be at work.
19 One of the more amusing features of those days was the adoption by the Farmers' Association of Mr. Malcolm. Its officers took him along to the annual meeting of the Farm Bureau Federation. They might have saved themselves the trouble; but Mr. Malcolm was on crusade now, too, and among them they framed and got passed another of the resolutions, now becoming familiar, calling for my removal.
about him and he held forth by the hour. It was good talk. He loved cafés and the informal give-and-take of conversation. His mind eased under these circumstances; and he talked like the statesman he had somewhere within. On 8 and 9 December he testified before Senate and House Committees. He did not do very well, however, from the accounts which came to me, seeming inhibited by his surroundings. The disparity between the inferior intellectual level of the proceedings and the magnificent physical surroundings there confuses the better sorts of people. A shrewd old politico like Coll y Cuchí senses the Congressional cachet at once—the brass-spittoon-in-the-marble-hall kind of thing—and uses it. But a poet like Muñoz flounders in the shallows. He can be casual but not superficial.

One amazing incident occurred during the hearing in the House. At a certain point Mr. Bolivar Pagán, playing on the prejudices of his Southern Committee colleagues, asked with annoying effrontery if the Popular program was not socialistic, to which Muñoz replied that it was shaped, without prejudice, to Puerto Rican needs, but as to its being socialistic, that was a matter which he might refer to him—Bolivar—since he was the head of the Socialist Party in Puerto Rico. So far had the Resident Commissioner—and his colleagues—drifted from the ideology of Santiago Iglesias, whom they had succeeded, that he seemed actually to have forgot for the moment his nominal affiliation; he had, at any rate, given Muñoz the opening for a thrust which would be repeated with amusement in island gatherings for a long time to come.

As Christmas approached, the Washington proceedings were damped down. The Coalicionistas returned to the accompaniment of extensive statements of accomplishment. Muñoz and his party cut down plane travel, which he disliked, by crossing Cuba by train and Hispaniola by car. Charles Taussig went to London on Commission business. Lieutenant Thomas Karsten—former assistant to Abe, but now commissioned in the Navy—arrived to be my naval aide and helper. Mr. Fitzsimmons renewed his fiscal threats. The Senate Committee gave Mr. de Hostos two hours more in which to complain about bulk buying and importation; Muñoz made the suggestion that if I were to be withdrawn, an immediate election be held; but he was brushed aside by Republicans whose book this did not suit. And Senator Chavez announced that his subcommittee would come to Puerto Rico in January.

In view of what appeared to be an inevitable ordeal, I suggested to Abe that we have an investigation of our own, one which would comb my administration from end to end—but impartially. The trouble with what impended was that it appeared to be a political expedition and a very unfriendly one indeed, except for Mr. Homer Bone. Senator Ellender was from a rival sugar section in Louisiana; Senator Brewster was a slave to the Republican party line; Senator Taft had already committed himself on
me; and Senator Chavez, so far as Interior could inform me, was actuated by anti-administration bias and was dancing cheek-to-cheek with Mr. de Hostos. The choice of this group for counsel had fallen on a certain Mr. Ralph Bosch, who, in spite of the name, was a Puerto Rican from Harlem—and a Republicano. In view of all this it seemed a good idea to neutralize the coming attacks by an independent overhaul. But I got no response.

Muñoz reported, as had the Secretary after my letter of resignation, that the President, with whom he had had a talk, was concerned but firm. He sent word to stick it out. Muñoz said it a little anxiously, for the Coalicionistas were covering their empty-handed return by tall promises that, thanks to their efforts, I would be going within a few weeks. I relieved his mind. "But," I said, "just remember, if you want me to stay, to act as though we are equal allies."

On 18 December we read with real regret that that good rough-and-tumble fighter, Leon Henderson, finally had been forced by Congressional heckling to quit his efforts against inflation. And just before Christmas my defense counsel arrived—Mr. William Brophy—assigned by Interior to assist in our presentations to the Chavez Committee.20 I thought he would have difficulty and so did he. There was no optimism visible around La Fortaleza during that holiday season—or for some time thereafter.

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20In view of this I forewent the engagement of Mr. Sher referred to earlier.
BY CHRISTMAS in 1942 the nation had been brought fully into the orbit of war. There were some reasons for optimism, some for discouragement. We could be grateful that the people of the United States had stood up to the challenge: they were not incapable of organizing for an immense task; their sons were being quietly heroic just as their fathers had been;¹ their science seemed -to be level, after all, with Germany’s; in spite of years of peace, their military men appeared to be competent; they were even capable of carrying on war without being ridiculous about "Reds" or "Huns," and there were far fewer fantastic spy hunts and atrocity stories than might have been expected. It was impossible not to be concerned about some signs of degeneration; there was such resentment against restrictions—rationing, price controls, materials allocation and so on—that it had undoubtedly influenced the election and this seemed to run to the dangerous length of demanding a "soft" war rather than the "tough" one which those who were informed knew to be necessary; the President had not yet dared to propose the National Service Act which was needed if we were to solve the man-power crisis; the carping bitterness of the Congress which had so hampered preparatory work before Pearl Harbor was becoming the most prominent evidence of national divisiveness; and it seemed that most of the gains of the New Deal would have to be sacrificed in the appeasement of a growing legislative reaction.

The reasons for this seemed not too obscure. Those who supported in Washington between ten and fifteen thousand "legislative representatives," as lobbyists now called themselves, did not do it without hope of advantage. This number had grown from an estimated few hundred in 1933 at the time I had first gone to the Department of Agriculture, a growth which indicated not only the changed position of government in economic life but an unwillingness to trust vital interests to its uninfluenced operations. It was not new for those who hoped to profit from it to maintain liaisons at the capital. Many an old New England and Pennsylvania fortune had been founded on tariff favors or exemptions from the anti-trust laws. Back in the last century there had been numerous exploitative excursions, the boldest of which, perhaps, had been the attempt, successful for a while, to turn over to private interests the function of creating the nation’s currency. From the viewpoint of 1910-20, when I had been a student, that had looked like an aggression to end all aggressions, one whose imaginative immorality was very unlikely ever to be matched. If I consciously thought that, it was a careless reckoning. For the vast

¹Quietly, except for an ill-advised temporary policy of dragging the more spectacular of them around the country as exhibits in war-bond drives and so on. But the Army sensibly fired its publicity men after a season of this and the boys were again let alone.
regulatory attempts of the New Deal offered competitive advantages measured perhaps in billions as compared to millions in any other period. It was the fierce struggle for advantage in N.R.A., completely obscuring its intended purposes, which led to its abolition. Whatever the Supreme Court said in the Schechter case, the Justices were, in all likelihood, really actuated by the same revulsion felt by the whole public—a withdrawal from the depravities of artificial scarcity into which the agency had fallen.

Government ought to be something more than the struggle among private interests for advantage. Yet the whole Congressional process, as we plunged further into war, seemed perverted to these uses. The legislative bodies were incapable of making a policy which rose above this level or which to any degree embodied the people's aspirations; yet they persistently prevented the executive from responding to demands for action. One after another they had, with express satisfaction, killed off the New Deal agencies. And nothing was to take the place of these enterprises. The Congress even contemplated at this time, and would actually carry through a little later, the elimination of the National Resources Planning Board. This Board had been innocuous enough; and it had, moreover, maintained a policy of avoiding any criticism of the fetishes of laissez faire; it had had, nevertheless, an orientation toward the general welfare. So all its compromises were not going to save it from the lobbyists' wrath. It represented, even if poorly and weakly, the public as against private interests, and as such it could not be allowed to live.

The degeneration of democracy into a kind of free-for-all battle among those seeking private advantage seemed to be hastened rather than retarded by the exigencies of war. There were many long-developing causes for the degeneracy. There had been a moment, just after Pearl Harbor, as there had been in 1933 at the time of the bank holiday, when it had seemed that the whole nation might gather its strength behind the objectives defined by the President, smothering dissent and exhibiting an overwhelming common will. In the old New Deal days co-operation in a crisis had been dissipated in new rivalries. A similar dissipation was happening now. It seemed, even, that our fighting men were motivated by no more definitive purpose than "to get it over and get back home"—at least so it was reported by many a correspondent writing from various fronts. Men with no deeper desire than this might do a workmanlike job of soldiering but they lacked something American heroes once had had. Maybe it was not fact. Maybe they were merely like so many other Americans who could not believe in the imminence of a danger which did not actually exist within the borders of their country. Were we incapable of fighting a preventive campaign because we could not understand the implacable threats of totalitarianism?
It was true that the whole generation of young people were skeptics. But being skeptical in the scientific sense was one thing and carrying it to the length of negating any national aims was quite another. There was confusion somewhere. It seemed that young people were unwilling to accept even the definition of a world in which it was safe to be skeptical. If our enemies won this struggle there would be an end to the liberties which made free thinking possible. Could they not at least see that? To some of my young friends who were soldiers, I tried to convey my own deepening conviction of our lightness. I pointed out that I too had been a skeptic; that I had been a pacifist, a believer in non-resistance and so on; but that when my very right to be so had almost been lost I could at least understand the challenge. This was the paradox, I said, which gave our critics the right to say of us scornfully that we were eaten with such a corrosive nihilism as to be weaker than a morally convinced group, one which believed in a kind of society so strongly as to live—and, if necessary, die—for it.

Those young men to whom I put it this way seemed to be of two sorts so far as their view of this matter was concerned: those who were economic radicals and those who were reactionaries. I could not see, after probing, that other attitudes counted to anything like the degree of this difference. Those who thought themselves radical said that we had war enough against business marauders at home whose ethics were those of dogs fighting in the streets and who had not even a consistently rational policy concerning their own future, being quite willing to confide it to a system in which, as any enlightened person could see, all would perish in the mutual mass destruction of competition. Much better engineer a program which at least had social aims rather than individual ones. For this objective, the war was irrelevant.

The boys of a more reactionary sort were, on the surface, hotter for the war, but not in any very reflective way. They were choleric about it. But they were even more vociferous about the struggle within. My impression was that they would about as soon fight the "Reds" at home as the Germans in Europe. In fact there was a curious confusion about this: they were very militant, apparently because they believed in force as a way of settling everything (I thought, with a sinking feeling, of the bombastic encomiums of war we had heard from Mussolini!), but they had a leaning toward the totalitarian philosophy which was unmistakable. Why should they engage in war to suppress its prophets? They did not believe in "equality," hardly even in "equality of opportunity," and they were scornful of something they called "economic democracy," which they apparently defined naively as the equal distribution of wealth.

Very few young officers to whom I talked did not have, fairly well defined, one or the other of these attitudes. That was not so true of soldiers and sailors who were less
educated, and who usually had simple mechanical specialties to keep hands and minds busy. About these matters they exhibited an attitude which was almost as disconcerting. They were indifferent. Not that most men are not incoherent and withdrawing in the presence of great definitions which they are asked to accept or reject. They are. But this indifference went beyond that to a determined withholding of attention. Yet this seemed soluble in confidence. And I began at length to realize that they were repressed. This was evidently an army policy—not to let our fighters have an aim, because our society was not agreed as to what that aim ought to be.

When I asked my army friends about this, they evaded me. But the answer was, nevertheless, clearly indicated. This was a most disconcerting ideological discovery. Having made it, I was jolted into truing up my own attitudes. A Christmas lull furnished the opportunity. I had been a teacher and, in a way, felt as responsible as others of my generation for the mental furniture of the young officers now undertaking leadership. When we had equipped our students, along with a disciplined approach to knowledge, with skepticism concerning political and economic affairs, it had been because of honest disillusion. Between wars, we had, it will be remembered, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, to use only Presidential names as symbols of their years, and it still seemed that any other than an ironical approach to public affairs in this era would have been a travesty. We also had had, concurrently, as part of the same system, the developments of big business and high finance which had resulted in the ruinous depression.

To have approached the "new era" as a perversion of the American dream, instead, as the emboldened publicity men of those decades had tried to persuade us to do, as its embodiment, was the only honest lead a teacher could have given his students. But had we gone too far; had we obscured the ideal, the aspiration, the basic reality which lay in the American heart? I went back to Wilson with whom my generation had come into the adult experience of public affairs. Wilson’s was a mind necessary to be understood by honest—and informed—men. In the light of present events his shadow grew longer. For had he not predicted them? Writing a private letter in 1924, just before his death, he had said that twenty years would see the world again at war: it had not been delayed even that long. He saw that the same soft unrealistic turning away, the same illusion of isolation, the same unwillingness to accept the rigid movement of events from cause to effect, the same belief in having one’s cake and eating it—that all this would have its consequence, would have to be paid for.

Wilson was not a dreamer, a theorist, a long-haired professor. He was rather a tough and uncompromising Scotch-Irish Presbyterian who had been subjected to

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\(^2\)Mr. Gerald Johnson was at this time making this point forcibly in American Heroes and Hero Worship (Harper, 1943) in a chapter (VIII) he was calling "The Cream of the Jest." The "jest" was, of
the one rigorous intellectual discipline in his United States—the Johns Hopkins University as it was under Gilman. He saw that his countrymen were in danger of taking the war as a simple struggle, that they would visualize the Germans as an enemy to defeat, which task, when done, would be over for good. Wilson knew that this was not so, that the task of organizing the peace far transcended that of ending the war. This accounts for the outpouring of sincere eloquence, equaled only a few times in our history and never in such volume from one man, defining the aims of war—to "make the world safe for democracy" as its culminating slogan went. The peacemaking had showed, if it had not been clear before, that Wilson had not persuaded our armies of any mission beyond that of subduing an enemy. He could not realize this failure—which was his tragedy—because he never understood the betraying weakness in his nation. Peoples do not come to great purposes, pointed up in the absolute disciplines of unity, by the experience and with the leadership Americans had had. Official theory was against it. Did we not make a fetish of individual enterprise? Competition rather than co-operation was erected into a system. We denied that we had an aim beyond profits. Even the strain of dissent in American life did not deny this aspiration! Progressivism had had as its most prominent tenet the breaking up of large units into smaller ones so that competition could have a better chance.

Why Wilson, when he was shaping the League, did not know that his people were unrealistic, devoted to the nihilism of competition, hopeful of living safely in the sloth of a publicity man's dream, pretending that nothing which occurred beyond their borders could affect their destiny, it is hard to say. Perhaps he thought his own crusade of realism had been more effective than in fact it had. More likely, having so clear and simple a mind, he could not understand the evasive intellectual dishonesty in which American leaders had been trained, from which the rich among them had benefited, and whose fatal consequences had again and again been postponed by accident and by the hitherto unmolested natural riches in which they wallowed.

No, those of us who had dissented had taken the only way open to unevasive minds. It might have been expected that the vast expensive proof provided by the course, that we thought ourselves too smart to take up with such a theoretical invention as the League and then found that this might have been the only way to save us from another war: "Without doubt, it is a cosmic jest, the irony of ironies, this spectacle of a great nation regarding itself as too shrewd to deal with any warlock and proving it by striking hands with the Devil himself. Afraid of a new order created by Wilson, we intrusted its making to Hitler! It is a great and grisly jest but it is hardly on Wilson."

Perhaps he came to understand it. It is reported by Mrs. Wilson that on the day before he died he said that it was just as well that the League had been rejected, for clearly the people had not been up to it.
depression would have settled the matter. But the dream of easy, irresponsible and uncomplicated living had survived even that—had survived, perhaps, because President Roosevelt had insisted, at the moment of crisis, on devoting several (but a bare minimum) of billions of dollars, spread among consumers by work-relief, to the tempting out of warehouses of goods which had been otherwise sterile. Finally this spending had gone to the point of awakening the farms and factories, the productive life of the nation, even if slowly and grudgingly, thus giving employment to the idle and starting the economic spiral upward. Was this temporary salvation of the economic system well received? Everyone knows it was done to the accompaniment of wails and groans and against the most violent opposition of press and pundits. And upon the turning of the balance toward recovery, the lesson, instead of being taken to heart, had been repudiated. There had been, then, a wide conspiracy to pretend that the whole cataclysm had been caused by the measures taken for recovery.

A nation incapable of learning from experience is indeed helpless. It had been said that those who predicted disaster and preached avoidance were "theorists," were "academic," "had never met a payroll" and so were not "practical." When they were proven right by events, they were still accorded the same, or perhaps worse, treatment, still labeled with the same epithets, still officially distrusted. But when it was said that the minimum measures of the New Deal were responsible, the ultimate hypocrisy had been reached; for those who said it knew that it was false. They said it, risking the further disaster of such counsel, in complete cynicism, because they themselves would gain, they thought, from their country's loss. What is to be said of a nation which honors such counselors? That it deserves what it gets? To say that is to say a futile thing. It is to confuse people with an abstraction—a nation does not suffer penalties; its people suffer them—the innocent with the guilty. Those who honor truth and whose integrity is uncompromising are in no way excused from going on. Nor are they to be forgiven for becoming—as some did—communists or any other kind of anti-American pledgee. This is even worse for the soul than becoming a compromiser. Because the way is strait the believer is not excused from going down it. The nation may be morally lost; the individual who opposes the obscurantism in which it is being lost, is nevertheless saved.

Wilson had been the protagonist. To teach the lesson of his hopes and his defeat, was to teach the lesson available also from the great depression. It was true that Mr. Roosevelt was not a Scotch-Presbyterian; because he was not, he was more capable of understanding men's incapacity for facing the unpleasant consequences of their neglect. He knew too that our form of government made it easy for the sovereign people to create policy blindly and then to resent the consequences. A large part of
his Presidential life was given to saving his fellow citizens from their carelessnesses and their follies. He never tired, or if he did, he did not let it be known. Occasionally his impatience with the less sincere of his enemies showed, perhaps, in an irritable press conference, and then he was scolded severely by the publishers' sycophants. To a degree just less than was true of Wilson, he was to be frustrated. It would come in a different way because of his different character. He would give away in compromise most of his early gains, rather than lose them in one great defeat. But they would nevertheless be lost. By 1942 there was very little left of the New Deal. Soon he would repudiate it altogether.

Against the will of a growing opposition, he had brought his nation through the depression somehow; against an equally strong opposition he had begun a war outside the nation's borders, which, except for the maniacal attack at Pearl Harbor, even his costly compromises on domestic policy and his careful program of preparedness might not have been able to keep there. If the young men who had to fight this war in the (to them) far places of the earth did not understand what they were fighting for, and thought it was only "to get it over and get home again," they were no different from the country as a whole. Their fathers had thought that in 1918; and their fathers had refused to learn anything since. Their teachers (on the whole), their press, their "higher audience"—those leaders in the community to whom young men naturally look up—were devoted to the same fatal unrealism which had characterized them all along. They were still hiding its true character by calling their intellectually honest contemporaries "theorists" and "dreamers." The boys could not be blamed. But I wondered if what they had would be enough to sustain them in the machine-gunned foxholes of the desert, in the bombers rocking over bursts of flak in the night skies of Europe. Was it not too little to die for—just to get home again?

I wished for them that they might have the conviction that they were soldiers of liberty, of conscience, that they might feel the deep and unassailable honor of honesty. And I thought it the shame of our generation that we should send our young men out to actual battle without a deep inspiring—and positive—faith.

Wilson had thought he could trade on our share in the victory to secure what his mind told him was the only justification for the war into which he had led the nation. It was he who fought for the League of Nations. And not only fought—he compromised. In every other respect the peace was a cruel and unintelligent one. He gave in to everything in the interest of the League he had told the world we were fighting for. It is, after all that has happened, and even to one who understands America, still incredible that he should have been repudiated at home after prevailing in Europe. How powerful was the softness! How pervasive the unreality!
But his enemies went on calling Wilson a "theorist." That was why his League was repudiated. No one could be certain, of course, that that League would have prevented this later war. But it might have. It might have if there had been the will in America to adopt it, because that will would have seen it implemented rather than sabotaged. It could not be said that we were now in war because of the lack of a League to which the United States adhered. It could be said, however, that we were in war again because we had not believed it necessary to take precautions against its recurrence; because we had lived in a silly dream of security; because, in fact, we were the kind of people who allowed policy to be made by representatives who had no mandate; and even tolerated the neglect to have any policy at all unless that neglect suddenly caused us inconvenience or sacrifice, when we instantly rose against it, no matter what the consequences; because we were the kind of people who thought that out of competitive free enterprises the mysterious influences of a beneficent nature would arrange social progress and that by fighting each other everyone somehow mysteriously gained, even the losers in the contests. Because we projected this comfortable nihilism upon a world whose other citizens saw its weaknesses, even if we did not, we had, but for the miraculous grace of Rooseveltian leadership, perished.

Mr. Roosevelt was not perfect any more than Wilson had been. There were developing, at the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943, some very doubtful policies. It had seemed apparent to me for a long time—as has been noted—that our side was defective in what was now being called "political warfare." It had seemed to me as well as, of course, it had seemed to many others that we had an enormous potential army within the enemy’s borders to whom we should have spoken, as Wilson had, in a loud, clear voice. That could only be done, it had to be admitted, if there were agreement on our side about what to say. The Polish underground was not interested in the re-establishment of the landlords, neither were Frenchmen in the perquisites of the "two hundred families." Yet it seemed that we were so committed to the upper classes in all occupied Europe that the revolutionary force of liberalism could not be employed. It seemed that, in Africa, we had actually carried this policy into effect and now had an alliance with those who had been traitorous to the Third Republic, who were, indeed, indistinguishable from the Vichyites themselves. Was this going to be the policy in Europe: to set the kings again on their thrones, the landlords in their great houses, the bankers in their banks? If so, we really had nothing to offer the people. Where had the President’s liberalism gone now that it could be so supremely useful?

No one knew the answer to this. It was said that the African choice was a military one, that it had been made as part of a deal to avoid resistance to the occupation.
The news dispatches, as we were getting them, did not sustain this contention. It was said, again, that the President was under Mr. Churchill's domination. But why that should be, considering that we were saving the British Empire, was not clear. Presently the policy would have its logical culmination at Casablanca in the "unconditional surrender" communique which liberals everywhere instantly recognized as a fatal error. This would seem the stranger for Mr. Churchill's pointed attribution of it to Mr. Roosevelt. It could not thereafter be attributed to the British tones. It had seemed an easy lesson of history that Wilson had shortened the First World War, and saved innumerable lives, by his successful separation of the German people from their Government. And actually revolution had defeated Germany rather than a collapse of the Army. It seemed as though the same strategy, in a more favorable form, was available for displacing the Hitler group; and surely it was not contemplated that 85,000,000 Germans should be exterminated—to say nothing of 75,000,000 Japanese.

Those who thought they had read the lessons of the last war could only wonder what was developing in the President's mind or to whose influence he had succumbed. Was it the military leaders? If it was, we were in for a bad time, for instance, in Italy, if we should cut her off from the continent as now seemed to be the plan. For the "constituted Government" there would still be Fascist even with Mussolini gone. The King had been complaisant for a quarter century; and all the Italian liberals were in exile. Then there was the unpleasant thought that the doctrine of legitimacy which apparently dominated the decisions now being made would lead to self-determination as it had at Versailles, interpreting that as the recognition of the status quo ante bellum. Were we going to make inevitable another European war? It did indeed look like it.

The President had set the war beyond our borders; for that his countrymen would in the long run be grateful. But the man who had created the New Deal was apparently consenting to an Old Deal for the rest of the world—even in China, where Chiang Kai-shek still fought with the "communists" of Sinkiang, and perhaps used lend-lease materiel against them—and the President had obviously chosen not to make use of the devices which would attract our natural collaborators in the areas occupied by the Nazis, and even in Germany itself, and so weaken the enemy.

He was even lending himself to a policy which would seem to strengthen the grip of the Nazis on their people. "Unconditional surrender" meant that all must win or lose
together. If Germany never had had unity before, she was being presented with it now, and not by Dr. Goebbels but by those who shaped our political warfare.⁴

Mr. Roosevelt may have been governed by hidden considerations; his course seemed to me, however, something to be expected of the leader of a military state, rather than of a democracy. This was perhaps one reason why, in our tradition, the civil and the military had been so carefully kept separate—so that the people in other lands might never be governed by our military. Had the President become more Commander in’ Chief than President? The historical circumstances in which the original of “unconditional surrender” had been used were, moreover, wholly inapplicable in the present case. They had been handed to a defeated Commander after he had sued for an armistice. General Grant had been speaking not to the Confederacy but professionally to General Lee and his army. It would have been unlike Lincoln to use the phrase in expectation of weakening the enemy while the war was going on. He, like Wilson, had followed the opposite course, promising mercy and forgiveness. And in both instances the results had been, one would have thought, obviously good. The developing policy seemed wholly out of character for Mr. Roosevelt; but also it seemed downright unwise.

Casablanca was still, at the year’s end, a few weeks ahead. But the shape and tenor of the policy was already clear. It was in all probability just at this time (as would appear later) that the understanding genius of Mr. Arthur Koestler was in process of illuminating the compulsions of duty in our war-torn world. His Arrival and Departure was written, its introduction says, between July 1942 and July 1943—the story of a youth’s escape from a country occupied by Nazis and of his Gethsemane on neutral soil. He could find a permanent haven in America—the way was opened to him, and his tortured body demanded that choice. The claim of youth on the future to which it has a blood right also demanded that choice. But beyond and above—or shall I say under?—these claims was another: it lay in his subconscious, held there, below the threshold, by suffering, by fear and by the need of nature for

⁴Cf. the last chapters of Mr. Leland Stowe’s They Shall Not Sleep, which are a serious indictment of our political warfare. The theme of these chapters is that “the most striking fact about America today is that the United States has become the last great stronghold of conservatism; perhaps even of reaction.” Consequently we cannot understand the profound revolutionary forces moving beneath the surface of the rest of the world. This is why our policy is so fatally mistaken. “Those who have suffered most from exploitation invariably understand quite clearly who has been for them and who has been against them,” says Mr. Stowe. And he fears that our relationship to the postwar world will be shaped by our own reactionaries and will win us only hatred. In that world we are in danger of having no influence whatever; and we might so easily have become the leader in a progressive union. There was the basis for it in our own New Deal—but we have repudiated that and have joined everywhere in Europe with the exploiters against the exploited. The coming revolution will find us, he thinks, on the wrong—and losing—side.
perpetuation. It was a claim I shall have to describe in poor words with inexact connotations which nevertheless refer to an impulse more powerful than any other—the claim, then, was that of freedom against slavery; of love against hate; of sympathy against malice; of solidarity against individual salvation. It was, indeed, the claim of right against wrong. The struggle had its seat in his soul, paralyzing part of the body which was determined to escape; and eventually it dragged him off the escape ship as the gangplank was being drawn in.

Mr. Koestler had his youth write a symbolic tale, thereafter, as he waited for the assignment which would take him back into peril. The story was called "The Last Judgment." It illustrated the timeless struggle of which his protagonist now knew himself to be the field. Judgment was always being rendered and always being reconsidered. In it a few lines—an episode—put the matter succinctly:

Meanwhile the trial of the first defendant had begun. He stood facing the court, a lean ascetic man with a stoop.

'How do you do,' asked the Judge in a terrible voice, which echoed throughout the dome.

'Humbly, my Lord,' said the defendant. But his voice was thin, it collapsed in the air without resounding and fell with broken wings on the marble slabs before his feet. 'Bad echo,' roared the Judge. 'However, proceed!' 'He has sacrificed his fortune to help the poor,' said Counsel for the Defense. His face resembled the defendant's, but there was more fat on his body and more righteousness in his voice.

'On what did you dine tonight?' roared the Judge. 'On a glass of milk and a crust of bread, my Lord,' said the defendant.

The Prosecutor rose. He too resembled the defendant, but he looked even more haggard and his voice was like a lash.

'A child starved in China while he guzzled his milk and bread,' he shouted.

'Condemned,' roared the Judge; and the audience echoed in awe-stricken voices:

'Condemned, condemned.'

This will serve to point the moral I, like others, was trying desperately to understand just then. We had sent our youths into the final venture of war. Was it true that they, on their part, had gone only to "fight and get home"? They might say

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so. And we might not know any better. But the truth was that their implacable opposition to what had arisen in Europe was a compulsion exactly like that of Mr. Koestler’s Peter. This was, even if undefined, and to the incoherence of youth, undefinable, a struggle of right against wrong. It arose from a source more fundamental than the viscera which demanded safety; or even the genitals which demanded procreation.

I studied young Captain Lein and even younger Lieutenant Brookmeyer of the 32nd Fighter Squadron, stationed now at Vega Baja. They had come to our Christmas party and were as gay as any of the two hundred youngsters we had gathered together. They were the first and second in command. Commander Adair, Captain Hernández and I, in a JRF amphibian, had flown into Vega Baja one day just ahead of a storm we had been dodging for an hour and which had finally cut off our retreat to Isla Grande. The lads there had taken us in and given us lunch at their mess without fuss or self-consciousness. I had since then watched their work with perhaps a little anxious feeling. I knew that Christmas night what they must have guessed: that they were going soon where the dangers of maneuver over our cloud-topped mountains in their P-39’s, and those of patrol against submarines, were to be exchanged for the perils of combat. They were going without misgiving, aware of the probable consequences. They were sustained by an awareness of competence—that is, they had been well tested and fully trained. They were full of physical and mental health—drawn fine, as any lad had to be to handle what they called the "hot" fighting craft of their squadron. If the human race could in future be fathered by the flying men of this war there could be more expectation of attaining Utopia: that was what I at least had thought as I had sat in their mess. It would not be a nirvana; that is to say, the issue of animal spirits in high jinks would be very nearly continuous. But there would be a sudden diminution of those phenomena which are traceable to the aggressions of neurasthenics; there would be very little malice; and there would be an amazing competence in all the mechanics of living. In contrast with the present one, that kind of world would seem to have been planned by a rational Saint.

But these boys were not running the world. They were not even running the war. It was about this time that a manifestation began which caused a good deal of comment and, among liberals, much misgiving. The turning over to the businessmen of production for war had been taken advantage of to feather a good many nests. There never had been such a bonanza for industrial adventurers, for those who, starting on a shoestring, turned up with huge concerns in a year or two, bloated fortunes made from army contracts. Many of these were inexpert with labor and ran into difficulties. They conducted something of a black market in materials too and
ran up prices. Consumers' goods, following materials, also rose in price so that, what with other reasons too, the cost of living stood at a higher level than was shown on official indexes. Labor felt that the effort to stabilize, in fact, was being evaded by all classes except wage earners. The farmers were frankly trying to coerce Congress into exempting them. Mr. O'Neal was saying that a little inflation would be a good thing—meaning food prices—and using all his mobilized forces to defeat stabilization. He had won a great victory over labor—although Mr. William Green did not appear to realize it—when Mr. Leon Henderson had been forced out of office.

Workers were needed; for the first time in a decade there was a sellers' market. And now labor was asked to forego any advantage. No rational assessment of the scene at the end of 1942 could have recorded other than amazement at the general acceptance of this self-denial. Officially the entire labor movement was at one in abjuring strikes for the duration. None of labor's self-respecting leaders, however, could view the spectacle of the businessmen's orgy without protest. And sometimes controversies became acrimonious. In a few cases the military services had had to intervene and temporarily take over factories, utilities and so on. And there were some strikes. Usually they were unauthorized and usually begun under the greatest provocation. But they had caused an enormous resentment among the men of the armed forces, especially those at distant posts. This, in itself, seemed to me significant—a kind of rebellion against the whole arrangement for war. Here they were, these boys, undergoing all the risks and hardships entailed by their service. And here were workers at home betraying them. Strikes in war industries! That was enough to enrage anyone who possessed a modicum of common sense. Yet it most vividly illustrated the paradoxes and tensions of our system of conflict. The boys who were infuriated at labor really resented chaos, resented the fact that behind them there was not a nation united in purpose but one still devoted to private and individual advantage—even at the expense of the thing, the idea, for which they had been asked to make so great a sacrifice.

They felt betrayed. It was as though an ideal had been exposed as a fraud. A civilization worth dying for ought to be worth the sacrifice required just to produce the materials required by its fighting men. . . .

I did not discover why the boys were willing to go to war, exactly, but there was no doubt of their willingness, or at least that of most of them, and the faults of definition were not theirs. They felt it. Others should have externalized their inner compulsion—as Wilson had once done. It was not fair to ask them to fight unless it was as the tempered instrument of a great purpose. Surely nothing less is worth the
risk of death or mutilation—and surely the protection of a divided house is not a great enough purpose.\footnote{6}

This was even more true of the Puerto Rican youngsters. Aside from a few of the more extreme \textit{independentistas} no one questioned the extension of the Selective Service Act to Puerto Rico. This seemed on the surface a rather remarkable evidence of solidarity with the United States, but here again the motives for acceptance were uncertain. Among the less literate and more primitive the pay and keep were a considerable factor; and for a long time quotas were filled by volunteers without resort to actual empressment. Knowledge of this contributed to the suspicion of continental officers that such recruits would not stand up to battle. But this did not apply to thousands of others with education or training, whose sacrifice of years was as great as that of other American youths. They must have had a motive. Some of them, it is true, were attracted by the prospect of being officers; and their mothers were reconciled to the decision by the belief that they would have only garrison duty in the Caribbean. But a good many had more than this in their minds; and there was even some agitation for battle duty. This last may have originated partly in resentment at the implied lack of courage in keeping them at inactive posts. But again, most of it must have been genuine.

The conclusion was inescapable about the Puerto Rican lads as about the continental ones, that they knew better what it was all about than did their elders; not necessarily in any articulate way but nevertheless with assurance. For them it was, for one thing, simpler. Their house might be divided; but they judged that the division was a superficial one, running no lower than, perhaps, politics or at deepest, economics, and not touching the moral levels at all. And if economic and political attitudes were inconsistent with acknowledged moral criteria, that meant no more than that the older generation was confused. They were caught up in a system which was an impermanent and perhaps a traitorous expression of aspirations which would be reached somehow even if the faulty system had to be scrapped. This broad underlie, this deep moral base which they touched and found sustaining in moments

\footnote{6 The analysis of sympathetic and acute observers as our effort gathered momentum was a little pathetic. This, for instance, was the best that Mr. A. J- Liebling could say (in The Road Back to Paris, p. 207) : "I knew that the quality of American troops would be good, once they had paid their entry fee with a couple of bobbles, because Americans are the best competitors on earth. A basketball game between two high-school teams at home will call forth enough hardness of soul and flexibility of ethic to win a minor war; the will to win in Americans is so strong it is painful, and it is unfettered by any of the polite flummery that goes with cricket. This ruthlessness always in stock is better than the fascist kind, because the American kid wears it naturally, like his skin, and not self-consciously, like a Brown Shirt. Through long habit he has gained control over it, so that he turns it on for games, politics and business and usually turns it off in intimacy. He doesn't have to be angry to compete well."}
of introspection or exaltation was what reassured them and created that feeling of continuity, permanence and necessity for which a man may die. The boy alone in the stratosphere, or in a solitary outpost, had a spiritual experience he communicated to no one. But as the war went on one could feel a gathering purpose in the generation of service men to make the world worthy of that experience. It might be frustrated, because the act of externalization would perhaps call for more discipline, more sacrifice, more expenditure of moral force than would survive into a disorganized peace. A hold on motive which would do for war might not do at all for peace. One urgent question was whether service men were only service men—whether their worthiness would survive the military life. The postwar world might—probably would—be a chaotic one in which, just to live and love, a man would have to forget everything else and scratch gravel. But meanwhile he might dream; he might even resolve. Something might come of it. Those whose interest was in keeping things as they were always counted on the inexperience of youth, on his early entanglement in a family affection which would make him forget his dreams, and on the vast pressures of approval and disapproval which exist in complete disjunction from such aspirations as seize men risking death for a civilization. There might, however, come a time of crisis when there would be the requisite emancipation together with inspiring leadership. If it did, those moments of revelation, of certainty, of security in a permanent human experience, shared by many others, would find their embodiment in a better institutional structure, in what men have always spoken of as "a new world."

So our youths were not skeptics after all, it seemed. They did not need to have pointed out to them the distinction between the scientific method—the detached resort to objective test—and faith in human purpose. They could see as well as any philosopher the threat of totalitarianism to the small increments of freedom and dignity which had been made secure in the Western world. They could see that a gang which burned books had to be taught the lesson that our cultural inheritance is precious. They could not see it very clearly, perhaps, but they were certain in the presence of Tightness and willing to fight for it. They might do it with a cynical air, with ribald allusion covering the deeper layers of feeling. Indeed that was de rigueur; for these were not matters to which any words they knew were appropriate and they had no intention of seeing their sentiments cheapened.

It cannot be denied that we were doing badly by these heroes of ours. What was being called the home front was an almost obscene exhibition of betrayal. There were not only the strikes which so infuriated the men at the front—one returned soldier lay in wait for Mr. John L. Lewis and expressed his displeasure by a blow on the nose—but there were other evidences that even in war we were devoted to dog-
eat-dog activities not to be reconciled with the vast interlocked co-operative effort required. There was not only an exacerbation of the chronic worker-employee suspicion (only somewhat mitigated by official renunciations); there was also a complete withdrawal from sacrifice by many large groups who were in a position to enforce their claims. The most notable refusal was the exhibition of advertising to which man power, paper and other materials were devoted in amazing quantities. The favored position in a money-getting society into which the great and growing business of publicity had elbowed itself was, instead of being reduced for the war, expanded into a flatulent parody of all that was sacred to the fighters. There was one well-attested story current at the time which illustrated not only the fact but the reaction to it.

A member of the Ninth Air Force in England, which was tangling almost daily with the Luftwaffe, pinned on the bulletin board of his barracks one of the full-page, many-color advertisements which were being run in the million-copy slick-paper magazines (at government expense, since they were added to costs on cost-plus contracts). This was a blatant and phony representation of the American plane being flown by the squadron; and its caption read, "Who's afraid of the big Focke-Wulf?" The commanding officer wrote beneath it, "I am," and signed his name. Whereupon every last man in the squadron also signed.

This was heartening. It was a notice to those at home that no one at the front was being fooled and that a day of reckoning would come. I for one hoped profoundly that this resolve would not end in frustrated irrelevancies. The process of embodying the purest motives in institutional structures is overcomplex for the patience of youth. And the way is beset by blandishment, by demagoguery and by selfishness. A realistic person could not but admit that probably nothing would come of it. The air-force officer who made the profound gesture of repudiating the shoddy hangers-on of the war effort, and those others who signed with him, had had a single lightninglike instant of illumination, a momentary penetration of eternity. It might never come again, strong and flashing. But with luck it might, and might issue in vast changes. We should not know until the boys came home.

We made the Christmas party as much like traditional ones as we could and we had as many of those who were away from their families as we could pack into the big public rooms at La Fortaleza. -Some fifty sat down to dinner and afterward hundreds more were asked to come and make as merry as they could. An army band at one end of the great open spaces of marble and mirror and a navy band at the other played for the dancers. The punch bowls were kept full. There were any number of lovely Puertorriqueñas. To open the proceedings I had climbed on a chair and read a Christmas poem and we had all sung carols. With a gesture we had
disclosed a tintello tree from our own forest, and with all the lights and tinsel it could hardly be distinguished from the traditional hemlock—unless one looked too closely, and all of us Northerners knew better, by now, than to look too closely at anything in the subtropics. It was a good party. Hardly any of those who were there would be around for the next one. Many, indeed, would never be around for another.

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WHEN THE HOLIDAYS WERE OVER we really got to work with Mr. Brophy. After a week with our papers he was ready to say that our case was good—in fact he was amazed that, with all we had done, any question could have arisen. This indicated that he had approached the matter as a lawyer, and it seemed well to suggest to him that our work would not be given anything like a trial. It was even possible that the better it was, the worse for us. The impending Congressional investigations were going to be carried out without the rules of evidence with which he was familiar; and without the purpose in mind of determining guilt or innocence. Our side would not be unrepresented—we counted on Senator Bone—but there would not be an impartial judge and there would be no counsel for defense. It might be that, because our case was good, hostility to the ideas we represented might be more intense and our hearing less fair. Perhaps he would be able to do no more than to prepare a statement and demand its inclusion in the record; not even that, perhaps, since we should not be allowed counsel. Beyond a statement—which would be of interest only to some future historian—we should be at the mercy of the conflicting interests which were playing about our case. He might work with prospective witnesses to a certain extent; but this had its own dangers and could only be done with caution. This difficulty being taken into account, he departed again for Washington with an altered conception of how to proceed.

The outline was something like this: as a public figure I had carried over, even after a gap of years, the synthetic personality fastened on me by the embattled advertisers, publicity men and lobbyists, not to mention the rivals for Presidential favor. The elements of this stereotype were contradictory; that is to say, I was a boondoggling "theorist" and yet so effective as to be "dangerous"; I was extravagant and a waster, yet if I were not watched I should succeed in reorganizing large areas of American life. This kind of jumbled asseveration seemed, however, to frighten certain people because of its very confusion. I was a person to be distrusted, from whom any kind of crazy proposal could be expected together with the insane energy to carry it out. I had always failed in everything I had undertaken; therefore I must be a failure in anything I should undertake in future. This did not need proof. It was,
in fact, impervious to proof of an adverse sort. And if it was not consistent with the fears that I might be effective in an almost revolutionary sense, that inconsistency was a kind of added basis for distrust. If what I wanted to do—which was never exactly explained—was a failure, it proved that I had been wrong; but if it succeeded it was worse because it was anyway "un-American," or "Red" or "socialistic," and so, dangerous!

Mr. Brophy had not realized, at first, that he was taking on a client who was a special object for consistent smearing by the press, who was opposed by business interests, who was positively hated by the larger farmers and by the reactionary elements among labor organizations, and who was the object of intermittent attack by the Washington lobbyists. It was reasonable to suppose that the movement to oust me would go with a whoop in a Congress more antagonistic to the President and closer to the business-farmer-labor lobbyists than any since 1932. And there was the special fact that almost the whole of the Southern representation seethed with bitterness against everything Mr. Roosevelt stood for and would regard a slap at me as a backhanded blow at him—and one to which no penalties were attached because of the reputation so carefully fostered for me by the press. All this had to be considered. And it was unlikely that any Congressional group would—or even could—penetrate the layers of falsity and prejudice and reach an impartial judgment. To expect it of them was unreasonable. They were inveterate watchers of the newspapers; they were sensitive to public feeling; they were far from being crusaders for lost causes. What could be expected except that they should confirm what had already been announced in loud, firm tones by the Hearst papers, the Herald Tribune, and even the New York Times in its own stuffy way? There would not be lacking those who would present them with what would be announced as facts to prove every possible allegation of misconduct and misfeasance.

There was, of course, another element in the matter which Mr. Brophy and I did not discuss but which deepened the pessimism of our small group. He represented the Department; and we knew that the Department was so vulnerable in the matter that one who was briefed for its protection as well as ours would be strongly tempted to blame the only other agency involved—and that was the insular Government. How Mr. Brophy was to get through an "investigation" without precipitating nasty recriminations between Washington and San Juan, I could not see. Of course, the worst offenders had now disappeared. Mr. Fortas was too new as Under Secretary to share any blame; and Mr. Ickes was too remote. Nevertheless, we knew well enough that if rebukes were going to be passed out they were going to be deflected from the Department if it could be arranged.
After thinking over his problem Mr. Brophy asked me what I thought was the most dangerous threat. I replied that it was undoubtedly the Auditor's office. For one thing Mr. Fitzsimmons seemed to be bursting with that frustration which comes from having made predictions which have turned out to be so inaccurate that they can be explained only with great difficulty. In estimating revenues he had not been ten or fifteen per cent off, but more than fifty. And on the basis of such forecasts he had sturdily advocated a reduction of health and educational services which would have caused incalculable suffering. There were many other evidences of ineptitude, strangely teamed with aggressive interferences in matters of policy (which were not his business), all of which had been proved by events to be unwise if not disastrous. His state of mind must be one which would lead to extreme attempts at recovery and reprisal in the atmosphere furnished by an investigation directed at me.

He ought to have been replaced long ago by a happier man—another instance of Departmental delay which was inexcusable.

After thinking it over Mr. Brophy decided that since he had Secretarial credentials he had better be direct. So he called on Mr. Fitzsimmons and gave him instructions concerning his place in government. He met such outright defiance, however, that he had to retreat, merely presenting futile directions for maintaining silence. The veneer had disappeared and his declarations were quite open about what he intended to do to me. I was glad that some time previously, after Interior's delay had become embarrassing, I had requested an answer to a letter I had written. I had asked him to say, since rumors apparently emanating from his office, and being made much of in the press, indicated that I somehow had been involved in or had condoned financial irregularities, whether he knew of any such. I pointed out that as Governor I was entitled to know even of suspicions. I demanded a reply. He was forced to say that he knew of none and that if there were any he would be obligated to inform me. Knowing what had happened in similar instances, I felt safer with this letter in my files. Many an executive, who must sign a hundred papers a day with no better basis for action than trust in his subordinates, together with casual assurance of regularity, has been let down in this way. It did not seem impossible that something like that might have been arranged to be produced at the proper dramatic moment in the impending proceedings. Mr. Brophy thought so too in his amazement at the open refusal of Mr. Fitzsimmons to take instructions or to recognize authority. There was interest in the case, also, in other places. The private power people were still hoping to get back their profitable properties; in fact, the U. S. Circuit Court in Boston had just said that these had been taken illegally under the so-called Lanham Act. The Water Resources Authority was still in possession; and a new taking would be devised under the "First War Powers Act"; but a long and
complicated legal struggle was in prospect during which the Washington possibilities would not be overlooked. Much could be made there of our "socialistic" aggression on private business.

But power was not all. There was in prospect a similar set-to with the International Telephone and Telegraph Company—Mr. Sosthenes Behn, President—who wanted to keep the insular telephone lines in spite of the fact that their franchise was to expire during the coming year. Mr. Behn had already hinted at the desirability of collaboration.

During the first week in January of 1943, also, there was handed down in the San Juan District Court a decision of Judge La Costa in the matter of the law permitting the insular Government to take over the water-works systems. These systems, said the Judge, were the private property of the municipal authorities and could not be taken by the Government. So this law would have to be carried to the Puerto Rico Supreme Court—and, doubtless, higher—which would require at least a year.\textsuperscript{164} During this time the Coalicionistas, to whom the water system was a genuinely prolific source of patronage, would be carrying on an extralegal campaign of abuse. It was the attempt to reorganize this water system, so inadequate and so dangerous to health, which had been the occasion for the first screams of rage, just after my inaugural speech, from Mr. Bolivar Pagán. He could be counted on to keep it up and to devise new variations. And he would be given adequate facilities for his campaign by one local newspaper even though the newspaper professed, in long and virtuous editorials, to be as anxious as the rest of us about more and purer water.

Mr. Brophy had taken on a job of work! And he had hardly got back to Washington when we were sandbagged by Senator Vandenberg. On 5 February he announced a new scheme "to get rid of Tugwell." He proposed an amendment to the Organic Act declaring the governorship vacant and fixing a new term of office.\textsuperscript{165} The object of this was not so much to force my resignation as to bring me before the Senate for reconfirmation, thus giving all my embattled enemies a chance at me through their favorite representatives. Senator Vandenberg was, of course, acting for Mr. Malcolm, among others, and was undoubtedly convinced that he had a good case. On 19 January the Senate Committee on Territories would vote 9-3 to approve the Vandenberg measure. This action would be taken in spite of a vigorous argument from Secretary I ekes—the first of a number of statements from him during that

\textsuperscript{164}See decision on appeal: Government of the Capital v. Executive Council of Puerto Rico. Appeal from the District Court of San Juan, 8703, 20 April 1944. We won this case.

\textsuperscript{165}S. 40. A Bill To Provide that the term of office of the Governor of Puerto Rico shall expire upon the enactment of this Act and at the end of each two-year period thereafter.
year which, taken together, form an admirable representation of the liberal point of view. The necessity which called them out was, however, the sinister nature of the attitude prevailing in the 78th Congress, something it is not so pleasant to recall:

Memorandum on the Constitutionality of S. 40.

This bill provides that the term of office of the Governor of Puerto Rico shall expire sixty days after the enactment of this Act and at the end of each two-year period thereafter. Fourteen days after the bill was introduced it was reported favorably by the Senate Committee after an executive session. No hearings were held.

Senator Vandenberg, when introducing S. 40, indicated that he hoped in this way to escape the ordinary limitations upon legislative removal of executive officers. He recognized that his objections did not rise to the level which would warrant an impeachment proceeding; he recognized that the President might, as did President Coolidge, reject as an invasion of executive power a Congressional recommendation for executive removal; and he recognized the unfairness of attaching a rider to an appropriation bill. S. 40 was proposed as "the answer to this dilemma."

It is true that S. 40 undertakes to oust Governor Tugwell from his position through a different method than any of the other alternatives, but this is not sufficient to save its constitutionality. S. 40 would be valid only if its purpose and effect did not include a legislative removal of the Governor... .

I. S. 40 Circumvents the Impeachment Provisions of the Constitution

The power to remove an executive officer of the government is vested exclusively in the President of the United States. It is a power coincidental with the power to appoint. The power to remove is not a legislative power; the only way in which the legislature can remove an executive officer of the government is through impeachment and only for the reasons specified in the Constitution,...

No impeachment charges have been brought against Governor Tugwell and S. 40 is an attempt to impeach him by an indirect method which would, if successful, wholly circumvent the impeachment process. It is not to be thought that the framers of the Constitution would have taken such elaborate pains with the impeachment clause had they supposed Congress could by this device so simply remove an executive officer.

II. S. 40 Violates the Fundamental Constitutional Principles of Separation of Powers

The powers of each of the three principal departments of government are, under the Constitution, separate and apart and each is free from the control or coercive
influence, direct or indirect, of each of the other two. Indeed, the members of the first Congress for this reason eliminated a phrase from the bill creating the Department of State which declared that the President alone could remove the principal officer of the Department. This was done because the Congress recognized that the power to remove was inherent in the executive and it did not therefore wish to insert a provision which would imply that the executive power to remove was delegated to the Chief Executive by legislative authority.

The President is charged with the responsibility of taking care that all of the laws of the United States are faithfully executed. Therefore, the President has the power to choose those persons in whom he has the greatest confidence and those who, in his opinion, will most ably facilitate the discharge of that responsibility. Governor Tugwell has been appointed to such a position of trust. His appointment was affirmed by the Senate and his character and fitness passed upon in accordance with law. And, so far as the adequacy of his performance is concerned, it may be noted that his administration has been commended by a resolution passed in both Houses of the Puerto Rico Legislature and by a memorial signed by more than 314,000 American citizens residing in Puerto Rico. Should the Governor fail in his duty, the President and the President alone has the power to remove him. Removal of an executive officer is, under elementary principles, an executive and not a legislative function.

III. S. 40 Violates the Constitutional Prohibition Against Legislative Punishment of Individuals

A bill of attainder is a legislative act which inflicts punishment without a judicial trial. It has in times past been used arbitrarily to deprive persons and even whole classes of people of their civil, political and property rights without trial or re-hearing. Bills of attainder have had a bloody history in England. Nor were they foreign to the several Colonial Assemblies here in this country during our early period. Article I, Section 9, was adopted to make certain that the Congress would be prohibited from passing bills of attainder. Such a prohibition secures to each the enjoyment of all civil, political and property rights without fear of punitive Congressional action and prevents legislative infliction of punishment without affording the accused the safeguards of a judicial trial.

S. 40, if enacted, would be a legislative determination aimed directly at Governor Tugwell and Governor Tugwell alone. It would be a legislative act inflicting punishment without trial. The Congress would thereby exercise the function of the office of judge, and in the language of textbooks, assume "judicial magistracy." It would pronounce upon the guilt of the Governor without any of the forms or
safeguards of trial. This it would do without any of the judicial protections requiring proper proof and evidence—in fact without any opportunity for the Governor even to defend his position or to express his views. The prohibition against bills of attainder, together with the constitutional requirements of elementary fair play found in the due-process clause of the Fifth Amendment, condemns legislation such as S. 40.

It is true that S. 40 does not seek to imprison the Governor of Puerto Rico or to seize his property, but it is not to be supposed that the great guarantees of the Constitution against unfair legislative action are meaningless so long as the bill is directed only at a man's honor and his continuance in office. "The Constitution deals with substance, not shadows." If a man may not constitutionally be subjected to a small fine without knowing the charge against him and without an opportunity to be heard, much less can he constitutionally be ousted from official position by legislative action based upon unknown grounds, and consummated without notice to the accused or opportunity to be heard in his own defense. . . .

No principle of our law is more cherished than that which ensures that no man shall be condemned without a fair trial. No principle of our form of government is more basic than that which ensures that neither the legislature nor the executive shall control the functions of the other. S. 40 in its present form violates both principles, and is unconstitutional.

In spite of this valiant defense there were reasons for believing that some intemperate action was likely to be taken. Between the time of Senator Vandenberg's introduction of his bill and its approval by the Committee on Territories, the Chavez subcommittee had made a preliminary report which had said that the members were led "to the conclusion that these particular charges [that Mr. Ickes and I were responsible for the shipping crisis] . . . are unfounded." This report indicated, however, that there were more important fields of investigation to be covered for which the Committee needed additional funds. This teaser worked; and additional funds were approved. But meanwhile, without waiting for the disclosures hinted at, the full Committee recommended—among them Senator Brewster and Senator Chavez himself—the bill to declare the governorship vacant.

Something was blowing up. It was not possible to predict what it would be, but I began the preparation of a general statement, nevertheless, which would be useful in any case. It was calculated, as Mr. Brophy put it, "to get our bait back." In other words it looked as though I should presently have another of those opportunities my enemies had so often presented me with when I should have the
widest possible audience and the closest attention for what I should say. And I intended to use it. The White Paper was already completed after several months of effort by my wife and her collaborators. It was this, of course, which had convinced Mr. Brophy that our case was good. He had hesitated over the statement itself, however, and we were a little worried; for its most effective documents exculpated us in the only possible way—by showing how we had been hampered by Interior; and it was his first duty to exonerate the Department. The situation had been badly handled; there had been at the least dilatoriness and connivance with private interests; we thought all this would have to be admitted; and we could not see how it could well be shown that no one was responsible.

We had one break during January: Mr. Crawford made the mistake of introducing a bill to annul the "Authority" laws passed by the legislature of 1942. There was a healthy reaction to this. Even the President of the Republicanos felt obligated to issue a mild statement of protest. And since the suspicion was general that Mr. Bolivar Pagán was implicated, it was a severe setback for Coalicionistas who had appealed to dissident Congressmen in Washington. The enemy had provided an opening. Muñoz might at this point have been expected to taunt them with inability to settle their quarrels at home; and with having injured Puerto Rican interests by calling in outsiders to redress their weakness. I thought it strange that he would not use this obvious advantage until I realized suddenly that he had done precisely the same thing when he had been in the situation of the present opposition. He had, in fact, spent the better part of several years in Washington just as the Coalicionistas were doing now. He was, as the Puerto Ricans say, en pare delito—in the same boat—and so estopped from protest. Something but not much was made of it by others; the feebleness of the effort pointed again to the great mistake of the Organic Act which, in effect, invited appeal to Washington from any local political decision.

I find from my notes that 12 January was "the first day in months that a front-page attack on me was not a feature" of the newspaper for which my removal had so long been a cause. Perhaps there was no connection, but from this time on its detestation, even if unmodified, would be more temperately expressed.\(^ {166} \)

The prospect was that the Chavez investigators would be with us in February. Meanwhile Mr. Bolivar Pagán and others in Washington found a much smarter way to attack us than any they had used up to now. They began a campaign to convince

\(^ {166} \)To the disappointment of the reactionary políticos and the Chamber of Commerce. In a hearing, more than a year later, before the Bell Committee Mr. Filipo de Hostos would attribute this change of policy to threats on our part of refusing permits for the importation of newsprint, a part of his testimony which he would, after second thought, ask to have stricken from the record.
the American public that Puerto Rico with its present management was a place of violence, disorder, suppression of civil liberties and incipient revolt. This kind of picture is newsworthy always, since it is sensational; and it can be repeated frequently, with slight variations, and still carry widely. This tactic would be so effective that it would be followed right up to election time in 1944. It proved to be agreeable to the numerous editors who have to decide daily whether they will print press-association dis-patches and what place they will be given in their make-up. And the press associations co-operated by carrying repeatedly the same asseverations from the same source as fresh news. On the whole this campaign was a success. Through it Mr. Bolivar Pagán got more attention than he had had before—in fact, the only attention he had had; and the picture of administrative ineptness, extravagance and confusion already associated with my name was confirmed and elaborated.

This plan worked the better because during January there were, in fact, some troubles, with a prospect of more to come in February. We were beginning a season of strikes worse, if possible, than those at the beginning of the zafra in 1942. There was reason enough. The unchecked rise in living costs throughout two years past had not been compensated for by wage increases and workers were desperate even when they had employment; and since they believed that their old leaders had lacked aggressiveness they were in process of transferring to new organizations. These, as is usual in a transition stage, were being formed under the leadership of agitators and ambitious políticos. It is impossible to deal with such people; and, in any case, they cannot bargain for their followers because they are not trusted and will be repudiated whenever the ratification of an agreement is required of the rank and file. No appeal on the wide ground that Puerto Rican interests were jeopardized would have the least effect. It did not touch the source of the emotions which had taken charge.

With such conditions prevailing, the recovery we were experiencing with the resumption of shipping and with good crops brought on an epidemic of labor troubles, the irrational, violent, insoluble kind which only time, patience, and expert conciliation can shepherd into a period of stable organization and contractual relationships. To add to the difficulty the employers were frightened and savage. Simple strikes they inflated into "revolutions"; and demanded that force be employed. They seemed to have no perspective at all on what was happening, perhaps because of their concentration on the campaign against me in Washington and because this kind of attitude contributed so successfully to the impression they were trying to establish there. Also, of course, the habit many of them had of treating workers like animals might be responsible for a real fear of what would
happen as a result of the new liberties being achieved under the Popular regime. Reprisal for years of toil and hardship would have been logical. At any rate they lived in constant state of dismay and felt a continuous need for recrimination. They accepted no blame, of course, and without the slightest hesitation transferred to the Populares the whole weight of responsibility for the hatred which their own follies had earned.

If I thought by this time that everything possible had been produced in the way of insult and injury I was mistaken. Another experience was coming up. Mr. Lear, some time before, had begun a daily radio program the purpose of which was to publicize the doings of government. This innocent attempt on his part to create good will was hotly resented. One large San Juan newspaper had been accustomed to maintaining pipe lines into the Governor's office and making what use it liked of the information obtained in this way. This practice had come to seem like a right and any attempt to stop it or to put out authentic news in competition with it was professed to be regarded as an attack on the freedom of the press. After several really confidential letters had found their way mysteriously into print I refused reporters the freedom of the inner offices and gave them a press room near the entrance and on a lower floor. A number of other changes, including some in the secretarial staff, closed at least some of the pipe lines; but resentment was hot. Much of the campaign in recent months had harped on the theme of restraint. But I had thought a Governor entitled to a few private desks and files and had reconciled myself to a season of blackmail in order to keep them.

One day there was a slip. Something was said on the radio program which infuriated the officials of the Farmers' Association and they sued both Mr. Lear and me for criminal libel. The Government, it seemed, had bought a building just up the street from La Fortaleza to accommodate the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget. The Farmers' Association had its office there and refused to vacate. It was said on Mr. Lear's radio program that they would neither leave nor pay rent. At once we had another cause célèbre. And, incredibly enough, a Coalicionista municipal judge found not only Mr. Lear, but me as well, who had nothing whatever to do with the program, guilty of criminal libel and fined us $200 apiece. The object was, of course, to manufacture another incident to bolster the thesis of dictatorial oppression. A conviction for criminal libel had a horrendous sound; and it made an excellent follow-up for the recent stories of the smearmen and was widely used in the States, nothing being said, of course, about the background. The Judge was within a month of retirement anyway; and reversal in a higher court was unlikely within that time. When the case would get to the District Court shortly it would be thrown out with ridicule; but remarkably little attention would be given to it then—
other stories suddenly would be more important! I have the impression that not a single continental paper found the critical remarks of Judge Cordovés Arana worth printing. They did not fit the thesis.\textsuperscript{167}

The idea was, of course, to set the scene for the visit of the Chavez Committee. There was need now on the part of the opposition to produce for the continental visitors visible evidence of the fantasy they had created. It was one thing to describe conditions for those who would never visit the spot; it was quite another to maintain the fiction against contrary reality. However, having gone so far, and having put so much into the campaign in money and effort that they half believed it themselves, our enemies were not going to retreat. They went boldly on—and over the cliff!

For the Chavez group came, and after taking a look for themselves, made up their minds that they had been hoaxed by their Washington informants. There were a lot of goings on, of course, for the Committee had its own position in the matter to consider. Its members had been pretty solemn about a crisis in asking for investigating funds; and had made quite an investment of time and prestige in Messrs. de Hostos, Balseiro, Bolivar Pagán and others of the same sort. Several of them also had voted for the Vandenberg bill. They could not afford to let themselves down completely. There were, right from the first, however, twinkles in the Senatorial eyes which changed the atmosphere a good deal.

The gas went out of the Coalicionista bag so fast that the sound of deflation could be heard quite clearly as far away as Washington; and in San Juan it smothered the shrill testimony of our detractors. Presently—although they were careful enough never to say a good or pleasant word about me—the Chavez group would become known as a "whitewash committee." Members of the later group led our way by Mr. Bell would take some satisfaction in this and resolve for themselves to do better.

\textsuperscript{167}Decision of Judge Rafael Cordovés Arana delivered n February 1943 in the District Court of San Juan, Don Miguel Martorell for Farmers' Association of Puerto Rico v. Governor Rexford Guy Tugwell and the Coordinator of Information, John Lear: "The evidence has convinced us that the argument . . . does not establish libelous defamation . . . The Attorney had to prove that this . . . article was published by the accused with the express purpose of exposing the plaintiff to public abhorrence, scorn and ridicule. Interpreting the article reasonably, and with an unbiased mind, it does not impute to Don Miguel Martorell any delinquency, nor does it say anything about him tending to undermine his honesty, honor and good name . . . The deductions of the witnesses . . . are illogical, absurd and capricious . . . If this is the interpretation of such declarations made over the radio, would not the seven words of Christ on the cross be libelous in the judgment of Pilate? and the words of Lincoln at Gettysburg, would they not be libelous to the Southerners? . . . If we were to give this kind of interpretation to declarations we hear daily, would we not have lost freedom of the press, of thought and of speech? . . . "}
The legislature was meeting in annual session just as the Committee was arriving. In fact I stopped at the Capitolio to read my annual message on the way home from meeting Senator Brewster, who came a day or two after the others and after they had left for a trip in the country. It was the worst possible time to entertain investigators looking for evidences of inefficiency and disturbance, what with the natural turmoil of an opening legislature, with the cost of living not yet under control, with the sugar crop delayed because of strikes, and with the citizenry still in fear of submarines and food shortages; but there was nothing we could do to change the time and so we only hoped for the breaks. There was, however, one fortunate characteristic which distinguished this from other groups of its kind: Senator Chavez spoke Spanish. When it was decided, therefore, to make a journey through the island instead of beginning hearings at once, we were much relieved. It would be impossible, we thought, for them to miss the temper of the people.

They did not miss it either. Stopping at little colmados and cafetines, going into the cane fields, questioning people on the streets, they sensed what was going on and how it was regarded in spite of all attempts to guide their inquiries and influence their reactions. These were formidable. All the wealthy landowners laid themselves out to provide entertainment and incidentally to relate their wrongs. Committee counsel, Mr. Bosch, lent himself to this attempt in a kind of bungling way because he was vaguely reactionary; but his inefficiency would have defeated the purpose if the legal fraternity had not come to the rescue. The Committee was guided each noontime and evening into a gathering of respectable whiners. The result, however, was not what they expected; and we were relieved to see how things were going.

For the provincial men of wealth put a case which might have got sympathy about 1883 but not in 1943. Their complaints about labor proceeded, as the Senators were not too dull to discover, from a nominal wage of $1.60 for a day and some $350 for an average year, which they nevertheless regarded as ruinous; also from sabotage of the collective-bargaining principle by the corruption of the union leaders; also from the maintenance of company houses and stores and other like survivals from a past age of more or less forced labor.

The complaints about the Government proceeded from a belief that the police ought to be used to keep troublesome lower classes in order; from objections to an income tax; from a revulsion against any regulation of business; from an instinct for small governmental budgets, no relief, little education, no health work and so on. The managers of the campaign were so stupidly intent on relating their wrongs that they failed to observe a rising irritation not only on the part of Senators Bone and Ellender but of Senator Taft as well. The climax came on the last night of their journey, in Ponce. They were being entertained at the Club Deportivo and paying for
it by being lectured to. Finally Mr. Taft, being the worm in the case, turned on a prominent sugar lawyer, an expensive one, who had been particularly pontifical and outrageous. "Are you trying to tell me," he asked incredulously, "that it is unconstitutional for the Government to take and operate power systems?" Sugar counsel had been telling him just that. Mr. Taft turned red and talked back; and Mr. Bone did some talking for him. Mr. Taft indicated that because he was a Republican and known to be a conservative he was not necessarily an antediluvian and certainly not so bad a lawyer as to become confused between what was politic and what was legal. Mr. Bone, with some amusement, referred to the part Mr. Taft's father, the Chief Justice, had had in shaping the legal concepts to which there was so much objection.

Why, in their attempt to convince the Senatorial investigators, the lawyers especially, knowing as they must that most of the group were lawyers themselves, and at least one of them—Bone—a famous public power advocate, should have insisted so tactlessly on the illegality of public ownership, it is impossible to explain. It is true that the Water Resources Authority's taking proceedings were then current and that all the insular reactionaries were insisting that it constituted a grave threat to the familiar "American way of life." They were inclined to the view that the whole future of Puerto Rico depended on decision in the matter. But such an exhibition of combined insularism and reaction was bound to be taken more or less as an affront by those who were being subjected to the lessons in indoctrination. However it is to be explained, it was fortunate for us. As Senator Taft said to me a few days later—we were having a pasadía at Zoilo Méndez' place—"I'm not exactly a radical, but after all I object to being classed with those who think public ownership unconstitutional. I may not be in favor of it, usually, but Puerto Rico is a very special case." He did not go further; but we understood that we had his blessing. And he would not go back on it.

Seeing what happened to people from Washington on actual exposure to the Puerto Rican troglodytes, I asked Abe, after the Senators had been here a few days, to invite the House Committee to visit us as well, offering them hospitality and every facility for investigation." He had told me earlier that the Committee was in a sweat to act on Mr. Vandenberg's bill to declare the governorship vacant and that he was using delaying tactics. He had wanted requests to be heard from Puerto Ricans; and I had passed this on to Muñoz. But getting the Committee members actually onto the Puerto Rican scene now seemed a better idea. And it would at least prevent any action until after a visit could be organized and carried out. This would prove to be a mistake on my part—the Committees were very dissimilar—but at the time it appealed to Abe too, and he relayed my invitation.
Senator Brewster had been in Puerto Rico before and wanted some sun more than anything else. While the others were in the country he was at the Beach Club. He did, however, lunch at the Bankers’ Club with one of the continental lawyers resident in Puerto Rico who was known to be unhappy about the government. Present also was a representative of the Chamber of Commerce, together with a few others. Among them they presented the Senator with an interesting theory which he later passed on to me. It was this charge, he said, which I would have to meet.

There was a movement, they said—for it amounted to that—to get all economic interests into the hands of the insular Government, beginning with the holdings of absentee Americans. There would then be a move for an elective governorship which would in effect fasten a dictatorship on the island. Such a hold could not be broken for a long time because an elected Governor, controlling so much power—and consequently votes—could not be defeated.

This theory was not new. A version of it had been printed months before in the English-language paper with more detail. That account had indicated that the Planning Board was to be the central agency through which control was to be administered. Then the Development Bank was to control industry through credit, and the Land Authority was to take all the land. We were to have a complete socialistic state. This conveniently neglected the fact that a main function of the Planning Board was to regulate private property, and that one ambition of the Land Authority was to create many private owners where before there had been only a few; also that the enormous quantities of idle capital which refused to employ itself at all had made necessary the Bank, one of whose purposes, anyway, was to lend to private enterprisers.

It was in fact a theory got up by the lawyers for absentee concerns who saw their fat fees in jeopardy. And their fees were in jeopardy, though they preferred to direct attention elsewhere. A socialist conspiracy was a frightening phantom to a good many people, including those most influential with national legislators. It suited the reputation, also, which had been fastened on me. Senator Brewster thought it a little coarse of me to mention lawyers’ fees, and I seldom discussed the matter with anyone else who did not think such talk merely an attempt to divert suspicion from our insular program. Mr. Brewster was frank about it. "You," he said, "are up against

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168 World Journal, 28 October 1942.
169 This indicated misunderstanding of the planning function in government and specifically of the Puerto Rican law, which was deliberately framed to give the Planning Board powers independent of both Governor and legislature. But presumably the casual reader was expected to overlook this. And actually, it would be ignored in the final report even of the Bell Committee. There the popular misconception would form the central thesis.
it. Congress had a lynching party all prepared for you and I don't think it can be stopped." I was bewildered. We were talking, alone, in a room of the Normandie Hotel, where I had been asked to meet the whole Committee. But the others had not yet got back from their journey. This had left us tete-á-tete. Was he trying to be friendly? Was he trying to get me to make an admission of some kind? How could I know? Anyway, I concluded, it did not matter; there was nothing to conceal: every project in the Puerto Rican program had arisen from practical need. Most of its items had been long discussed and much delayed. The Popular success in 1940 was evidence that some such action could not be put off much longer. He probably would not believe that I was a moderating influence, but I was well aware of that part of my function. I ran over some of my successes and failures in that direction. But I did not persist with him; anyway I thought he was probably right in one thing —it was a lynching party and no protests would be taken seriously. And even if that was not true of this particular group it would be true of some other, because powerful interests wanted it and would act, preferably with evidence, even if manufactured, but if necessary without any. The Vandenberg bill, he said, would pass; and I guessed that he knew.

This was neither the first nor the last I should hear of this conspiratorial fantasy. Whether it actually had its origin in the mind of one of the continental lawyers or in that of one of the smearmen, I should never know. But that it was one of the favorite horror tales at the Bankers' Club and the Country Club was evident; for it came back to me from time to time all fresh and redecorated. For instance, a few weeks later, a vice-president of one of the largest New York banks, visiting the San Juan branch, where the insular Government kept large deposits, would warn me, as an old professional in Latin-American affairs speaking to an amateur, that the Populares were using me to "get themselves fixed for a generation." What was happening, he said, was entirely acceptable so long as I remained. But a "native" Governor would use all this power to perpetuate his regime and to enrich himself and his friends. Look, he said, at the Central American countries: except for the fact that an American was assisting here in the process of acquiring control, the pattern was everywhere similar.

The expression of confidence in me was a novel touch. I had usually been pictured as the chief conspirator; in this version I was the innocent abettor of the guileful Populares. It had not after all escaped notice, then, that my efforts were going toward bettering government. Even if they could not afford to admit publicly anything so out of drawing, my enemies evidently knew it well enough. I refused to discuss the thing seriously with the solemn vice-president or with anyone else. They were incapable of conceiving that De Jesús, Moscoso, Jaime Benítez, Picó, Fernández
García, Lucchetti, Belaval, Fernós, Buscaglia, Nigagioni, Descartes, Cuevas, Sánchez—all the administrative group—were men of one mind and one service, that they could not be bought with money or gain of any kind, and many of them not even with power; that they were exactly as selfless as I was credited with being; and that Muñoz' politics, subversive of good government as I felt it to be, went no further than he judged it indispensable to go in order to hold the votes he needed—mistakenly, I was sure, but nevertheless honestly.

I had opportunities to talk to most of the Senatorial investigators privately, and always what I tried to convey to them was an appreciation of the larger issues, together with the dedication of the working group now just getting down to serious business. But others were talking to them as well. Fitzsimmons disobeyed the Secretary’s orders and appeared at a hearing. So did Frisbie. Both were squelched, but later were heard in private on representation of having information which bore on the case but could not be made public. Neither had anything, of course, except complaints that I had failed to take their advice. Frisbie and his "War Board" colleagues, not knowing—as by now the Committee did—the efforts we had made to overcome our difficulties, said that I "was responsible" for the crisis, not having built stock piles and taken other precautions recommended by them. Senator Brewster did what he could to help them out but it did not go well:

MR. TAFT: Can you tell me if the Governor has associated himself with the Popular Party?

MR. FRISBIE: That is my impression.

MR. BREWSTER: He didn’t see anyone else?

MR. FRISBIE: That is my impression.

MR. BREWSTER: I understand you had a program which, if it had moved forward, would have done much to solve the food problem?

MR. FRISBIE: We could have imported food and farm products before Pearl Harbor and the submarine attacks. Our plans called for it. General Daly said what we should do here was to follow the British idea and we would have had food after the submarine attacks cut us off from the mainland. That was before Pearl Harbor.

CHAIRMAN CHAVEZ: DO you mean to state to the committee that that program was stopped by the Governor?

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170Notice that there was no mention of the Coalicionista boycott—their refusal to have anything to do with me so long as I would not accept their dictation of appointees.
MR. FRISBIE: It was in the Governor’s hands and the hands of the Commissioner of Agriculture, and we sent up a commission to report to the Governor right after he was inaugurated. The legislature was convening and he was very busy and we didn’t get anything done.

MR. REED : I don’t think it was a case of his refusal to do anything, but it was disinterest.

MR. BREWSTER: That was after Pearl Harbor, even?

MR. FRISBIE : Yes . . .

MR. BREWSTER: He was making no constructive program to meet the crisis?

MR. TAFT : What excuses did he give?

MR. FRISBIE: We didn’t have a chance to get to him. We wrote various letters and would get answers back from co-ordinators. . . . We became so discouraged with our inability to reach the Governor and the fact that things weren’t being done and the situation we were getting into because of the lack of shipping, we finally, on the 4th of May, wrote a six-page letter to the Secretary of Agriculture outlining the situation and winding up by asking that unless we could have a change of attitude down here, we were going to ask for martial law. That letter got all over Washington and quite beyond our intentions.

MR. BREWSTER : Would you furnish us a copy of that letter?

MR. FRISBIE: Yes. And, of course, Wallace and the State Department said thumbs down on martial law.

CHAIRMAN CHAVEZ: Why did you recommend martial law?

MR. FRISBIE: We were desperate over this situation and we couldn’t see any way out.

MR. BREWSTER: YOU could see where you were headed for: and that was based on certain developments here?

MR. REED: Yes, sir.

MR. ELLENDER: What was Ickes’ attitude in regard to that?

MR. FRISBIE: I never heard what Ickes' viewpoint was but the only reply that we got from the Secretary of Agriculture was to hold the situation until we could hear from him further.
CHAIRMAN CHAVEZ: You felt that conditions necessitated your making a recommendation of that type?

MR. FRISBIE: We did.

CHAIRMAN CHAVEZ: It was unanimous?

MR. FRISBIE: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN CHAVEZ: Will you kindly submit that letter and the answer?

MR. FRISBIE: Well, I may not be very accurate about that. I will see what kind of an answer we got.

MR. ELLENDER: Well, I am certain we had the same situation in the States. It was hard to make the people realize a war was on.

CHAIRMAN CHAVEZ: You would think the Governor of a particular area would . . .

MR. FRISBIE: We realized that half our food had to come from the mainland and we could be cut off.

MR. ELLENDER: Was there any reason stated by the Governor for not stopping these projects?171

MR. FRISBIE: Yes. He said they were necessary for employment and for housing—that the population was increasing at the rate of 40,000 a year, which is very true.

MR. TAFT: You think martial law would stop that increase?

MR. ELLENDER: Did the Board recommend that martial law be established in order to compel the building projects to be stopped?

MR. FRISBIE: Not the war defense projects. We need the shipping for food.

And so it went on for some hours. Presently Frisbie would mention Mr. Gordon and what a good job he had done and how disappointing it had been to have his scheme abandoned in the fall. Then Senator Chavez asked how many agreed. Mr. Reed, Mr. Maas, and Mr. Nolla did—Mr. Nolla said, even, that Frisbie had been too moderate. But Mr. Mason entered a sour note as to Frisbie’s stock-pile scheme—it wasn’t possible, he said, to have prepared for war so far ahead, three months being the

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171This referred to an earlier complaint of Frisbie’s that I had been “facetious” about the “War Board’s” desire to put an end to housing projects at once after Pearl Harbor. Of course, I had not been facetious; but I had been sharp; and had more or less intimated that they were far afield for an agricultural committee, even if it was called a “War Board.”
limit for keeping supplies in the subtropics; and, a little indirectly, he indicated that Frisbie's friends had not tried very hard to grow food, a hard hit because it linked them with the sugar producers' refusal to co-operate in this. Mr. Bash, although a newcomer, said that he had had no lack of co-operation from the Governor, implying that possibly it was because he himself had tried to be helpful rather than dictatorial.

I heard of these private (but on the record) hearings from Senator Ellender. He and I went across to St. Thomas for a day—none of the other Senators cared to travel in a single-motored plane which was the only one available—and had lunch with Governor Harwood. This was a little journey I liked and must have made a hundred times. Senator Ellender liked it too, and said so. But my recollection of the day is that he spent most of it giving me his version of the Huey P. Long epic, which he was certainly in a position to know intimately, having been the Speaker of Huey's House and a faithful henchman otherwise. I had known the notorious Louisianian in Washington but not at home in Louisiana; and according to Mr. Ellender the program there had been much like ours in Puerto Rico. That was why he was all for us and what we were doing, he said, and why he sympathized with us in the struggle with landlords, bankers and others of the wealthy who were so incredibly blind to what they were up against. I can see, he said, that it's you people or revolution. And your "interests" here would choose revolution just as they would have in Louisiana, if we had not prevented it, on the chance that out of it would come an organization they could control for their own profit. The "martial law" suggestion which the Federal officials put up did not originate with them; they were the front for cleverer people in the background. In Louisiana the Federal officials had played the same part and he intended, he said, to get them off our necks. On this last, if on nothing

172 "Coming up off the runway at Isla Grande the plane is over the Condado lagoon and then the seaside row of apartments before the engine has been cut back for normal flight. A slight turn heads it straight down the coast over the reefs. On one side the wrinkled blue sea goes out to an uncertain horizon, and on the other the mountains stand with masses of cloud about them. The valleys are washed with green; and the light falls into them like a liquid. Ten minutes brings El Yunque's majestic pile up on the side, with the eastern coastal plain going quickly down to the bays and points of the great naval base. Ahead now and off to the southeast are Culebra and Vieques, lying fully revealed, for all the world like the miniature relief map of the Holy Land, whose hills and valleys were small boys' delight at Chautauqua when I was young. Culebra is only twenty miles—some six or seven minutes—and then the profusion of the Virgins opens up. St. Thomas, St. John, Tórtola, Jost Van Dyke, Thatch Cay—and all the rest running down and losing themselves in the east. St. Croix lies off to the south, forty miles; and Sail Rock lies in the path of an eye looking that way—a full-rigged ship, but sculptured from a luminous soft stone. It stands on a base of blue velvet exactly as though it might be some extraordinarily rare exhibit given plenty of space in the great hall of a museum. But there is hardly time to do more than breathe an appreciation before the plane noses down to the runway at the St. Thomas Marine base.
else, the investigators seemed to be agreed; and their report, when issued, would castigate these interfering busybodies in really warm passages.173

I did not know— it then, but the investigators apparently saw through the attack made by the handful of Federal officials against the food-procurement program and realized that their efforts were undoubtedly dictated from behind the scenes by persons who passionately wanted the whole Puerto Rican program to fail.

On the previous evening I had gone to see Messrs. Taft and Brewster off on the plane—they were leaving several days before the rest. Some quick arranging had provided favored passage for them direct to New York (with a pause in Bermuda) which obviated the uncomfortable night in Miami by the only other route. These ships were the big Clippers; and since there was some delay in starting we went aboard, wandered about, and talked. It was, I had thought, an exchange of confidences; but it now appeared that they had heard a lot of miscellaneous poison which they had not disclosed to me and perhaps they had been trying to get more documentation. Since I had had no opportunity to answer Fitzsimmons’ and Frisbie’s assertions, whatever they were, they lay in the record as undenied fact. Messrs. Brewster and Taft were, after all, Republicans and it seemed almost too much to suppose they had not left early to anticipate the Committee’s return with denunciation. If they had that in mind, it would be hard to catch up with—denials are always futile—and we should, in effect, be condemned without hearing—at least on the opposition’s charges.

What these charges were, Mr. Ellender and Mr. Bone soon told us. We were relieved to find that the Committee already possessed the answers, and that Fitzsimmons had not gone beyond what we already had heard. All of us had expected him to produce something startling. His air of mystery and his confident dis-obedience seemed to indicate a rabbit in the hat. This mystery had persisted so long that innocence seemed to have worn thin as a protection, and daily routine, looked back on, quite capable of having hidden the most dangerous of booby traps. Such a state of mind becomes wearing. It had burdened us now for more than six months; and it promised to go on indefinitely into the future. It had its origin, of course, in the

173 "We could well conceive pusillanimity and lack of interest, on the part of these officials, in an outlandish place that means little to them in their life. But it is unbelievable, in the face of an insular crisis which could be seen approaching, in the face of national emergency and world-wide conflict, that these various Federal agents permitted the jealousies, animosities, and enmities existing among themselves and also against the Governor to preclude the crystallization of a rapid, well-conceived plan of action. This committee’s words fail to castigate adequately the unpatriotic attitude on the part of those officials and agents concerned and responsible therefor, but it cannot sit in judgment as to who is right or who wrong.” Report No. 628 to 78th Congress, 1st Session, Economic and Social Conditions in Puerto Rico, December si, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1944, p. 51.
election results in the States. There had been in them such encouragement for reactionaries that a more or less advanced progressive, who could, further-more, be pictured as associated with the President, had become a conspicuous political survival already regarded practically as a fugitive. I, along with others, was now the fox and they the hunters. And it was impossible to see any time ahead when the roles might be reversed.

The Senators seemed to enjoy the entertainment we provided for them. If they noticed that no Coalicionistas participated, they did not say so. The fact that they were willing guests, that they obviously regarded themselves as my colleagues in solving some difficult problems, mutilated the picture so carefully painted day after day for months past in the press. The tension eased for the moment. Newspaper petulance is obvious to faithful readers; and there were some demands for the production of the humiliation which had been so confidently predicted. Altogether it was an unhappy fortnight for the embattled local reactionaries; they had counted inexplicably on the existence of reality within a fantasy they themselves had created. It is to be supposed that the Senators had been expected somehow to go on with the myth and miraculously to give it substance. But the Senators had lost interest.

The last week of their stay—after the departure of Messrs. Taft and Brewster—was devoted to a quite different issue: education, and, in particular, language. It got started by accident—largely because Mr. Bone could not communicate with the waiters at his hotel. What kind of a place was it, he wanted to know, where after four decades of opportunity to associate with us the people had not even acquired our language? He visited the family of a young woman he knew and found that even there English was used with difficulty and reluctance. He then began to inquire into aims and methods of teaching. And he uncovered what seemed to him—and to his colleagues—a shocking conspiracy to perpetuate Spanish and eradicate English. Of course, it was not a conspiracy. There were many Puerto Ricans who instinctively resented the necessity for using English; and for this there was a complex background—perhaps its most important element being the feeling of inferiority which went with not doing it perfectly. An instinct like this, however unreasonable, will find its way into the determination of policy unless there is constant effort to prevent it. Under Commissioner Gallardo there had not been adequate preventive effort; and it was true that English teaching had deteriorated.

The Commissioner was ineffective. He had sought approval not by using the best instruments for the purpose but by doing what was most popular. He had catered to the weaknesses and prejudices of Puerto Ricans instead of opposing them; and he had supported no causes which were unpopular. He had sat on fences so long that he was incapable of recognizing a cause when he saw one. And I had long ago given
him up as a bad job. The truth was, however, that English was necessary to Puerto Ricans, and whatever they had to undergo to achieve it would have to be undergone. The best of them writhed when this was put baldly; and there was almost universal avoidance and rationalization. One elaborate defense which had recently come to be widely clung to was that only those who were to have American contacts needed it; the others could as well dispense with it. This allowed the educators to fall back on the formula of conducting classes in Spanish but teaching English as a subject. This might have been the most practicable course. But it was conceived that this permitted a number of politically agreeable, but otherwise unfortunate, policies to be followed. For instance, no more continental teachers need be imported. These teachers had been fiercely resented by their Puerto Rican brothers and sisters for obvious reasons. But within a few years the inevitable results had arrived. Even those who thought they spoke English because they had been taught it, could be understood only with the greatest difficulty. My four-year-old son was exposed to some of that. He had learned his Spanish quickly and had gone to a school in which that language was used but which pretended to teach English. One day we heard him saying some rhymes to himself and asked him to repeat them. After some repetitions it occurred to us that they were supposed to be in English, but that he had not realized this, being so young, and had followed his teacher’s phonetics. Words like "cat," "witch," "pumpkin" in a Halloween jingle were so mutilated as to become to him a kind of third language. He actually had not known that he was saying "cat," "witch" or "pumpkin," words which in English were entirely familiar to him. He was amazed when we told him.

One of the most enlightened and sympathetic teachers at the University—continental by birth—explained his view of the situation as follows:

Americans are inclined to accept at face value the talk about culture, traditions and so on which is often produced when this subject of language comes up. I have come to the conclusion after hearing a good deal of it, however, that it is insincere, an invented reason for not doing a difficult but necessary thing, an excuse for having failed to follow a course which every practical consideration dictates. It may be that no people wants to admit that it is satellitic; but not wanting to admit it does not and cannot change the fact. The hard truth is that the best, almost the only outlet for Puerto Rican youth of ability is in the States; and that not to provide these young people with a colloquial knowledge of English is to start them with a serious and needless handicap. There should be some better reason for not doing this than a sentimental allegiance or the coddling of psychological discomfort.

This forthright way of putting it came out of thirty years' experience. It impressed me deeply.
The Senators had hit on a real issue. The reaction to their probing showed how vulnerable the educators were. There had been about a decade now of pretense and avoidance. It cried for exposure. I hoped, however, that they would get on to constructive recommendations. I myself had come to believe that a bilingual program was feasible, educationally, and that it had such advantages, practically, that it ought to be tried. Spanish to the south and English to the north made an opportunity for these people much like that which the Swiss had grasped so successfully. The fact was that Puerto Rico was in danger of determining a much larger and more serious issue by not settling this language question on its merits. That question, of course, was whether she was to remain a small independent principality, entirely provincial, filled with false pride for achievements which were not recognized elsewhere but protected from exposure by insulation from competition; or whether she was to become part of the larger world, accepting common standards, contributing and receiving as part of the whole.

If Puerto Rico was going to shut herself up she had already been fatally inconsistent; she was no longer self-sufficient and had not the slightest chance, with two million people on her small acreage, of becoming so. How then was she to isolate herself culturally and defy the world? Her population had increased until only the most generous subsidy from her rich Northern associate could keep her alive. These subsidies were not going to keep coming to a hostile, suspicious, foreign country. Her most responsible leaders knew this well enough. But they would not carry their knowledge over into language policy—because it required discipline and so was unpopular. I thought this a very dangerous state of affairs and lost no chance to say so, making the point that what was carefully avoided on the outright independence issue might be lost merely by not doing what was consistent in the matter of language. Most Puerto Ricans—and the press—were very resentful that the Senators should be so "unsympathetic." And after they had gone, I could not see any results; the políticos spent several months smoothing each other's feathers and then went on just as they had before.

20 February IQ43. Senator Chavez left this morning. The hearings ended yesterday in an unfinished row about the teaching of English to which the Senators had turned when they found how empty the allegations of our enemies had been and how little there was to be gained by inquiry in that direction. Senators Chavez and Bone, Mr. Brophy and I had a talk yesterday. Along toward the end I hesitantly mentioned my case and repeated what Senator Brewster had said about a lynching party. I referred to the Vandenberg bill, which was still pending; and said I had made an answer. My prepared statement—worked on for more than a month—was accepted somewhat
carelessly, I thought, Senator Bone saying not to take the whole thing seriously and Senator Chavez indicating that there was nothing whatever to be concerned about.

22 February. Senators Bone and Ellender left this morning. This is the last. These two want sincerely to help, but they do not see any obvious way, and they are really disturbed over the language issue. They are inclined to unite their liberal impulses behind the very different one of getting the United States out of Puerto Rico before the consequences of our failure catch up with all of us.

25 February. The Secretary testified yesterday before the House Committee. There was an indecorous exchange with Bolivar Pagán. Evidently the Secretary kept his temper and had much the better of it. Outside his prepared statement, which seems to have been based on Brophy's brief, he suggested that there was "no good reason why a Governor should not be elected in 1944."174

174 "This statement before the Committee on Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives in regard to H.R. 784 (24 February 1943) is too long to print here. Certain points are, however, relevant to this story and are therefore excerpted:

Mr. Pagán, himself joined with the then President of the Puerto Rican Senate (1940) in charging Governor Leahy with attempting to establish in Puerto Rico "an intolerable personal rule, undemocratic and un-American," for the alleged reason that he failed to pay sufficient attention to the group controlling the insular legislature in his appointments. Now he criticizes another Governor for following the legislature and the recommendations of the party in power. Mr. Pagán’s group controlled the legislature in Governor Leahy’s time. It does not control now. Governor Winship was the continual target of protests and demands for removal from various groups; he was even the objective of a Fortunately ill-aimed assassin's bullet. I need not go further back into the record. All of these attacks point to a situation much more deep-rooted than the mere question of the length of term of a Governor or the degree to which a particular individual should withstand the clamors of vociferous pressure groups and govern according to the will of the legislative majority.

I say to you, gentlemen, that this attack upon Governor Tugwell by Mr. Pagán and his associates has bigger game as its objective. They are attacking the system of democratic legislation in Puerto Rico. They are attacking the wisdom of the people of Puerto Rico in electing to the legislature a majority which is opposed to Mr. Pagán’s Socialist Party and its Coalition allies. And they are attacking the legislature of Puerto Rico because it has passed laws with which they do not agree, and which are being faithfully executed by Governor Tugwell as he is by law charged to do.

If there are any accusations of Governor Tugwell relating to misconduct in office, inefficiency, or incompetency, I haven’t heard them. All that I’ve heard is violent criticism of him for administered the laws passed by the elected legislature of Puerto Rico. If Governor Tugwell is guilty of any misdeeds, let's have a list of them.

The Constitution of the United States establishes a procedure for the removal of executive and judicial officials untrue to their trusts. If the minority party in Puerto Rico, the Resident Commissioner, or anyone else, has evidence that the Governor of Puerto Rico has violated the law or his responsibilities, let it or him bring formal charges of misfeasance before the House of Representatives, and if the House finds sufficient basis in those charges to impeach the Governor, let him appear before the bar of the Senate to answer to those charges. The Resident Commissioner knows well that the Governor has not been guilty of any acts which would form a basis even for bringing charges, much less impeachment by the House of Representatives. He is determined, however, to punish the Governor for venturing to differ with him.

This is not, of course, a technical bill of attainder such as was used by the British Parliament prior to the Revolution of 1688. No more was the Missouri legislation a technical bill of attainder which
This is an interesting issue now. And I am asked by Fortas for suggestions for a Committee to be appointed by the President to draft changes in the Organic Act—which would center in the elective governorship.

It still seems probable that the House will pass the Vanden-berg bill though it appears dormant in the Senate.

As our "investigators" depart and we can look around again there is a spreading gloom among liberals everywhere, and more and more indication that a world-wide reactionary swing is in progress of which the elections last fall were only one symptom. My own troubles are not to be taken too personally even when they seem a little like persecution. There is a vast attack being made on the Administration and my case is a small, if (to me, here) picturesque, part of it. If I were Harry Hopkins, I should feel it centered there—and a few months ago this would have been true of Leon Henderson, and so it goes. Senator Byrd is at the moment inveighing against "government propagánda"; Mr. Disney, of Oklahoma, is seeking to attach a rider to the urgent bill for raising the limit for the national debt which would kill the President's $25,000 top on war earnings; Mr. Smith, of Virginia, has got a law through the House throwing open to inquiry any action, rule, procedure, regulation, order or directive of the whole executive establishment; Mr. Dies is still at his vomit; and the incredible "Cotton-Ed" Smith, along with such statesmen as Senators Johnson of Colorado and Reynolds of North Carolina, is conducting himself in a way to raise the most serious questions about our techniques of government.

Reaction against the President's Administration is again only one evidence of what is clearly a world-wide movement. The Governments-in-Exile are arrogant; the British tories are almost jubilant; our policies in Africa are completely anti-liberal; there is a great concerted movement to discredit Russia among the other Allies' nationals, especially in much of our press, and it is openly said that since her successes the winter's campaigns may presage the "bolshevizing of Europe." We had better think again before going further with assistance for her. It is even hinted that we might make peace with the Nazis and turn on her. Our press as a whole is as much against Russia as against Germany.

Reference was also made to the fact that the men who had never sympathized with the Rebellion, which must be taken before he was eligible to hold office. However, it was held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in Cummings v. Missouri (4 Wall 277) because it was too much like a bill of attainder. I think that removing a man from office is much more like a bill of attainder than prescribing the requirements for his holding office. Indeed, the Supreme Court in the Cummings case described a bill of attainder simply as "a legislative act which inflicts punishment without a judicial trial."

There were also some amusing passages in which the Secretary exposed Mr. Págán for quoting, as decisions of the Supreme Court, briefs submitted by counsel and dissenting opinions. Was he careless or dishonest? He never accepted the open challenge to his integrity.
Last week in the New York Times Mr. Arthur Koestler was quoted as saying: "The character of this war reveals itself as what the Tories always said it was—a war for national survival, a war in defense of certain nineteenth-century ideals, and not what I and my friends of the Left said it was—a revolutionary war in Europe on the Spanish pattern... This is not a final cataclysm... but perhaps only the beginning of a new series of convulsions, spread over a much larger period of history than we originally thought, until a new world is born."

As for myself, on the day after the last of our visitors left, I wrote to the Secretary:

First let me express my appreciation for your defense before the House Committee yesterday. Even in the garbled account available here it seemed effective. Of course, I doubt whether the House can be kept from passing the bill—perhaps the Senate but not the House. Anyway, if the defense does succeed in one way or another, the position still has to be assessed. Suppose we are to look forward to an elective Governor in 1944, don't you think it would be feasible to have as Acting Governor a Puerto Rican for a considerable interval before that? If I stay here I will only draw fire from the conservatives in the Congress as well as those who have a specific interest in Puerto Rico. This gives an added strength to the attacks. Assuming that the Vandenberg bill does not pass and that there is a lull, would that not be the best time to withdraw me from the situation?

The reply both from him and from the President, however, was a definite "No."
IT WAS slightly more than three months before the Bell Committee arrived. During that time the war receded until the Caribbean was on its periphery. It was somewhat ironical perhaps that simultaneously the Frontier finally came into possession of adequate means for defense. The President finally sent to the Congress a message supporting the elective governorship and appointed a Committee to draft a definite recommendation. The fiscal situation improved so definitely that there was no longer any question of solvency; in spite of the loss of Federal aid of all kinds, it was still possible to maintain most of the customary social services and provide generously for relief. During this time an important change in British colonial government took place: the electorates of the crown colonies in the West Indies were enlarged, an action for which Lord Moyne's report was mostly responsible: the Commission could, however, be given credit for hurrying the process. The Puerto Rican legislature, after an initial convulsion, settled down to the reinforcement of the program which had been for several years taking shape. But Senator Tydings, with what Puerto Ricans regarded as malicious intent, introduced and began hearings on a bill for independence which stirred up numerous old differences and made real progress much more difficult by encouraging the separatists.

If what has been said in these pages has been at all revealing it must have been conveyed to the reader that all Puerto Ricans are in one sense independentistas—that is, that they long to be stronger and more capable than others with whom they are associated. They possess a pride which is almost an obsession and which leads frequently to the substitution of fancy for fact. In individual relations this trait prevents the public acknowledgment of inferiority of any kind and leads to the covering up of weaknesses and incompetencies. Such protection permits the mediocre to prosper in the professions, excuses inadequate preparation for the trades and so on. But in governmental relations it causes the fiercest resentment at a status which, however favorable economically, can be said to be in any way inferior. Indeed those who know Puerto Rico well observe that equality would be only less resented than has been the status established by the Jones Act, so fierce is the wish for dominance. However absurd this may seem to outsiders, it must be taken into account by anyone who deals with Puerto Rican affairs.

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1 The last of the Senators departed on 22 February and the first of the Representatives came on 31 May 1943.
2 Charles Taussig had made an extended visit to London during the winter and had urged action.
The demand for recognition of individual and collective dignidad is not a trait easily understood by others; and its consequences are not easily assessed. By now, I was beginning to grasp and worry over its implications. It was not a subject for opera bouffe; it was the Don Quixote theme with touches of Cyrano; and perhaps it had led to the incapacities of modern Spain; but a thoughtful student could not avoid recalling how Cortes and his four hundred conquistadores had subdued the millions of primitive Mexicans and South Americans. There was plenty of that same hot, overmastering blood still flowing in Puerto Rican veins. Pretensions which are made good cease to be comic—they become Roman or Napoleonic, that is to say, heroic. Criticism on the ground of overstatement, of excessive praise for moderate achievement (if it was one of the family) and the like were matters of taste in which those who preferred understatement and grudging praise might equally well be wrong.

The danger in the prevalent Puerto Rican trait was obvious: it might lead to the avoidance of outside competition, to the establishment and protection of mediocrity and so to a general lowering of the levels of competence. There was no denying that signs of this could be seen. That described the University as I had seen it in my days as Chancellor; it described the professions; it described the trades. It was as hard to find a competent carpenter or plumber as it was to find a superior lawyer, accountant or architect. And most of these had got themselves established in high-sounding Colegios (set up by the legislature) for protection from more competent outsiders, just as the University faculty, and even the staff at the Agricultural Experiment Station, protected themselves from competition—by social ostracism, by favoritism among themselves and so on.

It was the task of the new Puerto Ricans to purge themselves of the falseness in their pride, to accept world standards, to combat mediocrity. This change in itself was not going to make any difference in fundamentals: there would still be the whole distance to go in economic rehabilitation. But undertaking it earnestly would make the economic task seem more nearly possible instead of, as at present, hopeless. Dignidad, in its Puerto Rican manifestation, was deeply rooted; and its eradication—even its modification—would not be easy. It had an obvious utility to conquest and empire, just as had the well-known British arrogance. When the conquistadores were exploiting the riches of Central and South America it must have been essential. But its adaptation was as specific as the protective coloring of the condor nesting among the broken rocks of the Andes, or the parrot in the green uplands of the Caribbean. Unlike the condor and the parrot, however, the empire had not survived and the utility of dignidad had long ago disappeared. It was as conspicuously a useless survival now as the fortifications of San Juan which were measured to resist
the guns of a frigate; and it had as little relation to present-day function. It was even worse than that: the fortifications had determined a seriously bad plan for modern San Juan, but that could be overcome by engineering; *dignidad* was a dysgenic force which ran all through insular life and there was no apparent means for correction.

A man who had to pretend that he was made of special stuff so that he could walk safely among primitive folk and even command their labor and their wealth, had use for the feeling, the sense, of inherent superiority. A man, however, who must walk among equals, giving and taking in daily exchange, depending on the good will and cooperation which are the essence of the democratic way of life, simply cannot carry the weight of imperial manners. It will ruin him because its maintenance requires that its pretension shall never be examined or contested. The modern society is a mixture of competition and co-operation, a paradoxical and unresolved complex of elements, none of which, however, has any useful place for the sacred separate-ness of a superior class. And the man who cannot forget his dignity and learn to give and take will simply not do well in that world—will fail in proportion to the percentage of imperial survival he has to carry.

There is no denying the handicap this trait furnishes. There is a definitely felt degradation in work or even in any physical competence which has other than a decorative or sporting aim; there is the dangerous—almost unconscious—protection of personality in the policy of excluding the competition of outsiders and in the rejection of exterior standards. This intense desire to be accepted at face value without examination because of the danger that an inferiority may be exposed lies behind more policies than even the most intelligent Puerto Ricans will admit.³

There were those, however, mostly those who had been educated or who had worked in the States, who to a degree, at least, recognized the difficulties and dangers involved in the situation. It was they who possessed the power to transform. They recognized that the balance of power in the Puerto Rican community must pass from the politician and the landed and moneyed dons to the technically trained and realistic younger group whose ambition was not to exploit the jíbaro and the obrero for the benefit of himself and his connections but to

³My wife comments on this passage. I do not agree with her because I have found the phenomenon present in those who had no reason whatever to feel "inferior"; yet I have found her such a shrewd observer that I quote her comment: "I think you have the cart before the horse. You should begin any explanation of dignidad by stating that there is a collective feeling of inferiority brought on by (1) being a neglected island possession; (2) being subjected to seeing Continentals doing everything better; (3) low standards of living; (4) actual inferiority in educational devices and having to send youths to the States for professional training, etc. This causes an extreme sensitivity which Puerto Ricans try to cover with this dignidad. All of which leads to preferring poverty and independence rather than comfort and charity."
develop as a people in one co-operative effort, with leadership but not with dictatorship. This was the American idea. And it was this more than anything else that the unregenerate defender of dignidad hated and feared with his whole being. He might be a lazy student or an incompetent professor; he might be an importer with a monopoly which depended on the maintenance of custom (many of them did); he might be a politician who had an oratorical gift put no other claim to representation. All those with these empty pretensions resisted examination and testing for genuine utility and, as we have seen, they fought it viciously. It was no light task that the administrative group, which had by now been fairly well formed, had undertaken. But as I had hoped, it had by now reached the point where it had begun to grow by accretion. Its type was being accepted. It was not the kind of group Muñoz would have chosen, obviously, only a few of the two dozen or so important new people had been among his intimates or had been put forward by him for places in government.

In selecting administrators I had taken chances; but since there had appeared to be no alternative I had gone into it boldly. Moscoso had been a druggist in Ponce, but had been imaginative as Secretary of the local Housing Authority; Gándara had been a physician in the same city with a passion for service to which he was sacrificing the usual medical man’s large fees; Belaval had been a lawyer and a litterateur; Jaime Benítez had been in a minority group at the University (although he was a devoted follower of Muñoz); Sánchez Vilella had been an engineer in the Department of the Interior; Chardón had been in self-imposed exile; Acosta Velarde had been a (somewhat rebellious) sugar technician and manager of centrals; Cordero and Picó had been at the University; Descartes had been at the Agricultural Experiment Station. And so it went through a long list. True, Fernández García, Fernós, Buscaglia, Lucchetti, Cuevas and some others who were really competent had been recognized and brought forward before my time; but I felt entitled to considerable credit for change in emphasis. And, as I have tried to indicate, it implied a far greater transformation than appeared on the surface. With few exceptions all the young men had been trained in the States; but, more important, even if perhaps related to that, few of them were irrevocably committed to their own importance. True, one or two of them who had not seemed to be that sort before broke put with elephantiasis of the ego when they were raised to positions of importance; but I thought that might have happened anywhere and would prove curable if they really had the ability I had credited them with; for a man of ability has no real use for dignidad and can understand its dangers.

Sometimes the petting and nursing necessary to the maintenance of dignidad among my growing group of helpers seemed a great nuisance. In one month during this year there were five resignations among the cabinet and other agency heads, none
of which was final, and none of which was carried through in spite of being called "irrevocable" in written communication. In each case I had to argue and plead and to find a face-saving formula. Candor compels me to say that a good half of these resignations came from the better men and resulted from Muñoz' irregular habit of calling them in and issuing orders or quarreling with them over the operations for which they were responsible. The type of person now being recruited for these tasks would not consent to such outrageous impropriety and would promptly quit. I could never get Muñoz to retract, or even to desist—he had his own kind of dignidad—so the burden of reconciliation fell on me. These were the easiest salvage cases. The less reasonable ones were really difficult; in these no more than fancied insults were involved. Others got into quarrels and demanded support or heard rumors which were considered insulting. Still others thought their honor touched if I ignored or modified their budget requests or other recommendations; or if I hinted at dissatisfaction with their work. At any rate it was constantly necessary to draw on thinning reserves of lubricating tact.

The ultimate effect of this on the gubernatorial patience might be important; it might just wear out; but much more important were the implications for political status. I was coming to take seriously the contention that Puerto Ricans would be as unhappy with equality as they were with what they already had. The psychology of a people cannot be understood if studied only under conditions of tension, of course, and it might be that something like what is usually understood by Dominion status would satisfy the now unappeased demand for what—so far as I could see—was a wholly chimerical "freedom." It was at least worth trying. And from about this time I began to elaborate a scheme for Commonwealth, Dominion—call it anything indicating a halfway relationship—and to try it in imagination as a possible solution. The trouble with this was, however, exactly what I have been dwelling on—that it did not satisfy the obsolete aspirations of the independentistas. These had become involved in a collective dignidad for which satisfaction and protection were being demanded as unreasonably as individuals demanded them. Those worst affected could never, perhaps, be argued into reason.

In my Commonwealth trend I found company in a group which was at this time affiliating with the Free World Federation. Among those most interested were Mr.

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4 I have no doubt that Muñoz had a similar problem. His political leaders must continually have been quitting because of my inhospitality to their claims. Since I thought he leaned on them much too heavily as a rule I was inflexible.

5 By this it is not to be understood that I did not think that the Puerto Rican situation could be improved—merely that what the separatists wanted was something which would not give satisfaction because it would prove to involve a frightful cost.

6 Not that this was original in Puerto Rican history. It had been offered before as a solution.
Campos del Toro, Mr. Guerra Mondragón, lawyers, and Mr. Rafael Cordero, economist. These three called on me in company one day and suggested that the existing acerbities concerning status might be eased by a new formula. I urged that they work out a proposal related to the Organic Act, making as few changes as possible, so that we might study the matter further. I had in mind the possibility that the President might be interested. I reminded them, however, of the difficulties and referred to the intransigence of the separatists, whose aims seemed wholly irreconcilable with the need of Puerto Rico not only for close affiliation with the United States, but, to put it bluntly, for special favors—such as the sugar preference, the coffee subsidy, the free market for tobacco and, as a matter of fact, for outright relief. All this economic assistance might hurt like the mischief. But its lack would hurt more and it had to be maintained. The studies of this group would be carried on rather casually for a time and would issue in a memorandum by Mr. Guerra Mondragón, but because, I suppose, it is so difficult to syncopate political processes except when violence seems imminent, this more comprehensive proposal would be lost for the time being in the preparations for discussing the simpler suggestion for an elective Governor with only the changes in the Organic Act which were relevant to that.

Abe and I carried on a lengthy exchange as to the personnel of the Committee which it was proposed that the President should appoint. His judgment of the Puerto Rican scene was more certain, more fixed, than it would have been if he had actually seen it. Looking with the mind’s eye, he wanted a "balanced" Committee—by which he meant one which represented all the dominant political parties. But also he wanted Judge Travieso, as to whom I did not argue, having learned that there was something about him which made Continentals conclude that he was not only a "typical" Puerto Rican but wholly "impartial" as well. I argued against the choice of party Presidents, ex officio, and for the careful selection of prominent leaders who would not be tied in one of the tight convenios which constituted party organization on our island. I failed. I could not make him understand my feeling that party Presidents were the worst possible choice. There was a remnant of suspicion in his mind which came from the universal linking of my name with that of Muñoz. The fact that Muñoz and I differed frequently about the wisdom of his stress on patronage was something he knew. But it was not publicly known. The view put out by the Coalición press, after I had refused the Iriarte-Balseiro-Pagán demands, was that I had capitulated to Muñoz. It was utterly impossible to visualize a Governor who did not submit to dictation; and if I refused the Coalición it must be to espouse the Populares. In this they were entirely sincere in their bigoted way. And this sincerity was reflected in

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7 A BILL To Provide for the Establishment of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other Purposes, Bureau of Supplies, Printing and Transportation, San Juan, P.R., May 10, 1943.
the indignation which characterized their campaign against me. It was so much more bitter and unscrupulous as against me than as against Muñoz that only the most righteous indignation could account for its intensity. The fact that I was its object puzzled Abe—and others—and left a lingering doubt in their minds which sometimes became much more than doubt. I knew that we were approaching a situation in which everything I proposed or did would be regarded as "political," while everything the Coalición did would be regarded as a more or less justified reaction to my favoritism. I should be forced into a situation in which I leaned backward to avoid any justification for this attitude, only to lose by successive stages the confidence, among those who counted, that I was acting impartially.

So I gave in on the Committee. That Abe had on his hands two Republicanos—Travieso as well as Iriarte—he would have to learn for himself. I did, however, make an issue of Bolivar Pagán, Socialista President, and he was omitted on my assurance that he had almost no following left and so counted for nothing at home, however much noise he might make in Washington. The truth was that Ramírez Santibáñez was in a similar situation; he had no party left to speak of; but to have omitted him would have been to depart altogether from the principle of party representation; so he was included.

My suggestion that the Committee ought to be a mixed executive-legislative one was dropped in Washington with what I felt was unnecessary coldness. I persisted a little but got nowhere. Of course, I was in a poor position. The sentiment against me in the Congress was by now so formidable as to be embarrassing. It could not be expected that the Department should regard me otherwise than as a liability. Anyone could see that whenever a departmental representative appeared before a Committee from now on, the Tugwell matter would come up. Did not the Department know the Congressional view that Tugwell should be replaced? In the most irrelevant situations that question would be raised. And it was going to emerge in those tense moments sometimes when Committee members hung over budget proposals with poised pencils. As an experienced bureaucrat I understood this thoroughly and in spite of myself I was made not only defensive but more cautious than I should have been. I did things and consented to things I should not have done or consented to. One of them was the formation of the party-President Committee. For on it hung the approval of several members of Congress whom I would have included in the deliberations. Because of not having been included they would—if only out of assertion of legislative superiority—torture a careful proposal from the

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8Travieso was formally a Unionist, a party which by now had disappeared. Anyway, he was a rightist. He was also a relative of Iriarte and, what Continentals did not know, a product of the Puerto Rican party system. He was, in fact, an old-time político, having held, among other offices, the mayoralty of San Juan.
Committee into an administratively impossible bill. This would not at once appear; but I should always feel guilty for not having insisted with more vigor on my view of what was politic. For I was right.\footnote{It must not be assumed that Abe did not have a reason for his insistence on the other course. The senior members of the Committees from which selection would have had to be made were almost uniformly unsympathetic and to have included them in such a group would, in his judgment, have been to have invited trouble. He did not agree that they could have been converted.}

However this business was worked out, and whatever came of the proposal, such a Committee would presumably put forward a further change already overdue and insistently demanded. It would not be true to say that I lost interest in the immediate possibility; but I saw more and more clearly that it would not go far toward satisfying the demands of the collective dignidad of Puerto Rico—not nearly far enough. This could be read in Muñoz’ reaction. As we discussed the matter he experimented in his mind with numerous variations of an independence with guaranteed assistance. I warned him, as I had before, that Puerto Rico as a foreign country would be cut off from financial aid she needed. People, even Americans, generous as they were supposed to be, would only do for their own what was required even for relief, say nothing of reconstruction. Even then it could not be certain that the present economic situation was remediable. Besides, the Congress had been niggardly and averse to foresight or commitment whenever an issue had arisen on which attitudes could be tested. Nevertheless the fact was that Puerto Rico had progressed more rapidly in the last four decades than her independent neighbors; and since 1933 relief had poured into the island, in one way or another, in volume roughly equal to the yield from the largest crop. Independence would be ruinous; a close relationship might bring at least a minimum of necessary support.

All this he admitted. And it influenced him greatly as it did not many of the radical independentistas. As the time approached for the Committee to meet, I had doubts whether he would participate. He appeared to think it inexpedient to be involved in laboring to bring forth so small a mouse. He would finally decide to collaborate but only, as it would turn out, because he still hoped to use the occasion for forcing a commitment beyond the terms of reference. Meanwhile I helped him decide by giving wide circulation to the study we had been making of the balance of trade, which showed the appalling extent of actual dependence on the United States. The regional office of the National Resources Planning Board, being directed by Fred Bartlett, worked these estimates over and over. No matter how one tried there was no way in which it could be figured that Puerto Rico could survive with independence, and it appeared that she would be at least somewhat worse off with Statehood. Could it be that the present status was about the most favorable one

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possible? In view of all the oratory, all the talk about exploitation and Yankee imperialism, all the weeping about Colonialism with a large C, this might seem incredible. But the facts were stiffly unsympathetic to separation; and only less so to any other likely change—except Dominion.

What Puerto Rico had to complain of, legitimately, was not that the United States had been ungenerous. It was that everything had been so haphazard. Latins may be ebullient on the surface but it has often been remarked that they are calculating underneath. And there seemed to me no doubt that this as much as any other factor in the situation created the universal dissatisfaction with existing arrangements. No people, Latin or other, would, as a matter of fact, care to have its status left at the mercy of outsiders and perhaps, especially, legislative committees. That was the situation of Puerto Rico. And it did no good to argue at length that actually the political and economic situation was better than it would be with greater autonomy. This argument did not reach the source of the irritation or cure the real injustice.

What Muñoz wanted was (1) to get a commitment from the Congress that no future action would be taken by that body unilaterally—that is, without consultation with the Puerto Rican legislature; and (2) to secure a kind of "reconstruction fund" to be spent over a long period at Puerto Rican direction. The first commitment would, it will be seen, acknowledge the equality of Puerto Rico; the second would acknowledge past deficiencies in United States administration and the justice of reparations. There was an obvious relation to the principle of dignidad in this which made it seem, to one just becoming aware of its prevailing strength, almost inevitable as a demand but nevertheless wholly unlikely to be accepted by the Congress. Muñoz knew as well as anyone that relief and assistance would be forthcoming in the future as they had been in the past. But if he could secure acceptance for the proposal he had in mind it would be an admission that all the independentistas, even the most radical of them, had said about imperialism and colonialism was true. I knew well enough—and told him so—that he was not going to get any such proposal approved by the Committee—any Committee—or by the Congress.

The other members of the Committee, besides Muñoz, as it was finally announced, were those expected: Mr. Ramirez Santi-báñez and Mr. Celestino Iriarte as Presidents of the Liberales and Republicanos, and Judge Travieso. There had been question as to outsiders being included but finally only Father McGowan of the Catholic Welfare Council was added. The rest of us were officials. Of the Puerto Ricans only Muñoz really counted, since, as the islanders say, he was the one who really cut the codfish (el que corta el bacalao). The others would take their lead from him. And now that he had a formula on which he could proceed there was no longer
doubt of his participation. If he were to go into a conference only to obtain the elective governorship, his followers would make a terrific row; such a result would be out of all proportion to their claims. But if he should go demanding far more as a corollary of what was being offered, all his needs would be served. What a job, I thought, for the presiding officer! And what could come of it without the presence of the Senators and Congressmen who alone could put it through?

As the spring ran on and the regular session of the legislature closed there was very general improvement in our domestic affairs. Revenues were increasing from month to month, both from the higher income taxes imposed during the last two years and from the tax on rum. As shipping became easier after the African campaign was well started, rum could move out more freely. So, of course, could everything else except perishables: tobacco, coconut products, citrons, needlework, for instance. And this last showed signs of becoming as important as it had been before the Federal wage and hours regulations had cut it down some years before; there was now the advantage that no competition came from China and the Philippines. The legislature passed a characteristically generous relief measure to supplement the W.P.A. which had been temporarily extended for Puerto Rico by sharp work in Washington but which we knew well enough would be stopped soon by unsympathetic House Committees.

When the strikes were more or less settled and a certain calm had descended even on the C.G.T.’s tireless agitators the large cane harvest was gathered and converted into sugar and molasses. By now there was a general sugar shortage and rationing in the States; instead of being asked to cut down we were asked to increase output. This would turn out to be the biggest crop ever; but there was reason for pessimism about the future. For we were finding it hard to get fertilizers. The Board for allocating such materials was reluctant to give us any at all at first and then to give us enough. Months were consumed in controversy and it was then too late. Cane is a crop which takes at least twelve months to grow, and sometimes fifteen or eighteen months, depending on the kind of cultivation. And its yield is dependent on the amount of fertilizer applied and on its being applied at an early stage. When fertilizer is short, other less intensive methods — such as a larger proportion of

10 The short crop is called the primavera and the longer one the gran cultura. Which is used depends on a judgment whether, under all the prevailing circumstances, it is better to use quick high-capital methods or long low-expense ones. On expensive land and with expensive machinery in use, the quicker turnover is desirable. There is a similar choice to be made as to whether a crop will be ratooned—that is, left to grow from the old root from which the tops have been cut in the harvest, or whether the field will be recultivated, fertilized and reseeded. The latter costs more and yields more. It is a matter for nice judgment whether more intensive methods will, in a given case, yield a higher net.
fields which are ratooned rather than reseeded—are used. Apart from the
determination of the weather, always important in agriculture, the cane crop a year
or a year and a half hence is predictable from the fertilizer used. We knew in the
spring of 1943 that the crop of 1944 would be a small one even with good weather
and that, with drought, it might be disastrously low. But for the moment there were
no complaints.

There was assurance too that military construction would continue for at least half a
year longer. For a minimum of preparation for defense such a program would be
necessary. This assurance, however, came to me from a new Commander. For
General Collins had gone. This was a blow; we had been through a good deal
together and had come to have a good working arrangement. To have to find my
way to an accommodation with a new General seemed an unnecessary hardship.
And I protested. It was, of course, futile. There had been some kind of trouble,
growing out of the difficult administrative situation, and Lieutenant General George
H. Brett, in command at Panamá, had required his removal. General Marshall had
acceded "with regret" but this did not warm the chill of his note to me in
acknowledgment of my request for reconsideration on the ground of policy. I was
put in my place without hesitation. General Collins afterward told me that his
subsequent assignment was "more responsible" than it would otherwise have been
because of my letter, and because of the honorary degree conferred on him at the
University, but I rather doubted it and felt that I had wasted my effort. Anyway the
matter turned out well, for he was succeeded by Major General Conger Pratt, with
whom our relations were from the first just as friendly.

They needed to be, for almost at once we had a strike of railway workers; and army
men, who traditionally consider strikes to be subversive, are apt to think them
downright traitorous in time of war. But General Pratt was unusual. For one thing he
thought it was my business; but for another he saw that there was more to it than
met the eye. Being shrewd and politic—besides being genuinely friendly—he
determined on neutrality. There were those among his staff who were frankly
disgusted with this "weakness" and who predicted gloomily that if the strikers
weren’t taught a lesson God only knew what would happen next. But he was
unmoved.

This was not the first time I had met General Pratt. He had been in command in
Trinidad before succeeding General Collins and had shown Charles and me his half-
finished installations in the spring of ’42. Out in the soggy bush we had spent a
couple of hours trying to visualize the encampment being established on the scarred
earth, by innumerable bulldozers, trucks and hurrying jeeps, with the use of
innumerable piles of cement, lumber, tile and other materials; and at the end of our
journey, in a most unpromising standard hutment, he had produced, of all things, a turkey dinner complete with ice cream. I had made a crack about sharing our soldiers’ hardships and made honest use of my opportunity. From that meal we dated a friendship which had been next reinforced, so far as I was concerned, when the Chavez Committee had been among us. I had not known how to give its members a better view of what war meant to us than a conducted tour of our preparations. We had a rather fancy setup for civil defense by that time—Puerto Ricans can always be trusted to do such things with a flair. And Dr. Carlos Muñoz-McCormick, who was now in charge, besides having flair, had labored immensely to perfect the organization. So I took them around on a night alert to see how we functioned. It looked fine. There were solid citizens—volunteers—lined up in long rows before telephones on which they were to receive messages of disaster to be plotted on a great chart. There were others to send out orders to the local headquarters where fire, rescue, repair, and demolition squads were gathered and ready. I secretly felt that it was hopelessly vulnerable since we had no bombproof building and since our telephones were all aboveground; but for the one the W.P.B. had refused us priorities and for the other I had not even ventured to suggest an alternative.

There it was, however—the best that could be done under the circumstances and looking finished and efficient by then, however serious the defects might be. When I had shown off all this, and a really magnificent emergency casualty station as well, I took them down into the earth’s viscera to see the brand-new "operations center." And this, of course, was really something! There had come to be a standard style in such centers by then, copied, I always suspected, from the Sunday-supplement pictures of Royal Air Force control rooms which were so prevalent just before we had become belligerent. It was at its best that evening because we were in the midst of annual maneuvers. The Senators were very suitably impressed. There on the great boards were the convoys and the maverick ships. Once in a while a door opened and the confused clacking of teletypes could be heard as a messenger emerged from a large room filled with machinery and started the motions which ended in a change of position on the board. A plane had been reported, or a ship had come into our sea. But maneuvers were there too: an enemy was landing on our beaches, the mobile force was making its dispositions and the air forces were trying to help, although, as General House confessed at once, there wasn’t a damned airdrome left in the Caribbean. The author of all this disturbance could be said to be the attacking commander. General Collins had just said, "That’s Pratt, you know," when I heard a guttural voice behind me saying, "Cheneral von Pratt, mein herr." He had his hands over his face and only a merry eye showing. It broke up Collins’ party; but it had the effect of putting the whole war, suddenly, in its place as though he had
said that it was all nonsense and the sooner we got back to taking military games lightly the better. Such a commander was almost an ideal one with whom to weather a railroad strike.

We had been suspecting for some time that the railroad’s owners were trying to unload it on the Government. They said it was unprofitable in spite of the fact that it paid no taxes (under an old exemption just running out), that its wages were about one tenth of railway workers’ wages in the States, and that for years maintenance and replacements had been at so low a level as to all but cause a One-Hoss Shay collapse. To arrive at the conclusion of unprofitability allowance had to be made for the fact that there were three separate companies each with high-salaried officials and expensive counsel. It had obviously been a bonanza in the good old Coalición days when taxes need not be paid, when bad services were condoned by a tame Public Service Commission and when demands for higher wages were considered subversive; but anyone could see that things were going to be different now. And since a vast increase in temporary military haulage had raised operating revenues above those of any past period, it was a good time to capitalize them, establish a whacking value, and sell out to the Government.

Various maneuvers had been gone through, all of which were consistent with our theory of their intentions. One of these was to try to get the Army to take it over as the most necessitous customer, thus getting the matter of valuation into a favorable Federal court at the most propitious time. But General Collins had seen through that, with a little help; and it looked by now as though the old owners were going to have to keep their railroad; also they were going to have to pay taxes, give better service and raise wages. It was a horrifying prospect. But one way out remained to be tried. If a tie-up occurred, perhaps the Army would be forced into seizure. But of course there must be a suitable appearance of reluctance and good faith. It was assumed apparently that, army men being what they were, the best way would be to precipitate a strike. Puerto Rican workers could be expected to be noisy, disorderly and perhaps violent. The Army would not like that; and Admiral Hoover would be positively enraged. In such an atmosphere, the military must take over and the owners could move out, their interests entrusted to the Federal Court. Such was the apparent scheme.

Such a technically legitimate attempt to force government action by the use of fomented disorder was a typical example of the advice for which the more respectable lawyers in Puerto Rico were able to charge the old gallegos large fees. It ran in the violent Spanish tradition, yet kept within the framework of American law. I had been confronted with this kind of thing before and would be confronted with it again. Once the pattern was understood the specific occurrences were never hard to
anticipate. The real difficulties were in fact not in Puerto Rico but in the States, where the pattern appeared to be quite unbelievable and anyone who explained it prejudiced. The success of such schemes in fact depended on Americans' projection into the Spanish culture of their simpler sporting psychology. After forty years of association the ruling classes in Puerto Rico had learned that they could go on pretty much in their old way provided only they slicked it over with appropriate words. For this the lawyers were kept. A conspiracy of this kind would be got up, disorder would result as planned, and the stories in the States would appear (1) if the disorder were suppressed, as an attack on free speech and assembly; (2) if it were avoided, as an evasion of the duty to protect property. Nothing more was necessary than to arrange the situation properly. Newspaper correspondents and editors knew what their proprietors wanted; and proprietors knew what the financial interests with investments in Puerto Rico wanted. No instructions were given and none were needed.

It was too late for me to worry about this. The Chicago Tribune, the Scripps-Howard press, the New York Herald Tribune and Life had all done their duty. The thesis was by now determined. If the President and the Secretary were going to be fooled, it was already too late to appease the various business interests who were demanding my removal. In this—as in the other extraordinarily difficult labor situations—I should follow what seemed to me the fair, sensible and decent course whether anyone else approved it or not. But I could only do that with General Pratt’s at least tacit concurrence. For in wartime, say what you like, a military commander is all-important, and especially on an island which is besieged and where civilian morale is an immediate and legitimate military concern.

I began by neutralizing the Admiral, who was nominally the head of the unified command. I explained long and carefully to Genial John, who obviously did not like even to listen, that we were going to have more trouble, but that I could guarantee to get through. He had, I am sure, a shrewd idea that he would be better off if he kept out of civil affairs, and grudgingly he agreed to look the other way. General Pratt had a different attitude. When, having dealt with the Admiral, I turned a wary eye on him, he looked back with the same merry one which had appeared between his fingers on a former night in the bombproof.

"That railroad," he said solemnly, "has no military importance. We don't need it. There is nothing we can't move by truck." I was relieved; but there was still another step. So I went on and told him frankly that it looked serious to me. If it was an attempt of the owners to unload, they would stop at nothing. The accumulated grievances of the workers made it seem likely that there might be violence. I wanted something more than passivity; I wanted active help.
We got through without any real trouble. After innumerable communications with Abe and some quick work on his part, my old friend Joe Eastman (of the Office of Defense Transportation) agreed to assume responsibility. But the executive order setting up his Office had to be amended and so on, all of which took time. And there was a moment when it seemed as if nothing would happen fast enough. On strike day, I did something I had never heard of before—simply issued an immobilization proclamation. This disgusted several army officers and Eastman’s local officials, who were all for "forcing the men to work" and so on. But it served. During that period General Pratt simply moved several thousand soldiers onto the tracks and into the stations and shops, with orders to prevent anyone from turning a wheel or lifting a hammer. That was his contribution. To the surprise of both of us the strikers were delighted. They began rather boisterous picketing and speechmaking on the first day, at which I asked my new Commissioner of Labor, Manolo Pérez, to tell them they must go home and keep quiet. They replied that they had consulted the Chief of Police and had been advised that picketing was legal. I sent back word that it was certainly legal but not necessarily wise and that I wanted them to be quiet. It was a difficult program but they carried it out. And two days later when General Pratt and I met to confer, he was able to say that there had not been a single incident. "My boys and yours seem to get along all right," he said. Then he read me a report from his G-2 officer (Intelligence) which reported universal belief among the strikers that I was in sympathy with them and would see that they were treated fairly. The G-2 officer obviously thought it terrible; but General Pratt saw its utility. "Hell, I’m not here to fight Puerto Ricans," was the way he put it. Things went so well that after forty-eight hours we began to move military trains. But this was not until after some of the O.D.T. officials and army officers had moved some of them with strike breakers, apparently with the intention of provoking an incident. This little rebellion was suppressed by the General in his own way—gently, as he did everything—and the strikers themselves then began to serve as they had been willing to do all along. A week later Joe Eastman had sent down a new staff and full operation was begun under an order which amounted to "seizure during emergency."11 And the workers were pleased to find themselves negotiating with Tío Samuel for better wages and conditions rather than with the lawyers with whom they had formerly had to deal.

During the latter part of April, Abe came to make a visit. I borrowed the Howard from the Navy and we covered the island in detail, taking most of a day for it, lunching with the officers at Borinquen Field and going all the way round the coast and home by Ensenada Honda. That night we had a fiesta on the terrace. The rain held off; there was a moon, and the Southern Cross hung, tilted a little, over the Toro

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11The order would be terminated 1 July 1944 and the properties returned to their owners.
Negro, and was reflected in the Bay. It was hard to credit the hatred in the hearts of those who boycotted us; but Abe did not seem to miss them, even though he was supposed, by now, to be the head of the appease-ment group in Interior, with Brophy abetting. We had discussed that matter frankly, I protesting against their giving away everything we had gained in a year of struggle with the importers. By now the supply organization had a several months' supply of staples—rice, beans, codfish, canned fish, dried eggs, evaporated milk, flour and pickled meats—and the fight was over in Puerto Rico. Even the retailers were now actively on our side. Characteristically, however, disturbance had adjourned to Washington with the Chavez Committee pressing the importers' interests and Interior showing signs of giving in. Brophy had by now invented a phrase—"going out of the grocery business"—which was intended to ease the shame of appeasement, and to indicate that bulk buying and importing were kinds of activity which were beneath the dignity of bureaucrats. But I knew that a 25 per cent rise in the cost of living for two millions of Puerto Ricans hid behind it. And I continued to protest, to send supporting memoranda, and to tell our story to anyone who would listen. It must be said that in Agriculture, even after it became the War Food Administration that spring, we had unwavering friends who thought the "grocery business" important. Abe, I must say, looking around at the poverty in Puerto Rico, was just a little shaken. He was naturally sympathetic; and it is always good for Washingtonians to get away from their desks—and from Con-gressmen.

Abe did, however, bring us some good news: Frisbie, Fitzsimmons, and the lesser satellites were going the way of Malcolm. But that was anticlimactic now. They were still with us in person but so thoroughly discredited that they were being referred to locally as "Zombies." Even the interests they had served with such excessive zeal appeared to have forgot their existence. The center of interest was shifting now to the problem of status and we had many conversations with all sorts of people about it. It was while we were on a three-day jaunt to the south coast, visiting Bishop Willinger and having a look at sugar, that the House authorized an investigation of Puerto Rican affairs, social, economic and political by a subcommittee. Nothing could have been worse than the terms of reference and the personnel Abe said we were sure to get—nobody would serve but the prejudiced and the trouble-seeking. It would be wholly anti-administration, with the open purpose of "getting Tugwell." There would be about as much restraint in the group to be turned loose on us as we had seen in our Puerto Rican enemies. They would, in fact, be the same sort and we could expect the Washington-San Juan axis to be put now on a semipermanent, well-heeled basis.
With this prospect, current affairs began to shape themselves about the impending hostilities. Especially the matter of status became a gambit in the game. "Maybe," said Abe, "you’ll have more appreciation of appeasement shortly." But I could point out that it had let us off nothing so far. And before Abe left he was advising us to fight back with fiery weapons. But this was after conversations, extending over days, with our opposition. Mr. Iriarte, particularly, with his narrow bigotry, infuriated him. As Admiral Leahy had after the departure of a certain politico, Abe relieved his feelings after intercourse with Mr. Iriarte in language of which he had probably not thought himself to be in any further need.

Abe had come to the conclusion, as had Mr. Rupert Emerson, now the Regional Director for O.P.A., who had been shaking his head over us on his last visit, that our position in Puerto Rico was now solid. The opposition was disorganized and nonplussed. Our friends were suddenly numerous. It was too bad that we still had to go through the House investigation, now exploding like a delayed firecracker, with off-stage noises by Messrs. Fish, Dies, Taber, et al. I could see that the strategy he was formulating depended largely on bringing the elective governorship out into the forefront of discussion. How could all the talk about me be true if I was fixing to get through in 1944 and turn over to the first Puerto Rican Governor? I thought less of this than he as a red herring for investigators; but there was no harm in trying. He came away from a general discussion we had one day at Zoilo Méndez' villa less optimistic, but still without an alternative. Besides Muñoz, General Pratt and General Phillips were there that day and the four of us talked around the status matter at length. Phillips as usual was somewhat overcandid and let us know, as probably he ought not to have done, that the Army was going to oppose the changes we had in mind. This was, of course, serious. Abe’s suggestion, concerning it, made on our way home, was that the Committee should not ask for military opinion. He doubted, he said, that the army staff would openly oppose a Presidential policy. I thought him naive about the Army’s subterranean relations with Congressmen but I did not say so. He would find it out.

At the last minute, a trip we had hoped to make to Jamaica had to be called off: a coal strike was impending back home. But he made a parting suggestion about another of the troublesome current issues which I proceeded to follow up. This had to do with the acquisition of the private power lines which was still hanging fire and being poked at by counsel who hoped to have it good and hot as the House investigators descended. It looked to us as though Judge Cooper might be persuaded—and that was not nice: when Mr. Henry Brown moved to dismiss proceedings for expropriation because there had been "conspiracy and bad faith," and when the court appeared to take the fantastic charge seriously, it could be interpreted as a
move in the general political game. Also it served with suspicious convenience the purpose of putting pressure on us to pay a high price for escaping litigation. We had begun negotiations before, it will be recalled, but had found the price too high. Now a special representative—Mr. Frederick Krug—was being sent from Montreal to discuss the matter further. The terms, after investigation, proved too hard: the company wanted not only the price set by itself plus interest from the date of seizure, but also wanted to set a time limit for acceptance—reinforced with a penalty clause. Mr. Lucchetti thought we ought to accept. But I refused. To pay several millions of public funds to escape criticism seemed to me something it would be hard to carry on one’s conscience.

We went so far as to ask Mr. Thoron if he would explore the situation with the principals, we stating our maximum price. This he did. But when Mr. Krug arrived and I read the memorandum signed by Mr. Thoron for us and by Mr. Symington for the company, I knew that we should be unable to proceed until it was clear that public funds were not being used to keep us free of comment. Curry and I drafted a note which we handed to Mr. Krug:

We have before us a proposal for purchase of the Puerto Rico Railway, Light and Power Company properties which contains a number of elements which have not been considered previously by us. We regret that we will be unable to take action with respect to the proposed settlement within the time limit set forth herein. An additional thirty days will be needed for a thorough study of the agreement, as well as to make arrangements for necessary financing if the proposed agreement should be accepted.

It will not be possible in any case to reach an agreement so long as there are charges of bad faith pending and undisposed of. We will welcome a hearing in open court on any such question. We are willing to give consideration to the ratification of the Thoron-Symington agreement but are not interested in a settlement which will carry with it the implication that it was made for the purpose of avoiding a hearing on the question of bad faith.

Mr. Thoron exhibited annoyance at what seemed to him a repudiation; he thought he had made a deal within our instructions. But in spite of pressure I declined to consent. And so we went on toward the ordeal which the Bell Committee—so called for its designated chairman—was preparing for us with the threat of court action still unresolved. All the indications were that the investigation was to be made as embarrassing as possible. There was, however, nothing we could do but wait.

What any of the prospective witnesses would say or do under questioning, I was wholly unable to predict. The matter of status had been exacerbated by Mr. Tydings
for one thing, who had introduced another bill for independence and announced early hearings. This had raised the expectations of all the independentistas and in April they had held a mass meeting. These occasions were always embarrassing to Muñoz because the organizers and orators frequently turned out to be his followers and because they were always preceded by an attempt to identify the Popular party with the "movement." Muñoz, being acutely conscious that nothing could be more fatal than this, was always defensive for weeks afterward. He had to be definite in repudiation, yet he could not bring himself, as I advised, to disavow so many of his leaders as were involved.

The movement for Dominion status—if it could be called a movement—was repugnant to the independentistas who were true political reactionaries. And its gain in favor was naturally among the more moderate and thoughtful. To these the Tydings move seemed distressing and discouraging, in fact another evidence of the essential whimsicality and disorderly thinking which infused Congressional attitudes and actions in relation to Puerto Rico. There was, as there had been when the Senator had done the same thing in 1936, a convinced attribution of bad faith. It was said, among other things, that he had Cuban interests and that his law firm represented those who stood to gain from separating Puerto Rico and the United States. Such suspicions, unjustified as they were, made for an atmosphere in which any constructive organizing was quite impossible; and Dominion was put aside to grow only in faithful hearts until the times should be more propitious. Members of the élite as well as some of the self-appointed independentista statesmen rushed for Washington and appeared at the Tydings hearings, the one to support and the other to oppose the measure. By mid-May it was clearly dead and any change in status lay beyond the "investigation." It would be within the terms of reference, it seemed, of the Committee appointed by the President. This, even before its activities had begun, seemed certain to produce an already passé proposal. But the momentum of affairs like this is such that going through the motions was inevitable. We had to complete the evolution already begun before anything else could be undertaken.

Anyway the relation of the Puerto Rican unrest to the larger settlements now in prospect for what were being called "minorities" or "dependent peoples" was becoming more evident. Mr. Winston Churchill was content to rest on classic colonialism, so it seemed, but no one else thought matters would stop there, not even those entrusted with the making of colonial policy. We began to hear about prospective revisions of the constitutions in Jamaica and Barbados. It was equally evident from the agitation going on that Trinidad and British Guiana would follow. We did not yet know what form these changes would assume; but they could hardly stop short of removing the property qualification for suffrage and giving up the
appointed legislative majorities. Even so the colonies would be so far behind Puerto Rico politically that specific comparisons were futile. Puerto Rico had reached a stage of maturity at which she had to be given equality. She might become independent as were the comparable island peoples of Spanish origin in the Caribbean or she might find her equality in association with the United States. I believed the last to be best. I saw in it the most likelihood, for one thing, that we should make good our 45-year commitment to her future; and for another that she would not become a dictatorship after the familiar Latin-American pattern and so lose for her citizens the reality of freedom in a false independence.

That we were moving toward the time of settlement was suddenly apparent from the occurrences in Africa. Since last November American armies had been training there, along with the British, in the hard school of combat. They had done badly at first and our hopes had been disappointed. But the lessons had been learnt and by May the terrific climax had been built up in which the Germans were finally brought to bay and crushed. When Tunis and Bizerte fell, Mr. Churchill could no longer find excuse for not attacking Europe. We heard that he had not only put off the insistent Russians but our own high command as well with the scheme for getting at the "underbelly." Well, the under-belly was now exposed and it obviously looked less tempting. The classic American War College plan for landing in Europe called for cutting the peninsula of Brittany in two, thus establishing depth from which to move inland. If our Generals had wanted to carry out this design instead of landing in Africa, they now had the opportunity to insist again. It would first be necessary to clean the Nazis out of the Mediterranean. But with fortress Europe about to be attacked somewhere, actually, after so long a preparation, it was certain that very soon some real planning for the postwar world must be begun. In that planning Puerto Rico’s future might be determined. Meanwhile there was little we could do locally but carry on—and wait!
ONE OF THE FIRST acts of the Bell Committee on its arrival in Puerto Rico was to indicate that anyone who wished to be heard in secret would be accommodated. It was realized, it was said, that many of those who might wish to give information would be inclined to withhold it "for fear of reprisals." This invitation indicated the attitude which was to be assumed throughout and the tone of the "investigation." The members, with one or two exceptions, said to anyone who cared to ask that they "were here to get Tugwell and clean up the Puerto Rican Reds." The hearings, as might be expected, lacked a good deal of dignity and poise; and the conclusions reached were so obviously determined before the beginning that as an "inquiry" it was dim-cult to take seriously. Mr. Vernon Moore, Judge Bell's secretary, said to me in confusion, after I had conveyed the earliest arrivals from the airport to their hotel, that the Senate Committee's "whitewash" was a disgrace. This Committee would get the real goods. I never knew to whom he thought he was speaking. I merely got up and left.

We had been amply warned. When, during the visit of the Chavez group, I had cabled an invitation to the newly formed House Insular Affairs Committee, it had at least been hoped that we could count on an inquiring skepticism similar to that we found in Messrs. Taft, Bone, Ellender and Chavez. All of these, when brought into contact with actual conditions, had reacted honestly and had quickly accommodated themselves to facts. The Bell Committee would be careful to limit its contact with the life of the Puerto Rican people. Mr. Bell, it has to be said in all honesty, was biased. It must also be said that during the hearings he led—and permitted others to lead—witnesses throughout their testimony, asking prejudicial questions, seeking categorical answers, suggesting trains of reasoning. The prize performer of this sort was, however, not the Chairman but Mr. McGehee of Mississippi, "Smiling Dan McGehee," who made anti-Roosevelt declarations in the hotel lobby to any and all who cared to listen. Red-headed, red-necked, gross-bellied, he shouted and bullied his way through the hearings, crashing brutally into the honest niceties of Puerto Ricans' definitions of their political beliefs and their occasional tortured attempts to philosophize.

1) More properly titled the Subcommittee of the Committee on Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, Seventy-eighth Congress, First Session. Set up by H. Res. 159.

2) Mr. Bell declared that in cases in which the witness preferred it, closed sessions would be held. . . . Before leaving for Puerto Rico, Representative Crawford declared to the United Press in Washington that he favored the holding of private hearings as a means of obtaining more frank testimony from the witnesses, at the same time safeguarding them from intimidations of any kind. . . ." El Mundo, 31 May 1943, p. 1.
Judge Bell’s own methods were different, that is to say he was not brutal. He was a tall, gray-faced and gray-haired lawyer from Kansas City. His caliber is perhaps best revealed by the remark made later by the President when I told him of the Committee’s attitude. He cocked his head and inquired who the Chairman was: "Bell?" he asked, "Bell? Who’s he?" At that time the Congressman was serving his fifth term; but evidently he had not made much impression at the White House. He was the sort of person, however, who made one think him very earnest. Blue eyes stared and little expressions of concern issued frequently from a well-shaped mouth. Those eyes were hard and that mouth tight; but that was apt to escape a casual inspection. Presiding at our hearings he lent the proceedings a kind of specious dignity which lay like a thin veneer over the malice beneath.

Gross Mr. McGehee was slightly out of tune with the rest; he liked the bludgeon; they the knife. More characteristic and more en rapport with the Chairman were Messrs. Crawford of Michigan and Domengeaux of Louisiana. Mr. Crawford seemed to one incorrigible observer, whose levity I felt forced to deplore, like a busy weasel running happily in and out of small holes hoping for rabbits. This was the same Mr. Crawford who had intimated more than once that Charles Taussig and I had some kind of financial interest in Puerto Rican developments which was being served by my governorship. He had not flushed any game by more subtle methods. He was now nominated to do some official hunting and obviously he intended to exploit his opportunities. When he cared to he could ask more acute questions than the others; he had been, after all, in a former incarnation, a Certified Public Accountant. As such we thought him secretly impressed with our revamping of the Puerto Rican budget procedures; but he kept his admiration well under control. One thing we had to say for him: he was active. He spent the early morning hours exploring our piers, warehouses and factories, inquiring into supply operations and those of the Development Company. He asked questions which showed that he understood the difficulties we had had to overcome and indicated appreciation of our efforts. But not, of course, for the record. For the record he took the greatest pains to show us in a different light, a sinister, conspiratorial one. We were persecuting the honest businessman, one would gather, as one was intended to, from the record, and generally conducting ourselves as subversive characters.

Mr. Domengeaux was still another sort. He professed to have a fellow feeling for Puerto Ricans because of being latino, and if he found ways of demonstrating it which the strait-laced-appearing Chairman might not have approved, he obviously trusted that these departures from Anglo-Saxon standards would be regarded indulgently. Or perhaps he did not care. He was merely pleasantly contemptuous. On the evening of his arrival there was a gathering of Lions at the Hotel Normandie,
several hundred of them. The Congressmen came and each was called on for a few remarks. None of these efforts were more than nominal except those of Mr. Domengeaux, who perpetrated what under ordinary circumstances would have been regarded as an inexcusable indiscretion. They came, he said, as a Committee of the Congress to rescue Puerto Rico from the Reds who had her by the throat. Enlarging on this, he castigated the national administration, referred to the walloping he and his colleagues in Louisiana had handed out to the Long machine and said that the goings on in Puerto Rico were like what had been put an end to there. When the Committee men got through, he said, there would be no more nonsense. The gold-overlayed beams of the banquet room really rang to the cheers of the assembled businessmen and their wives. I had to sit—in the nominal place of honor—and take it.

Mr. Domengeaux was hampered in making good his promise to the Lions by having forgot his briefcase. Somehow he had managed to leave it in Washington. And in it were the questions he had intended to ask. In the first few days of the hearing, therefore, he did not produce the expected sensational inquisition; but got in his licks later when the notes did turn up. By that time the atmosphere was thick with mutual hostility. For the Congressmen did not always bother with even the most ordinary courtesies. This, however, was the least offense. More important was the complete disregard, presently, of any appearance of impartiality or even of fairness. Mr. Fitzsimmons’ legal counsel, who has been spoken of before, turned up as a special assistant; and in close attendance and with obvious confidential status was the most vicious of the Coalicionista radio orators, handing notes of instruction to inquisitors as each new witness appeared. In this way the Committee evidently expected that the points on which each was vulnerable could be probed. Sometimes this probing departed seriously from any possible relation to public conduct and stabbed at personal histories; more often, of course, it sought to indicate that the witness was communistic, socialistic or some other variety of leftist.

Among those who came with the Committee there were, as would always be true, men of good will, decent, ordinary people who would not join in the attempt to prove by arranged exhibits that everything being done in Puerto Rico was anti-American in one sense or another—if not independentista, then inimical to the "American way of life" so precious to the Congressmen of that session. Those who obviously dissented from the methods being used and the conclusions being assumed were Mr. Robinson of Utah, a Democrat, and Mr. LeCompte of Iowa, a Republican. Mr. Robinson was an old acquaintance from Resettlement days. At the first opportunity he took me aside and told me—what was by now no news since I had heard it from many others, including Senator Brewster—that this expedition
was aimed at "getting" me. I was, however, startled to hear the detail. Long as I had been used to hostility from those who disliked the cut of my political clothes and perhaps my ideological manners, I should hardly have believed it could run to such venom as Mr. Robinson reported. He frankly thought there was no way out and that no one would be able to survive politically what was laid out for me. I remembered that it could hardly be aimed at me, really; I must just be another Presidential connection to be used in discrediting the Chief. It had started out that way, he said; but as a crusade it had proved popular and had gathered amazing support. I knew the sources, I thought, and named them. He was a little surprised, as I always found Congressmen to be, when I exhibited elementary political perspicacity, but said that I had the exact information as he understood it. However, as he said, talking about it could do no good. The matter was completely foregone.

The hearings of the Chavez Committee had been held in the small theater of the School of Tropical Medicine; the Bell group refused to follow even in this detail—they chose to conduct their proceedings in an unused dining room of the Condado Hotel. During the first meeting I was grateful for being allowed to speak uninterruptedly for some two hours. There may have been two dozen persons present, most of them summoned to testify; but at later meetings there were fewer present. Also, what to me was a most puzzling phenomenon, the Committee was practically unnoticed in the press. Even at its most bizarre it neither drew a crowd nor gained a place on the front page. Obviously Puerto Ricans, including the opposition, had sized up the visitors and determined for once not to inflate them for effect. Had discouragement set in and were the attacks—the spring and fall offensives—going to be given up? Certainly the present opportunity was not being used in the characteristic way.

I did nothing to prepare as I had with the Chavez Committee, but merely talked extemporaneously about Puerto Rico’s problems and those which confronted all of us as a result of war. It was impossible to say whether any considerable impression had been made; it seemed not, really, except for Mr. LeCompte whose face was an exception to the poker-stiff others across the table.

Perhaps it should be said that before beginning these hearings in San Juan, the Committee had already taken evidence in Washington from Mr. Malcolm,3 from Mr. Fitzsimmons, from Mr. Jacques Covo,4 and from Charles Taussig.5 The testimony of

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323 April 1943.
426 and 27 May 1943. Mr. Covo had succeeded Mr. Fahy as Interior’s supply officer in San Juan.
5520 May 1943.
Charles was, in its small compass, good. He had emphasized the constricted insular economy and urged Congressional sympathy for a program of industrialization. Limitation of births and emigration he ruled out as proven impracticable; intensification of economic activity, with emphasis on new industries, was the only possibility. This was not new, of course; it was with this in view that the Development Bank and Company had been established; but it did no harm to have the reiteration. Messrs. Malcolm, Fitzsimmons and Covo, however, had other ends in view than the amelioration of the lot of Puerto Ricans.

Mr. Fitzsimmons’ testimony was one long complaint against our modernization of the Government, which, he said, was extravagant and wasteful. In the old days, before my advent, it had been bad enough; even then, he admitted, he had been protesting that a labor department and certain other agencies were unnecessary. But now there was a Planning Board, a Budget Bureau, and other inventions. But, as he soon revealed, his real grievance was another one. It had always been the custom of Governors in Puerto Rico to refer appropriation bills to the Auditor for advice and recommendation, but lately his advice had rarely even been asked. In spite of his protests to the Department of the Interior the multiplication of agencies, Authorities and functions had gone on until finally it had become more than an honest man could tolerate. He had in consequence decided to resign. He wanted, however, to submit a chart showing what a Mussolinilike regime existed in Puerto Rico.6 This would show graphically how everything centered in the Governor, who used as his central controlling agency the Planning Board. That agency had the frightening power to make a Master Plan and to effectuate it by making zoning regulations with the effect of law if they were not disapproved by the legislature. It appeared from Mr. Fitzsimmons’ testimony that someone had given him my Fourth Power7 to read and this Planning Board, he thought, was its embodiment. He had overlooked the fact, referred to before, that my thesis had centered in the necessity for an agency which should be independent of the other branches of government, including the executive, and that the Puerto Rican Planning Act had carefully protected this independence. I had been unable to discover a better way of constituting the Planning Board, however, than by executive appointment, even though its members’ terms of office were to be long enough to assure their freedom. He thought the

6 This chart can be found at p. 198 in Part II of the Committee’s record. This was not its first appearance. Mr. Malcolm had used it previously. It had circulated freely among the opposition in San Juan and finally had been published in the World Journal (28 October 1942). It was used by that paper as part of its campaign for my removal and was inserted in the Congressional Record several times by Mr. Bolívar Pagán. It was entitled Chart to illustrate some recent changes in the government of Puerto Rico, indicating (1) concentration of authority in the executive, (2) control of free commercial enterprise, and (3) large-scale commercial activities being undertaken by the island government. It would form the basis for the final report of the Bell Committee to be noted later.

7 “The Fourth Power,” Planning and Civic Comment, April-June 1939, Part II.
appointive power made for subservience in anyone receiving appointment. And he thought that zoning ordinances gave unlimited controls over private enterprise—or said he did, although this would indicate a remarkable ignorance of the experience with zoning in American government. With private enterprises suppressed in the way he outlined, the looming shapes of the Authorities were conjured up to replace them: Land Authority, Water Authority, Transportation Authority, Communications Authority, and so on. Acting through these various agencies, in other words, we were suppressing private business with one hand and erecting a socialist state—which, he said darkly, went much beyond even the New Deal—with the other.

Messrs. McGehee, Cole, Domengeaux and Bell were delighted with all this. They could not get the old gentleman to say that I had managed his removal, though they tried and left the record showing that he was the sole survivor out of all the honest protestants even if his retirement was purely voluntary. And they could not lead him into saying that I was personally profiting by these activities, though tentative leading to that conclusion were put out. As the record shows now, at most crucial points the discussions were deleted. What was said in the more intimate exchanges was left to the imagination.

Mr. Fitzsimmons, it seems to me now, had acquired a fixation. Of course Mr. Malcolm had the disease too; but Mr. Malcolm was sophistical and thorough rather than simple and pathetic. The burden of Mr. Malcolm’s story was that I had successfully undermined the Existing Order (which he lived to serve)—the Existing Order being, of course, a colonial one. To him it was just, and right for American businessmen to extend their operations freely throughout the whole Insular economy; and the flag, in his opinion, ought to shelter them and hallow their practices. His testimony had been made available to the Committee first of all and it certainly gave me and my regime a good going over. The printed record occupies 146 packed pages and if there is missing from them any kind of insinuation as to my character and abilities it resulted from the unimportant oversight of an agile mind. As a matter of fact not much was lacking there to furnish a foundation for the

His case was an interesting one. He had a long record of service among people with limited freedom to whom the United States had extended restrained assistance. Asked by Mr. Cole to detail his experience, he indicated this amazing series of assignments: Credit Agent for the Indian Bureau in Alaska; organizer of the banking system in the Virgin Islands; Financial Adviser to Liberia. That took him back several years: but before that he had been in Baluchistan; before that manager of a business in Japan; before that for ten years Treasurer of the City of Manila and Treasury Examiner and Chairman of the Committee on Currency for the Philippines; and even before that purchasing agent for the Chinese Railway Administration. Who says that we have no colonial service? Here was a living example and not even the British service could show a more typically shaped mind. He had become incapable of believing in theories but also had become incapable of conceiving government in any but the most restricted terms: police and audit but no social services and no economic functions. Perhaps there is an auditorial complex also, apart from the conviction of superiority; watching Mr. Fitzsimmons’ symptoms made me suspect it.
structure the Committee had set out to build. Most of it had been told before to the Chavez Committee in Senate hearings, but here it was given its elaborate and finished form—an indictment worked on for more than a year by an experienced lawyer.

The heart of it was Mr. Malcolm’s letter to the Attorney General, dated 15 June 1942, which I had been shown a year before by Abe Fortas. It was now revealed to the Committee. At that time Mr. Malcolm had been a member of my Cabinet; by definition of the Organic Act my legal adviser. He had had no qualms about reporting to the United States Attorney General, without my knowledge, that I was conducting my office improperly; and he had no qualms now about disclosing his treachery to the Committee. The burden of his complaint was that I had ignored his advice as to the action to be taken on bills passed by the legislature. He sought to show that in doing so I had violated not only custom and procedure but the Organic Act itself. This last allegation, of course, rested on his judgment. I had refused veto when he advised it; I had vetoed when he was opposed; and, in certain instances, I had not even asked his advice. Those were important cases, he said; and in fact they were. One amended the Water Resources Act; one created the Transportation Authority; and another reorganized the University. All those bills had gone to Mr. Malcolm’s office and I had recalled and signed them without report.

The list of bills on which veto had been advised, and which I had nevertheless approved, was a longer one; and they embodied the policies and attitudes which most members of the Committee disapproved. In emphasizing and discussing them, and in indicating his disapproval, Mr. Malcolm assumed that he spoke to a sympathetic audience. He displayed an insufferable unction as he did so. He was the defender of the American way; I was its intending destroyer. The Committee smoothed and petted him; he responded with purrs of righteousness. This list included amendments strengthening the minimum-wage law and the workmen’s compensation act, as well as the laws creating the Planning Board, the Development Bank and Company, and the Communications Authority.

The bills I had vetoed against Mr. Malcolm’s advice were conceded by him to have been within my competence. On them, he said, no good purpose could be served by

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9Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, Seventy-eighth Congress, pursuant to H. Res. 159, p. 88ff.

10The circumstances, which I did not feel called on to explain to Mr. Malcolm, were that I was just leaving for Trinidad to attend the first meeting of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission. In the Water Resources case there were fiscal reasons for prompt action; in the Transportation Authority case I was carrying out an official commitment to the R.F.C. (as a result, its loan to the old company was repaid in full, with interest); and in the University case, I wanted to sign the bill, rather than leave it for the Acting Governor, so that I should have the full responsibility.
comment; yet he did comment at some length, indicating that in one instance, at least, I had again exhibited my determined opposition to legal procedures and my predilection for illegal ones. That was the measure setting up a coffee-stabilizing corporation which he had said, in spite of his opinion disapproving such government corporations as the Development Company and the Authorities, was properly organized. He ignored my carefully written veto message in that instance. My objection had been that the bill would benefit a few merchants and exporters rather than the coffee farmers and that it would be very costly to the Government. When it came to opening the Treasury to San Juan merchants, Mr. Malcolm's legal qualms, like Mr. Fitzsimmons' principles of economy, were conveniently abeyed.

These two gentlemen came together at one place in the Malcolm testimony. This was when he related the story of Mr. Fitzsimmons' sad experience with the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior. It was only fair, Mr. Malcolm said, to submit to the Committee the Solicitor's opinion that the Governor's actions had been constitutional. It was also fair, however, to indicate that this opinion had been put out by a Mr. Felix Cohen as Acting Solicitor and that he had relied on the famous Springer case. That case, he begged to remind them, had originated in the Philippines and he himself had been the author of the opinion of the Philippine court. The Committee could choose which authority it would follow; but the fact was that the Springer case had been upheld in the Supreme Court. Mr. Malcolm, by now, was off on a side issue. The Springer case had nothing to do, really, with the question whether I might use my judgment as Chief Executive regardless of advice from the Attorney General. It was obviously dragged in to convey the thought that he was an experienced judge and that Mr. Cohen was merely a small bureaucrat.

At this point he introduced another private letter which lifted the curtain a little on the goings on of the summer before. It was a letter to Mr. Malcolm from Mr. Fitzsimmons dated 21 August 1942, just after the opinion of the Solicitor had disappointed the Auditorial hopes. Mr. Malcolm had been in California; Mr. Fitzsimmons had been in Washington at the command of Mr. Swope, Director of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions. "When you reach Washington," said Mr. Fitzsimmons, "you can obtain a copy of the opinion and comments of the Acting Solicitor, Mr. Felix S. Cohen, on the various acts creating the sundry authorities... [they] are authorized to receive their appropriations in full and may disburse them as they wish without any control by the treasurer or auditor, or any other department of the Government which provides the funds. When you receive this letter, will you kindly advise me what your official program is so that I may know if it is possible to see you...The Department here apparently wishes to see you\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11}The "Department" may be assumed to mean the Division of Territories.
because I was asked for your address which at the time I did not have." That there had been insubordination evidently did not seem to Mr. Malcolm a matter for concealment. Rather, he expected the Committee to share his feeling of affront that it had gone awry. Almost at once he introduced the World Journal chart already referred to, revealing that it had been prepared and shipped to the paper by "an army officer." This was the first I had known of that. There had been a Civil Affairs officer about of whom I was conscious but who had seemed to have no clear functions. He had haunted various government offices, including my own, and was known to have a passion for charts. It was true that he had been known to complain that he was not taken seriously enough for one who would be Governor in case military law should become necessary. But he was not malicious and, I felt certain, not part of any conspiracy among those who were anxious to displace me.  

Whether or not he was the author of the now famous diagram was still unknown to me. Evidently Mr. Malcolm felt that he had been indiscreet, because when Mr. Murphy asked whether the army officer’s name was on the chart, he said, "No, I am just stating that as a surmise. Possibly I should not have said that, because I have no information I can make public on it." Then, covering up quickly, he said, "... He would not want to be quoted under present conditions." The "present conditions" referred to the allegation that there had been attempts on my part to suppress free speech. 

This theory had been seized on by the reactionary press in Puerto Rico as a convenient stick to beat me with (it alternated for months with charges of waste and extravagance, multiplication of agencies and employees, etc.). The opposition was maddened by my insistence on a minimum of privacy and my objection to the subornation of secretaries and clerks, together with my objections to rumor-mongering and incitement to hysteria in the days just after Pearl Harbor. My rather mild and entirely reasonable remonstrances were blown up into what passed for a cause célèbre, a source of much amusement to friends who knew of my fanatical adherence to all the symbols of civil liberty. Mr. Malcolm brought it into his testimony not only to divert the attention of Mr. Murphy, who might have gone on to inquire how Mr. Malcolm and the World Journal had acquired an army officer’s confidential chart, but also to introduce an address he had made almost immediately after I had become Governor.

For the benefit of the San Juan Lions Club Mr. Malcolm had denounced the Government (of which he was a part) as "a mighty bureaucracy made up of countless bureaus, divisions, commissions, and what not, crowding and overlapping

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12 Mr. Thomas Hayes, who was my Secretary at that time, comments on this passage that these were not the Civil Affairs officer’s charts. As a matter of fact that officer thought they were poor stuff and said so to Mr. Hayes. This makes Mr. Malcolm’s insinuation so much the worse.
each other in jurisdiction but all dependent for existence on public funds." This was a typical performance. But since he was a member of my Cabinet I called him for it in a letter ending, "Since you have brought the matter up in such a public way, it seems to me not unreasonable to request that you supply me with the information on which your statement was based. I shall be glad to bring the matter to the attention of the legislature and ask for action." The reply to this was verbose enough, but, of course, contained not a single fact and it was significantly omitted from the list of letters and documents he submitted to the Committee. Instead another speech was submitted in which the Bill of Rights was passionately defended. This was also made to the Lions, to whom Mr. Malcolm was by then a proprietary hero. He had concluded with a paragraph to which the company had risen with cheers:

Today democracy stands at the crossroads. Down one avenue it can proceed to become enmeshed in the tentacles of absolutism. Down the other avenue, it can march to conquer the enemies of the democratic form of government and to safeguard the rights of the people. Under one system, organizations such as yours would not be tolerated, meetings, such as we hold today would not be permitted and the people would become, for all practical purposes, marionettes, who move on a stage with the strings pulled by a master dictator. Under the other system, we can continue to live as free people, accorded the blessing of a bill of rights. Can anyone doubt what our decision will be? That fortitude must be ours which is ready to make every needed sacrifice to attain our legitimate goal. In conclusion, my friends, permit me to request you to rise and join in a toast of gratitude for our Bill of Rights; a toast of loyalty to our country; a toast of respect for our Chief Executive, the President of the United States.

Truly the line is sometimes thin between what is recognizably drivel and what is legitimate exhortation, what is farce and what is ceremonial. Many a public man must blush to read such an apotheosis of the hypocritical cliché, recognizing, as one does on reading a sophomore’s essay, embarrassingly familiar outlines. Whether or not the Congressmen who were Mr. Malcolm’s present audience felt any such embarrassment, they went on listening to him at some length—indeed they called him back for a second session in which his opinions were received concerning the island’s rehabilitation.

The testimony of Messrs. Fitzsimmons and Malcolm has been referred to at some length to show the kind of thing the Committee had in its record—and presumably in its mind—before it came to hold hearings on the spot. There had been no expert testimony; there had been none—at least, none on the record—from Puerto Ricans; and there had been none from the authorities responsible for Puerto Rican affairs or from those who might, be thought favorable to the Administration. All they had
heard was from disgruntled, reactionary former office holders. It was no more than a fair inference that this was all they wanted to hear. Through April and May it was material for that year’s spring offensive. Naturally it had other accompaniments. The Hearst and Scripps-Howard papers renewed their interest and the affair might naturally have been expected to rise toward a climax when the Committee troubled itself to come all the way to Puerto Rico. This was a pre-election year and the fourth term for Mr. Roosevelt was not only a discouraging prospect for the Republicans, but also a dark shadow on the Southern Democrats’ hearts. Mr. McGehee made no secret of his animus, for instance; Mr. Cole persisted in his various attempts to reduce the insular income; and Mr. Crawford persisted in trying to repeal the laws on which our economic program was based. To the Republicans, who could not forget my former connections with the President, the whole matter was more than anything else an amusing instance of intraparty strife from which they had everything to gain and nothing to lose. Progressivism, besides, was just then at its nadir; no epithets were so effective as "radical" or "Red," and with these labels I was firmly tagged. Even to be called a New Dealer—and I could not escape that—was to be condemned.

Nevertheless the thing died on its feet in Puerto Rico. The Chavez Committee visit had petered out for the opposition because of a majority among the investigators who were intellectually honest; this one smothered itself in weakness and bias. Such a prospect was certainly not apparent when the Committee surged into the Condado and began to throw its weight around, but we had ahead of us a tranquil and constructive summer in which to consolidate our governmental gains.

This was the President’s spring in spite of everything. The long ordeal of winter in Africa ended with the first really glorious victory. The amateur management at Algiers suddenly blossomed into the smart expertise of Tunis with the supermen out-thought and outfought, their command centers paralyzed, their transport disrupted, their escape cut off, and they giving up on Cap Bon in the first divisional surrenders. Americans had learned the lessons of modern war. Detroit had found its way to the battlefield: as some correspondent said, "American tails were up and their stingers out." Sicily (or, as we more often guessed then, southern France) was soon to come. And out in the Pacific the Navy was beginning to make muscle again after the frightening concealments of the year just past when we had been down almost to nothing and had had to make battleship and carrier noises with pip-squeak numbers of brave little vessels in that vast hostile sea.

It could be called the Dawn of Victory if one wanted to be high-flown, and, in our renaissance, there was some excuse for letting ourselves go a little. The way to the beginning had seemed so hard and so endless. The Commander in Chief had never
had an instant of peace. Nothing he had done had seemed to turn out well in the
carping air of Washington. The press never had accepted one of his efforts as good;
ever had credited him with one item either of intention or result. The Republicans,
and even worse, the reactionary Democrats, had ridden him with cruel spurs.
Through it all he had not always perhaps been serene—the columnists had
complained that he was sometimes peevish and corrective—but he had been
completely assured. And now no furious press barrage, no big guns from the Senate,
could shake the citadel of the country’s faith in him. He had carried us to
accomplishment—just as Lincoln had done—almost against our collective will,
certainly against the most earnest opposition of press and pundit. Still not he was
praised but only his subordinates. General Marshall and Admiral King began to be
talked of—as geniuses, for instance, but no one pointed out that they were Mr.
Roosevelt’s geniuses and that there had been other candidates whose nomination
the press would have forced if it could. And the Republicans still refused, as they had
been doing since 1940, to recognize the war directorate as a coalition. Messrs.
Stimson, Knox, Nelson among Republicans and Messrs. Baruch, Byrnes, Vinson,
Douglas and Jones—to name no others—among the conservative Democrats won
for the President not the slightest recognition for impartiality. Except that he had
opened up wider sources of talent, his gains from this attempt at appeasement were
minuscule.13

With these vast consequential campaigns opening out and with the renewed faith
and vigor of all Americans, a small, mean and indirect attempt on the President’s
prestige, such as was represented by Mr. Bell’s Committee, must appear picayune
even to the narrowest critic. This was, of course, the real reason for its demise—not,
as it would be more agreeable to claim, because there was nothing to criticize. For it

13The similar problem and the diverse solutions of Lincoln and Wilson offered about the only
previous experience under our Constitution and with our customs. Mr. Roosevelt chose to accept the
solution of Lincoln rather than of Wilson, whose view was that it was the Administration’s war and
that the party would have to see it through. Whether it was a good choice will perhaps never be
certain. Mr. Roosevelt had in mind the stifling of dis-sension—which he did not achieve; but perhaps
also he had in mind winning the peace. Both Lincoln and Wilson won wars and lost settlements and
since they took opposing views of coalition their experience did not help. The troubles of both in the
peace were with the Congress, however, although Wilson’s were certainly partisan, remembering the
role of Lodge, Watson and the others. And Mr. Roosevelt doubtless sought to forestall such an
outcome by the use of Mr. Byrnes (who had been a popular Southern Senator) and, for instance,
Messrs. Vinson and Jones (who had been a prominent Southern Committee Chairman in the House).
If the President should win his peace, or make a measurable approach to it, the appeasement of the
reactionaries would have been successful although his gesture to the Republicans failed. Interesting
contrasts in the crisis-Presidents’ approaches were at that moment being explored, as was inevitable,
by historians. Shortly, for instance, Mr. George Fort Milton would publish his Use of the Presidential
Power, 1789-1943 (Little, Brown & Co., 1944), much of which would have been composed just across
the Square from the White House in the old Cosmos Club while the events of 1942-43 were under
way.
could always be claimed with a show of evidence—indeed it was claimed—that we were "Reds" or "fascists." And that ought to have twanged a sensitized chord and echoed importantly in every newspaper in the land.

When on 1 June I faced the Committee\(^{14}\) it was with the expectation of hostility which did not develop. I was surprised to be allowed to make my rather long statement—concerning the economic position, mostly—without interruption; and my questioning went on until the second day. Even that was temperate. Mr. Crawford was by now supplied with various budgets and financial statements and was nosing into them quite happily. On these and other detailed matters the members seemed willing to accept my suggestion that they could get more from the officers actually in charge—the Treasurer, the Commissioner of Education and so on. It was not bad. But we soon began to hear of private sessions and these went on throughout the Committee's stay, parallel to the on-the-record hearings which now appear in the printed hearings. It was in these that, as we knew well enough, all the grudges were being aired. The informers ranged high and low—the kind of person who, through threatened interest or hope of advantage, does not scruple at betrayal or feel himself married to truth, was present in Puerto Rico as everywhere. But with us he was to be found in his most vicious manifestation among the members of the Farmers' Association and the Chamber of Commerce. One banker in particular made himself almost the official host and sessions were held at his home. At these the other bankers and the sugar producers felt more at ease. There they gave the Committee what it had been looking for—a vessel full and running over. The lights burned late, confidences grew, and legislators and businessmen told each other horror tales to satiation.

There are always, of course, informers who inform on informers, and I heard all about it from volunteers: in fact, I could not stop the spate of gossip. For everyone knew by the beginning of the second week that the Committee had no indictment, that it was merely fishing in what it had hoped were troubled waters, and that nothing of value to the opposition would come of it all—that is, everyone knew but the local Bourbons who, like those elsewhere, never know anything outside their own immediate interests and have an infinite capacity for being deceived about them.

Mr. Benjamin Ortiz, at that time Chairman of the Public Service Commission, delivered a shrewd thrust at the Committee in a letter written after he had finished testifying. His appearance had been an ordeal, since his was the responsibility for

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\(^{14}\)Messrs. McGehee and Robinson had not yet arrived, for which reason, I expected, throughout the Committee's stay, to be called back for further questioning.
administering the law which made public utilities of the sugar mills and regulated their relations with the colonos. Mr. Crawford and Mr. Bell had sought to force an admission that the law was foolish, that it was discriminatory, that it discouraged private investment and that it led directly toward socialism. It was probably true that Mr. Ortiz was a socialist, speaking in a broad way; but he saw no reason to be ashamed of his arduous work in the year past. He was confronted with prejudiced and dishonest information furnished to the Committee by sugar lawyers and others and, considering the attitude of his interrogators, had conducted himself very well indeed. But he was conscious that the proceedings had been rapid and the pressure considerable. So he wrote a letter to Mr. Bell, one paragraph of which was this:

During my testimony I expressed some general ideas representing my philosophy of government. . . . Even assuming that a set of principles contrary to my points of view were to have some validity in the United States of America, yet we must ascertain whether there is any difference in the economic and social conditions in Puerto Rico which may justify the application of a different set of principles in our island. The greater part of our population lives in conditions of tragic misery. I respectfully suggest that your mission is not to study the conditions of 1,000 or 5,000 wealthy persons in Puerto Rico, but to study the conditions of the rest of the population. The best evidence which you could consider would be an actual physical examination of the conditions in which our people live.\textsuperscript{15}

Most witnesses, early in their testimony, were asked to say whether they believed in public ownership. Mr. Louis Sturcke, Director of the Budget, had a typical experience:

MR. CRAWFORD: What is your attitude toward government ownership versus private ownership?

MR. STURCKE: My personal attitude, you mean? - MR. CRAWFORD: "Yes, sir.

MR. STURCKE: Well, I personally believe that the profit motive is the best way to get people to work, and get that work done efficiently—that is, to produce goods and services. I think in government operation of business you get into administrative difficulties of one sort or another.

MR. CRAWFORD: You mean to say that by the government owning these activities and operating them, and getting into administrative difficulties, you still feel that the net return is better for the people, brings them more joy of life, more liberty, higher standards of living than under private incentive?

\textsuperscript{15}Hearings, Part 7, 10 June 1943, p. 646.
MR. STURCKE: NO; I said the opposite. I said the profit incentive, private ownership and operation, produces more goods at a lower cost or more efficiently, as against government ownership.

MR. CRAWFORD: Well, that is exactly what I understood you to say. Now, then, let me restate it this way. Do you believe in government ownership and operation in preference to private ownership and operation?

MR. STURCKE: NO, sir; I think the same answer would apply.

MR. CRAWFORD: In other words, you believe more in the private incentive, private ownership and operation, producing more goods at a lower cost, or more efficiently, as against government ownership with its administrative difficulties?

MR. STURCKE: Yes, sir.

MR. CRAWFORD: In your advocacy of these activities, since you became a member of the Governor's operating force, we will call it, have you advocated government ownership or private ownership?

MR. STURCKE: I do not know that I have had occasion to take a position on that.

For the Committee's purpose the prize witness was—or should have been—Mr. Antonio Roig, one of the largest of the Puerto Rican sugar producers. He had plenty of animus and was one of the main supports of the Farmers' Association. Mr. Domengeaux inquired whether businessmen were reluctant to appear because of possible retaliation. Mr. Roig said that they were but that he felt their apprehensions to be baseless. Mr. Cole asked whether, if there were any spirit of retaliation or vengeance on the part of the Governor, the law would not take care of him.

Mr. Roig said, 'Probably, but I do not hold that fear." And he was thus more or less unsatisfactory throughout. He was caught, for instance, in the insular dilemma of complaining bitterly about the Minimum Wage Act, the law making sugar mills public utilities and so on, but of being unwilling to ask that the Congress overrule local legislation. Lacking that, there was not much that was substantive in the "experience of a businessman" as he offered it to the Committee. He did allow himself to be led by the Chairman into denunciation of the Development Bank and the Development Company, the twin objects of his special concern. Indeed, after Mr. Bell had expatiated on the possibilities in a literal interpretation of the Development Company law, Mr. Roig said, as though somewhat surprised, that although he had not thought of it before, "It could work just like Mr. Ponzi did in Massachusetts." He then followed on into this bit of reasoning—under proper guidance:
THE CHAIRMAN: I believe there is a provision that the indebtedness of the island government cannot exceed more than 10 per cent of the assessed valuation.

MR. ROIG: That is right.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it your opinion under this Development Act, inasmuch as there is a provision in the charter that the assets and deposits of the bank shall not be the assets and deposits of the Puerto Rican government but of the corporation created and controlled by the government, is it your opinion that it is an attempt to avoid the provisions of the Organic Act?

MR. ROIG: It is.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would it not be possible by using the powers of that bank to make the actual indebtedness of Puerto Rico, by drawing off all the assets out of which taxes could be paid, to be doubled and redoubled and expanded many hundreds of times?

MR. ROIG: There are no limitations.

THE CHAIRMAN: The charter provides there shall be no limitations.

MR. ROIG: I imagine it is the policy to squeeze from the banks the government deposits of 25 or 30 millions.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the government deposits in these private banks were siphoned off to the Development Bank, what would happen?

MR. ROIG: Small banks could not stand it. Other banks like the National City would not make much money.

THE CHAIRMAN: When do you think, or how long do you think it would take to close out small private business in the island if the Development Bank could function?

MR. ROIG: Five years.

THE CHAIRMAN: You think it would take 5 years to destroy all private business?

MR. ROIG: Probably.

The Chairman desisted at this point and Mr. Cole took over; but presently the Chairman again intervened—he had one further question:
THE CHAIRMAN: We would like to have an opinion from the folks in the island as to whether or not the life of corporations such as the Development Bank or any similar corporation should be continued.

MR. ROIG: I do not believe in government in business. A bank with such a broad charter as this I think is one of the biggest causes of this main fear of business.

THE CHAIRMAN: Has there been any particularly marked tendency for capital to leave the island since that bank has been conceived?

MR. ROIG: I do not think the bank itself is the cause of capital leaving. I think it has been all of the philosophy of the recent years.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you say that the proposed system which includes the Development Bank and the Development Company, and other corporations that make up that picture, were parts of a general plan by the government to take over business, thereby causing a flight of capital? Capital in all times and in all countries is timid?

MR. ROIG: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: And it is selfish.

MR. ROIG: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: When I say it is timid I mean that whenever its safety is jeopardized it flees if it can.

MR. ROIG: It is always like that. They want a higher percentage.

THE CHAIRMAN: Capital is always governed not altruistically but really by a selfish interest.

MR. ROIG: Exactly.

THE CHAIRMAN: It goes to places where it can best serve its own interests.

MR. ROIG: Absolutely.

This was not so helpful as having the witness volunteer; still, it was something to have him agree, generally, to the Chairman's thesis. And the members were suitably grateful. Both Mr. McGehee and Mr. Cole expressed gratitude and said that he had been "extremely helpful." There were a few others of the business community who testified for the record. The Chamber of Commerce and the Farmers' Association
One of the most tortured passages was the inquiry into the matter of our taking over the bus line in San Juan, after it had broken down from mismanagement and private looting, and the setting up of a Transportation Authority to manage it. In spite of the plain facts in the case, witnesses were led into representations that it was I who was responsible for its breakdown and that this had been managed so that another socialistic enterprise might be set up. Our transportation crisis had been such in the spring of 1942 that I had asked the legislature for emergency powers. These had been denied because of the opposition of the público lobby. At the specific request of the R.F.C., however, I had recommended, and the legislature had consented to, the taking over of the bus lines. By now we had a system which was operating successfully and profitably in spite of competition from públicos which, because of the political influence of the chauffeurs,\(^{17}\) made the situation a chaotic and ruinous one. Since I lacked power to control it, I had appealed to the Federal authorities and Mr. Eastman of the Office of Defense Transportation had responded at once, supplying the necessary discipline and enabling us to regularize routes, economize on gasoline and tires, and at the same time provide quite adequate service. Because I had had one of my few quarrels with the Populares over this I was amazed to have the former attorney for the bus line testify that I had ruined the line by encouraging the públicos to operate freely.\(^ {18}\) Mr. McGehee and Mr. Crawford erected this into a pretty damaging structure with Mr. Robinson holding back. Speaking of the failure of the company to meet its payments on the R.F.G. loan, Mr. McGehee drove hard on the point that I was responsible.

MR. MCGEHEE: And you made those payments until this interference started by the insular government?

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\(^{16}\)The food-distribution program came in for its expected share of abuse, and, indeed, seemed to offer at the moment the most vulnerable object for attack so that when it got back to Washington the Committee would, for some time, devote itself to sparring with the Department over this, with Mr. Thoron weakening and I frantic at this end lest the program be abandoned and the cost of living should suddenly rise by the twenty-five or thirty per cent of the importers’ profits. As it turned out we should hold on for some time; but there were many anxious moments. Luckily the Senate group, after its early row about this matter, stopped bothering over it, and since the Bell group carried so little weight, Messrs. Ickes and Fortas decided to give up only the items of lesser importance. Up to the summer of 1945 and beyond we should maintain bulk buying and importing of the half-dozen most important foods.

\(^{17}\)They had a kind of alliance with the Populares. In exchange for rounding up voters and conveying them to the polls at election time they were protected from restriction.

\(^{18}\)Mr. Francisco Fernández Cuyar was a law partner of Mr. Celestino Iriarte, Presidente of the Republicanos. The firm had lost a profitable client when the Government took over.
MR. CUYAR: Oh, yes; absolutely. Not only those, but there was an additional loan of $250,000.

MR. MCGEHEE: And you met those until the interference of the insular government?

MR. CUYAR: Quite well.

THE CHAIRMAN: This additional loan came at what date?

MR. CUYAR: That was January 1941.

MR. ROBINSON: Just a minute, if I may; I would like to ask this question: Did the conditions on the island, with reference to the war, have any influence on your business?

MR. CUYAR: With reference to what, sir?

MR. ROBINSON: The war.

MR. CUYAR: Oh, yes. Yes. After the war started and when the maritime situation got worse in regards to Puerto Rico, why, you couldn’t get any material and spare parts, and busses, and so forth, to come down.

MR. ROBINSON: And that would have something to do with it?

MR. CUYAR: Oh, yes. I already said that that was, in part, to blame for it, but, in my opinion, which is based on all these facts, I should say that was sort of a final blow to break down this Company, but it was just a contributing circumstance.

MR. ROBINSON: Your opinion is that you could have been maybe successful in getting by, even in spite of the conditions that existed due to the war, if you could have had the support of the insular government during that particular and crucial time?

MR. CUYAR: I am quite certain of that, sir. As a matter of fact, though, we didn’t want to sell. We wanted to carry on this business. It is a good business. We were practically forced to sell. I am not referring now to the court in this proceeding.

I am referring to all the gradual processes by which this Company was, as I said, cornered. MR. CRAWFORD: Well, the war brought you a greatly increased passenger flow in this area, did it not? MR. CUYAR: That is right. MR. CRAWFORD: And that type of transportation is recognized as essential war service by the War Production Board and the priorities authorities and all the rest? MR. CUYAR: Yes, sir.
MR. CRAWFORD: SO then, from that standpoint, the war conditions would have materially increased the revenue had your franchise been protected? MR. CUYAR: That is right, sir. Only that busses break down once in a while, but if you had money to purchase the materials and so forth; yes. THE CHAIRMAN: Had you been able to get the allocation of parts, the war would have increased your business rather than hurt it, would it not? MR. CUYAR: Yes, sir. THE CHAIRMAN: The only place where the war hurt you was the failure to get the allocation of parts from the government in Washington; is that right? MR. CUYAR: I don’t think so, sir. In fact, we had an allocation of parts which was, in part, paid for with the $8000 disbursed by R.F.C. on its last $50,000 loan. THE CHAIRMAN: Why did you not get the parts? MR. CUYAR: We didn’t have the money. THE CHAIRMAN: You did not have the money? MR. CUYAR: NO. The loan was cancelled when all these things came up. The banks here would not let us have the money. THE CHAIRMAN: Then you did get allocation of parts from Washington? MR. CUYAR: Yes. It came down. THE CHAIRMAN: But the destruction of your revenue by these públicos was what kept you from having money to pay for those parts; is that your position? MR. CUYAR: The destruction of the income and the credit. MR. CRAWFORD: The públicos did not destroy your credit; it was the insular government. MR. CUYAR: The income was destroyed by competition at first. MR. CRAWFORD: Sure.

MR. CUYAR: Then this publicized thing that the government was going to take over, and so forth, why, that destroyed the credit.

MR. CRAWFORD: YOU now refer to the message to the legislature by the Governor of Puerto Rico?

MR. CUYAR: That is true.

It is obviously impossible even to summarize adequately here some twelve hundred packed pages of testimony and a large volume of exhibits which represented the on-the-record evidence taken by the Committee down to July 1943. If the excerpts which have been selected, and the comments which have been made, convey the impression of unfairness and partiality, it would seem to us who worked in Puerto Rico during that period no more than representative. It is possible that this account is unfair to Mr. Crawford’s undoubted industry, to Mr. Bell’s honest belief that we were erecting a totalitarian monster which would consume all private enterprise, to the withdrawals and non-participation of Messrs. Robinson and LeCompte. If so the reader will undoubtedly sense these deficiencies; and he will perhaps make some allowance for our resentment at the long persecution to which we had been subjected by what used to be called "the forces of reaction"—a phrase more accurate in this case than most others—both in Puerto Rico and in Washington. The
period through which we had just come was one of the Heroic ones in the history of
the Western world. We had tried to play our small part in it becomingly, with a
sense of the great events in which we participated. Partly by luck, but partly also by
good management, we felt, we had come through what was pretty obviously the
worst and had begun to see the rewards of reconstruction in a coming peace. We
thought we had gone far toward creating an institutional structure in our tiny island
which was capable of performing the tasks before us; we knew, too, that we had
brought a new spirit into our Government—of youth, hope, efficiency and
achievement in place of the old slack political methods. And here were members of a
Committee of the great Congress, the creator of the Puerto Rican constitution, the
arbiter of her fate, behaving with an irresponsibility suitable perhaps to ordinary
times, or at least expectable in them, but grievously below the level required if we
were to meet the obligations now so rapidly rushing toward us from the future.

Mr. Benjamin Ortiz had said it. He had written the epitaph of the whole enterprise
when he had suggested that the Committee would do well to study the life of the
Puerto Rican masses rather than to constitute itself the protector of the Puerto
Rican wealthy. There was more than that in it, however, to discourage one with a
genuine sense of time and events: there was a feeling that if this was what the
institution of democracy produced it would hardly be worth the fight our sons were
making for it. It might be the "delayed firecracker" Abe had said it was—that is, no
one might pay any attention to the attempted rumpus—and that seemed likely, now,
in view of the virtual boycott by the press. But the significance was nevertheless
there. The Committee had been regularly constituted by the Congress and had been
provided with funds. It had engaged "experts," it had taken preliminary evidence,
and it had journeyed to our island and spent two weeks in gathering more
testimony. All this, said in this way, sounds as sedate and earnest as the activities of
a Royal Commission, and might be expected to produce valuable facts and reveal
significant attitudes. It might be expected to presage more sympathetic treatment
for Puerto Rico, perhaps, and intelligent revision of her Organic Act. It might even
begin, I had suggested, with permission to elect her own Governor. But it was not
like that, whatever a surface description might convey. The enterprise was
conceived as a political expedition. It was meant to discredit me in order to harm the
President. This impulse was activated and sustained by the fears and hates of the
Puerto Rican sugar producers, her less scrupulous merchants and her press. It
sought to establish a theory and was neglectful of any facts which ran contrary to a
preconception. Witnesses were told what to say by leading, they were invited to
express fears of reprisal and their most private beliefs were probed with an
inquisitorial brutality. Was this Committee, with its prejudice, its perversion of the
democratic process of investigation, its willingness to injure reputations for political
advantage, its ruthless invasion of individual liberties, part of the same structure, product of the same civilization, as that clean, efficient, high-intentioned armed force now beginning the subjection of that challenging monster in Europe?

I still do not think we can be blamed if this question remained in our minds as a sourish residue when our visitors had gone. I had been trying to represent to my young men, the promising managers of a Puerto Rican irredenta, the new United States.

I had never told them so, but I hoped they—and all Puerto Ricans—would infer from my position on all public questions, by my loyalties and by my conduct, that the United States was worthy of their patriotic regard. I hoped thus to destroy the last vestiges of colonialism in their minds and to give them a sense of oneness with those of us on the continent who were also liberals and to convince them that they might tie to us with gratitude and trust. And Muñoz had consistently contributed to the establishment of this concept. None of the thrusts at me and my policies in Puerto Rico had affected that—indeed they had strengthened the faith now growing in many minds. Not even the attacks of a partisan minority in the Congress or the cruel lies and insinuations of the continental press affected it. The work of this Committee, however, in spite of the small attention paid to its current work, nearly destroyed all that Muñoz and I had built. From that time the old independentista movement began to grow again, fed by a sense of outrage; and within a year it would be something as vicious and as intransigeant as it had ever been, threatening all our freedom of maneuver and allied with all the dirtiness of the politics our new administrators were trying to thrust aside. We knew that something had to be done at once. We went at it with somewhat heavy hearts—and Muñoz with deep skepticism.
AFTER THE Bell Committee departed my wife and I for a while allowed the claims of exhaustion and went off to Caneel Bay on St. John to play with our son on the beaches, to swim, to read in a desultory way and to rest. There were plenty of jobs waiting to be done, some of them neglected because of the investigations; especially, now, there was a new one, the prospective meeting at which the President’s Committee was to revise the Organic Act. But for the moment these matters were put aside. And after a few days this book began to stir in my mind, having been suggested by Mr. Henry Volkening, who had also promptly arranged for its publication; and there at Caneel Bay its first pages got themselves written. With the illusion of efficiency which affects authors who have conceived but not yet gestated, I promised to finish it by the end of that year: when the end of still another year should be within sight, however, I should be adding pages. Those written in the first days would be sacrificed in the reader’s interest as reaching too far back. But they would have helped me explain to myself what was taking place. And if there should prove to be design or drama in this Puerto Rican record it will be because not only I but my wife, Tom Hayes, Mrs. Ruth Kenrick, Mr. Bucklin Moon and others chiseled it out of a larger and much less choate mass. Both the mass and the chiseling were necessary. By the time I thus withdrew for a while, however, the President’s Committee was in being. I had lost in my two attempts to influence its make-up. The Puerto Ricans chosen had been the Presidents of political parties (minus Mr. Bolivar Pagán of the Socialistas but plus Justice Travieso) and the Continentals had not included any members of the Congress. I was sure that these choices were mistaken and that they would be responsible for subsequent frustrations. But I was not in a good position to insist. I had now been under constant attack for almost two years. My reputation, at least with continental newspaper readers, was a somewhat confused melange of incompetence, wastefulness and at the same time dangerously successful socialism, but whatever it was, it was something people were expected not to approve. That is why its working up and printing seemed worth while to publishers. The campaign had the opposite effect in Puerto Rico. There I had as near general approval as any Continental ever gets and some genuine friends and supporters. But obviously my judgment had an impaired worth even in the minds of Messrs. Ickes and Fortas. Well as they knew me, they also read the newspapers and it was obvious that they had an occasional doubt whether all the attacks on me were unprovoked and whether all the charges made were unfounded. So I was having less and less to say about policy; and particularly, this Organic Act revision was going to be managed by others. I was out of touch with the President now too. I could no longer write him or expect special attention for matters I felt to be important. Letters giving him my views on issues other than Puerto Rican, which he had once
welcomed, had begun to find their way to his assistants without his seeing them. I was surprised, after years of intimacy, when my first formal acknowledgment came from one of these new men. But there was nothing strange about it after all. It was merely a warning that the war strategist was now uppermost.

I came back from Caneel Bay with this book’s first pages, at least, written, and found, as soon as I began active conferences with the other members of the President’s Committee, that Muñoz had taken a look at the world and made up his mind that some reorientation was required. I do not know whose advice he took or where his information came from, unless it was mostly inference from the unpunished, almost undisputed, performance in our island of the Bell Committee, but quite suddenly he became convinced that the group known as New Dealers had lost control in Washington and, even worse, that the Republicans were going to win the national election in the fall of 1944. These convictions of his made some temporary difference in our relationship which became at once apparent. It was not a change in affection and respect—those remained the same—but rather of confidence and intimacy. I could not for a long time be certain exactly what he was trying to do or through whom he was trying to work. In this he was not being disloyal to me, though at the moment I felt it that way; he was exercising his best judgment as to what was best for Puerto Rico. That was his guiding principle and whether he worked through me and my crowd in Washington or whether he worked through others, no matter what their views or attitudes, was a matter of indifference. I came presently to understand this; and from then on I argued with him only as to the possible facts. For the President had not fundamentally changed and would certainly be a fourth-term candidate and, I felt, would win even if Mr. McGehee, and other nominal Democrats, did seem to think penalties no longer attached to disaffection, and even if the Republicans seemed to behave as though they expected an imminent access of authority. But he did not agree. And he began to plan for what he believed was going to happen.

That Muñoz should have a strong sense not only of his historic role in Puerto Rican life but also that he should be impressed with his importance in that role was no more than natural. If he sometimes identified himself and his personal desires and wishes with the people and their requirements, that was to be understood by his experience. He had always, from boyhood, been encouraged to think of himself that way. His father, Luis Muñoz Rivera, living actively through the changes incident to the transfer of possession from Spain to the United States, had personified Puerto Rico throughout. He had not once regarded himself as a Spaniard resident in the West Indies and later as an American resident there; he was never either; but always a Puerto Rican. During his mature lifetime he was, moreover, the
representative of insular aspirations abroad and at home—a confident, personable man of large appetites, charm and political facility. Whether in Spain, taking advantage of the divisions there to negotiate the autonomous charter, or in the United States as Resident Commissioner, manipulating the difficult forces which play upon the Congress, he was the very embodiment of his people. And young Luis had been not only a son but a disciple. The father’s relatively early death had left Luis with no other ambition than to succeed to this embodiment. He had waited and planned for it through many years, to have it devolve upon him overwhelmingly when it did come in 1940. Now in 1943 he was acting a role for which he was well prepared and which no one in the island denied was his of right. If he was mistaken in the judgments on which he acted, no one could deny that he had to make them. They were his responsibility.

Even if he was right in making up his mind as he did, it nevertheless made difficulties for me that they should be based on what I believed to be mistaken forecasts. I had my own judgments to make. It was unfortunate, but we should simply have to go on working apart rather than together. His attitude was so withdrawing and unco-operative that I soon began to suspect that he might not attend the Committee’s meeting in Washington. In talking this over, he hinted plainly that his demands would have to be met before he would consent to take part: that is, we should have to go further than the terms of reference in the President’s letter. He was, I could see, feeling the pressure of the independentistas among his followers and fearing that they might denounce him as a Yankee collaborationist. Not only was he following the President, as he thought, into the tory camp on the continent; he was turning to the more extreme solution of the status problem. If he had reactionary allies on the continent, he could be politically more radical at home. It was a very difficult time for him. He was tortured with doubts and uncertainties; and, above all, he was determined to orient his policy in the direction which would bring most good to his people. What he would decide to do, I did not know even when I left for Washington; and when I got there I had to report that he might not come. He did come, finally, when we refused to make concessions; but I knew, and I warned Abe, that there would be trouble in the meetings.¹

He certainly approached the revision of the Organic Act with a good deal of dread. The independentistas were demonstrating behind his back. And although they were

¹A complete transcript of the meetings was printed as a supplement to the Chavez Committee hearings on the bill. It begins at p. 309 of Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs, U. S. Senate, 78th Congress, First Session, on S. 1407, A Bill to Amend the Act Entitled "An Act to Provide a Civil Government for Puerto Rico and for Other Purposes," approved 2 March 1917, as amended and Known as the Organic Act of Puerto Rico. Washington, 16, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26 November and 1 December, 1943.
few and their cause unpopular among the people, many of them were dear to him as comrades in a long struggle. If no more came of the Committee's work than the elective governorship they would be bitter; at the same time reason (in my shape) told him that nothing more could be got in wartime. It was because of this that he had invented the vast scheme for a rehabilitation fund and had thought he might sell it to the Committee as something final to do for Puerto Rico. Turn us loose with that, he would say, and we will never ask for more.

I had cited the terms of reference, which were clearly narrow, but he had thought that with the intervention of the conservatives with whom he was in touch he might either force the Committee to request wider terms or, failing in that, eschew the Committee and go directly to the President or to the Congress. That he had in mind something of this sort there could be no doubt. Whether he would, in the weeks since I had seen him, be reinforced in his resolve or would have decided to be more moderate in spite of his uneasiness I could not predict.

I was busy in Washington with routine matters for some time before the Committee first met on 20 July after some days of postponement while Muñoz was awaited. During that time, while the great battle of Sicily went on and the War Food Administration was given to Judge Marvin Jones in succession to Mr. Chester Davis, I had some opportunity to observe the Washington scene after a long absence. Never within my memory had the weaknesses of democracy been so apparent. The divisions and hostilities among the men managing the home front were appalling. It seemed to me that the jealousies and bickerings which had made the thought of return intolerable to me were now intensified to an incredible degree. The war must be progressing in spite of rather than because of anything being done here. The President, on 16 July, was forced to intervene in one of these quarrels which had reached a near-scandal stage. He chose to relieve Henry Wallace of all his administrative duties in the war agencies rather than to touch the empire of Mr. Jesse Jones of Texas. This settled the surface but left a worse quarrel underneath, for the basic disloyalty in Washington, which overshadowed all others, was the disaffection of the reactionary South. I found many belligerents among Southerners as unrestrained as Mr. McGehee. But the President was still appeasing them; and he knew that, however he was treated, Henry Wallace would remain loyal. Old friends and enemies helped to orient me in this melee—where it was practically impossible to find a restaurant seat, where most of the old agencies had moved and the new ones had expanded into innumerable temporary buildings, where the hotels refused to accept laundry and Colonels and Waves seemed to flow like white-flecked honey through the melting streets. Mr. Paul Porter, soon to succeed Mr. Charles Michelson
as Director of Publicity for the Democratic Committee, was very amusing about the old Department of Agriculture now straining at the seams and disturbed as it had never been before, even in New Deal days. Mr. Porter had been a product of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, largely responsible for getting the South to reduce its cotton in favor of other crops. I even found, after some study, that I could do a little toward smoothing out misunderstandings among the younger men who were now just next to the top. They obviously regarded me as a harmless old-timer, and since I had no ulterior interest, I could mediate. In doing this, I learned how uneasy and uncertain all of them were. The basic trouble was that everyone was seeking a completely elusive security. Everything was fluid; new agencies were springing up and impinging on old ones; old ones were withering as they were drained of their power. Everyone was on edge to keep what he had got of authority and prestige; everyone suspected conspiracy among his rivals.

Where was there evidence in Washington that this was the home capital of those legions just finding their battle courage in Africa and Italy? The one difficulty, of course, was the rapidity of change within which no one had any permanency or ease; but the other—and equally important—one was the dominance, which had been growing for a long time but was now startling, of the reactionaries. This was distressing to young men and even to those now middle-aged ones who had come to work with us in the early thirties. It seemed to them that everything for which they had been laboring was being lost by default. This was the reason why the President’s preference for Jones over Wallace caused such a sensation. Since becoming Vice President, Mr. Wallace had seemed to grow daily in stature. He was no longer faced with the administrative dilemmas which for him were so difficult and in which he so often came down on the wrong side. He had begun to shape up as the champion of the Progressives. And the President had publicly humiliated him.

It was no wonder that Muñoz interpreted events as he did. His instincts and apprehensions were very like those of the President—that is to say, they were political and cast in terms of advantage to a cause. With the President the cause was now that of victory over the Axis; with Muñoz it was the permanent settlement of Puerto Rico’s status. If the President judged appeasement to be so vital that he must rebuke his chosen second, it is no wonder that Muñoz felt likewise that he must find alliances among those who could do the most for Puerto Rico. But I thought he would see, as he thought it over, that the analogy was imperfect. For the reactionaries could never be expected to assist his efforts. They were exploiters; and he could not afford to pay their price for any political gains they might concede.

2Later to become Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, and then Administrator of the Office of Price Administration.
They would not give up their profitable market of two million islanders, nor, willingly, the opportunity to run the sugar industry. Their interest lay in a relationship with the United States which would protect these privileges. So I expected him to conclude ultimately that he must look to the liberals in the nation, as he had always done before, for genuine allies.

That I think is what he did conclude. And although he did not appear for the first meeting of the Committee, we shortly afterward had a telegram saying that he had been delayed in Miami by an illness; and within a few days he was in attendance. He was, of course, bound to make his point that our terms of reference were too limited and to try to stretch them if he could. But he did consent mildly enough to postpone discussion of this until after the clearer issues had been agreed on. So within a few days we were hard at it.

It was accepted by everyone that we were to provide for the elective governorship and for such other changes as were incidental to this. If it seemed at first that this might be accomplished by the redrafting of a few sentences in the Act, it was soon clear that much more was involved. I had wondered what would happen when it became apparent that sovereignty was involved; for it seemed certain that none of those who had consented so willingly—Mr. Ickes, Mr. Fortas and Mr. Gardner (the Solicitor), Mr. Thoron or Mr. Brophy—to revision had realized, quite, the implications. None of them had had any colonial experience and none had had any leisure to study the matter. In preparation, I induced Mr. Wayne Coy to spend an evening with us; and Abe, at least, understood, after that, what we were undertaking. I felt that Mr. Brophy did not have the same comprehension and his subsequent actions confirmed the impression that he was more interested to push through some change than to examine its probable consequences. His pride seemed somehow involved in simply getting something done.

Mr. Coy had been in the Philippines as assistant to the High Commissioner and he understood that if Puerto Rico was not to be a State within the Union, there must be some other nexus, and that neglect of this was tantamount to establishing a military occupation. This was because the Army would be far and away the largest Federal establishment, besides being the most dignified and powerful, on the island. The Commanding General would become the dean of Federal officers if there was none appointed, and would, to all intents and purposes, be the representative of the United States. To avoid this, as well as to preserve the dignity and symbolism of the nation, there must be a Representative, whatever called. Mr. Coy pointed out the errors in the Philippine Act which had led to embarrassments and sometimes to strained relationships and urged that they be avoided in the case of Puerto Rico. The discussion of this matter was a long one. Mr. Fortas and Mr. Gardner, especially,
found themselves convinced that some symbol of sovereignty must be provided, although I warned them that Puerto Ricans would be bitterly opposed: they were bound to try to have their cake and eat it too—that is, they would want to say that they had got rid of the American Governor; but they would not want to admit that they had consented to the appointment of a still higher official even though he represented something above and beyond the insular interest. They were bound to try to ignore the fact that in the present Governor there were combined two functions: the administration of local government, and the representation of the United States. No elected Puerto Rican Governor could represent more than the Puerto Ricans who elected him: to say that he could was not only to ignore the fact that Puerto Rico was not part of the United States, by constitutional definition, but also to give him a power and dignity not possessed by the Governor of any State. The Puerto Ricans on the Committee might want to ignore these issues, but Presidential appointed Continentals on it could not conscientiously ignore them.

The fact that there was certain to be a difference on this issue which would split the conference had, I said, led to my asking for its consideration in advance by those who would have responsibility for representing the United States. On other issues we should not be likely to find the same division. On this I thought, moreover, that there could be no compromise; at least I could see none that any American could make. We were not proposing to make Puerto Rico a State. If we were it would be different and the question would not arise. But since we were not, we must, if we were to be honest, accept the obligation to protect the national interest. It would be easier to ignore the issue, of course, but if we did we should always be open to the suspicion of not having understood our duty or of having avoided it. I knew that the thoughtless and the ignorant would be against us. We might be called illiberal; but this would be unjust and we must bear it.

As the discussions developed, it became obvious that this matter was second only to the postponed demand of Muñoz for further commitment on the question of status. But unlike the question of status it was not—and could not be—postponed, since it had to do with the governorship itself. Oddly enough, however, the outbreak on this came not from Muñoz but from Justice Travieso. It was put on the ground of dignidad. When he understood that a Representative was proposed, he launched into a denunciation which was something less than judicial, notwithstanding his previous suggestion (in a meeting of the Caribbean Advisory Committee) that along with the elected Governor, provision should be made for a "Presidential Delegate." Somehow, perhaps because Abe, who was presiding, spoke of the Representative as a "Commissioner," he concluded that he was to be analogous to the High Commissioner to the Philippines, and such a proposal he considered extremely
offensive. Abe had approached the matter with delicacy as one of several matters having to do with "the extent of power that the Federal Government retains ... so long as there is United States sovereignty in Puerto Rico." But the real trouble began when, on the second day, Abe indicated that we were "ready to consider the subject of the interrelationship of Federal and insular powers and functions" and that we might start by discussing the desirability of having "a chief representative of the United States Government in Puerto Rico who might be considered as chief representative of the President of the United States." This seemed to be the Presidential Delegate already suggested by Justice Travieso. Nevertheless it touched off an extremely temperamental exhibition. He had evidently been hearing some gossip, since he referred to the proposed appointee as a "High Commissioner" and said that it sounded to him like "English colonial policy." Puerto Rico, he said, was a mature community and ought not to have imposed on her an official whose presence would be interpreted as meaning that he had a higher standing than that of the elected Governor. He preferred keeping the present arrangement rather than submit to such an indignity. He would, he said, "object very strongly to a High Commissioner with such powers of supervision, investigation, meddling with the affairs of local government, because I am positive, I am sure that if the Governor is a man of ability, and he has to be to be a real Governor, he will not tolerate or consent and should not tolerate and consent to having a man butting in in his affairs of government any time that he sees fit to start an investigation of how the Governor was conducting the affairs of the island." There was more of this, approaching a tirade, in which, as expected, the other Puerto Ricans joined before Abe and I could stem the torrent. When I could get in a word I said that I had "listened with some amusement to Justice Travieso’s words, because they seem to be addressed to an idea that no one has put forward, and, so far as I know, no one expects to put forward. I think it should go into the record at this time that nobody has suggested a 'High Commissioner' and nobody expects to."

It was, however, the beginning of an acrimonious difference. No one among the Continentals except Abe seemed to understand that a clear definition of sovereignty was as important to the Puerto Ricans as to us. And I was treated by Messrs. Thoron and Brophy as though I had made and was insisting on a thoroughly reactionary proposal. They intimated, as Justice Travieso had, that this was an idea borrowed from the British—which seemed to them conclusive. I went over the ground again and again.

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3That was on the first day when the question arose whether the Auditor should be appointed by the Governor.
Puerto Rico, I reminded them, was more than a thousand miles at sea, a cohesive community with a Latin culture into which we had thrust ourselves forty-five years before with incredible irresponsibility. I was against going on into new relationships with the same stupid lack of purpose or of definition of relationships. Not to recognize and implement our sovereignty in the island, and at the same time not to give it up, was simply to perpetuate a regime of unplanned interferences. It was part of the whole attempt to maintain colonies without a colonial office and to manage them through the sporadic whimsies of Congressional Committees. Let us for once be clear for everyone’s sake. Let us not call the Representative a High Commissioner and let us not give him any power to interfere in local government. At the same time let us not have a large Federal establishment in the island subject only to the orders of various Washington Bureau Chiefs and without any common policy. And let us not attempt to give to the local Governor powers in Federal matters which it would be deadl y unconstitutional, if it were not also absurd, to give him. But above all let us not leave it undetermined where his powers begin and end—for their sake and for ours, and whether or not their dignidad had made an untimely appearance at the conference table.

I had a minor struggle with Abe before the discussion ended. He was torn between amusement at the exhibition and annoyance that so clear a legal and moral principle should be obscured by prejudice. I went to the library for an afternoon and surrounded myself with dictionaries, thesauri and books of synonyms. At the end I had a long list of suggested titles running from Agent General to United States Delegate, any of which would have avoided the connotations which were so annoying to the Puerto Ricans. But Abe had become a little stubborn by that time and he decided on "Commissioner General." This was much too close to the title which had already become a target. For months there had been something of a campaign in Puerto Rico against the idea of a High Commissioner; it was this, in fact, which Justice Travieso had spoken from in his outburst.

Aside from the question of representation of American sovereignty, two other questions proved to be the cause of considerable controversy. One was the relation of the elected Governor to the legislature; the other was the status to be given the Auditor. Justice Travieso tried to talk us into enhancing the prestige of his Court and adding to the number of judges over whom he was to preside, but this was eventually ruled out as being beyond our competence. Then there always remained in the background Muñoz’ demand for a commitment as to future status. That, put off until last, was nevertheless the subject of a good deal of informal discussion. And for my part I did some hard thinking and lively arranging against the moment when

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4Justice Travieso’s Presidential Delegate being certain to offend the Congress.
it could not be put off any longer. I knew better than Abe the pressure on Muñoz; it was quite clear to me that some formula would have to be included in our draft which looked toward further change in the future. And, indeed, this was not only a matter of political expediency for Muñoz, but something to which Puerto Rico was entitled. It was obvious that in suggesting the elective governorship the main sources of discontent—those which had their origins in insecurity—had not been reached. It was partly with this in view that I had put up so strong an argument for a Representative of the United States in Puerto Rico. That was a little, at least, of certainty if taken together with the elective governorship. It was an earnest, also, of the continued support which Puerto Rico must have. It was, so to speak, the symbol of a continued free market for sugar; of continued return to the island treasury of U. S. excise taxes; of continued assistance in education, health protection, free food distribution, and the building of houses, schools and roads. But it was only a symbol. It needed to be implemented by a contract.

It had always been my contention that a tacit contract existed; that the benefits Puerto Rico received were paid for by inclusion in the coastwise shipping system (which protected American steamship companies), by the provision of a market for rice from Louisiana and California, beans from Michigan, textiles from New York, shoes from New England and so on, and by the priceless control of the Caribbean for national defense. The difficulty with this was that, although plainly to be inferred from the Organic Act, and established in forty-five years of practice, it was nowhere made explicit. With a subject people there could be no treaty, of course. And there were always in the air suggestions for modifying these arrangements. These came especially from Congressmen, and more especially from Committeemen assigned to Insular Affairs who appeared to lack any sense of history or of contractual fairness. Since I had been Governor there had been repeated suggestions for modification to the detriment of the Puerto Rican economy and, although nothing had come of them, each had frightened the whole island. Most of them, as Puerto Ricans knew well enough, came up because some American interest pushed them: the Congressmen were only the mouthpieces of those who had something to gain from modification. It was their helplessness in this situation which continually unsettled the Puerto Ricans. For they could muster no corresponding weight against such suggestions, and had no votes in the Congress. The simple passage of an amendment to the Organic Act would be final and might be ruinous. It was this maddening helplessness and sense of insecurity, continually agitated by careless Committeemen, which was at the heart of Puerto Rican unrest. As we went on with our deliberations I—and, I suppose, others—struggled to find a formula to which the Congress would agree. It seemed hopeless, not so much because, legally, one Congress cannot commit successor Congresses, for commitments often are made in
spite of this legal fact, but more because of the Bell Committee’s unfriendliness. And we knew very well that our draft would lodge in that Committee as soon as it was transmitted by the President.

Meanwhile we sought to define the relations of Governor and legislature. Here, too, we were under the handicap of colonialism. On this subject, as I have said before, the minds of all Puerto Ricans were seriously warped. For the whole of her four hundred years Puerto Rico had had appointed Governors and more or less (more, in the American regime) representative legislatures. The executive represented outside interference; the legislature represented local interests. As a result it was difficult for the Puerto Ricans on our Committee to conceive the relations in different terms. "Ole Gandule," I reminded Muñoz again and again, was leaving for good. It was, indeed, more than likely that the new Governor we were talking of would be Muñoz himself. In his own interest he ought to consent to a modernized executive. But he could not quite conceive it even now, and the other Puerto Ricans showed no signs of comprehension whatever. For instance, when I urged the abolition of the Executive Council as a corporate body, practically everyone—except Abe—was opposed. But that obsolete institution existed for no other purpose than to reduce the Governor’s powers and to establish control over him by the Senate through confirmation. It had the effect of making the Governor’s subordinates his superiors. It is, of course, an old error of liberals that a strong executive is undesirable. The truth is that the centralization of responsibility is one of the most desirable features in any government and any blunting of definition enables everyone concerned to claim credit or immunity, as suits his convenience, for anything done.

In off-the-record discussions I argued at length for this point of view. I not only wanted the Executive Council abolished but also wanted all subordinates appointed by the Governor without confirmation. This last was rejected summarily. Although I was able to cite its success in New York City it obviously seemed monstrous to all my colleagues and I fell back on insistence that subordinates, once in office, should at least be responsible to their nominal head, not to a party leader or to anyone else in the Government. There was another idea of the same sort, which had always seemed to me desirable, but which got a very short hearing. I would have liked a provision enabling the Governor, if not to create and abolish agencies within defined limits, at least to redistribute functions in the interest of efficiency. I also lost out in my argument that the Auditor should be completely subordinate to the Governor. Otherwise, I argued, he would be—as the Comptroller General of the United States was—a continuous competitor of the Chief Executive for fiscal power and would be a ready tool for legislative aggressions. The final provisions in these matters were
compromises. They were matters in which I could not help feeling that the others had no real interest. My own was sharp from years of executive work in the Department of Agriculture, in New York City and in the governorship. I was a little bitter that I was not allowed moje influence, although this was modified by Abe’s reminder that the executive we were setting up was going to be still more emasculated by a national legislature prejudiced against extensions of administrative freedom and anxious to retain for itself as much influence as possible.

It was finally provided that the Auditor should be appointed by the Governor, although for a term of eight years, which is more security than any Auditor should have. The members of the Cabinet were also to be appointed by him, but were to be confirmed by the Senate. And the Executive Council was to be abolished. This, at least, was progress, and the governorship would under this arrangement be an office which would give its first Puerto Rican incumbent a real opportunity.

We came, then, at somewhat long last, to Muñoz' delayed demands. The'atmosphere by this time was considerably clearer. The continental members had got a new view of Justice Travieso after his exhibition over the "High" Commissioner; they could now recognize Mr. Iriarte as a completely professional político interested only in enhancing party powers—easily recognizable, when brought out into the open, as fascist in tendency; and Muñoz was more clearly temperate and patriotic—representative, in the best sense, of his people. He was too much the politician and too little the governmental technician; but even this was a weakness shared by practically all Puerto Ricans. And not only Puerto Ricans; I had seen too much of Mr. La Guardia and Mr. Roosevelt not to recognize that such a weakness was a qualification for success in democracy. This was, in fact, democracy's most serious fault. What it took to gain office was what made it difficult to administer it efficiently. Muñoz could hardly be regarded as an exception when he was in fact an outstanding example of the rule. At any rate it was recognized by everyone that his claim was a legitimate one. And we earnestly set to work on its satisfaction. We must try to find a formula which would evade the rule that one Congress cannot commit another; one in fact which would promise not only continued economic support of some sort but a "final" settlement of the status issue at some time in the future. Muñoz did not demand that it be settled now. He wanted a time fixed—even if an indefinite one, such as six months after the end of the war—for a plebiscite.

To this last I was opposed. As I had argued before, such a decision would lack all the elements of reality unless the Congress had previously agreed to respect its outcome. And suppose, for instance, it revealed a demand for Statehood: it was already known that such a demand would be rejected. With such knowledge
general, what kind of campaign would the políticos carry on between the time of the Act’s declaration and the distant date of the plebiscite? I could see years of turmoil in that and thought Muñoz most unwise to suggest it. But he was insistent and I supposed this was what had been demanded by his independentista friends. We argued about this for some time, although good-temperedly enough, until we had to recess because of a recurrence of Muñoz’ illness. This gave us a week in which we worked out the proposal which was finally accepted as a compromise:

There is hereby created a Joint Advisory Council for Puerto Rico. It shall study and report to the President and the Congress of the United States on necessary or desirable changes in this Act. The Council shall also study and report on proposals with respect to the basic relationships between the United States and Puerto Rico, which proposals shall, when and as approved by the Congress, be submitted to the people of Puerto Rico for their decision. The Council shall also study and recommend a comprehensive economic program to be made operative over a period of years, the purpose of which shall be the economic rehabilitation of the island. The Council shall report from time to time, but not less frequently than once every two years, beginning 1 January 1946. The reports of the Council shall be made available to the Governor and the Legislature of Puerto Rico.

The Council shall consist of the Secretary of the Interior, who shall be its Chairman, the Governor of Puerto Rico and the Commissioner General who shall serve as members ex officio, and, in addition, of four persons to be appointed by the President of the United States, and five persons to be appointed by the Governor of Puerto Rico.

The Council is authorized to employ such experts, technicians and other persons as may be necessary from time to time, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations or the Classification Act of 1923. The expenses of the Council are to be defrayed from appropriations made for this purpose by the Congress of the United States or by the legislature of Puerto Rico. There is hereby authorized to be appropriated out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, such funds as may be necessary to defray the expenses of the Council.

The purpose of this was to commit the Congress in some small degree, at least, and to convince Puerto Ricans that we too wanted to find a solution for the problem which so continually agitated insular life. It had the virtue of conciliating Muñoz; though, in the interest of negotiation, he would not admit any satisfaction. And all of us thought it not too much for the Congress to accept. After its adoption our work quickly came to a close—I was able to leave, as a matter of fact, before the last session, certain that no further causes for disagreement remained.
On 23 July, when we had got through the first difficult days without a breakup, and Abe had even maneuvered the acceptance of the Commissioner General—about whose title I still had doubts—the whole group was taken to see the President, I having been notified that I should be expected to remain after the rest had left. This interview was badly handled, as indeed were all the arrangements for the delegation in Washington. There was trouble about their expenses; and they were not treated with the slightest ceremony—although the Secretary did give one luncheon to which a few second-line notables came. They were acutely aware that if they had been Cubans or Costa Ricans the requirements of the Good Neighbor policy would have made a vast difference. Their matter-of-fact reception underlined their subjection; it certainly contributed to the outburst of Justice Travieso, who had good reason to be annoyed about his accommodations and the probability that he might have to pay for them out of his own pocket.

Since the Committee had been appointed by the President himself it was legitimate for them to hope for some exchange of views with him. As against the Congress, he was regarded as a friend and a friendly reception was expected. But they were merely ushered in to stand in a row before his desk while he told them that he had heard from Fortas what they were doing and that he thought it was fine. They were then ushered out while I stayed. All this was unfortunate. They were, at that moment, suspicious of anything Abe might have reported, seething as they were with injured dignidad and suppressed dislike for the limitations imposed by rigidly interpreted terms of reference. They were given no light on Mr. Roosevelt’s views and not a long enough exposure to the famous personality to do any good. I was afraid that the compromises we were just getting down to might be jeopardized. As it happened, Muñoz’ illness and other interferences, which gave reason for a recess of several days’ duration during which a good deal of off-the-record discussion took place, improved relationships. Not least in importance was my proposal to Muñoz that he give up his demand for a large reconstruction fund in favor of the permanent Council which could recommend all sorts of economic changes. He wanted to know, naturally, whether the President and the Secretary would agree. I took a chance and said that I could guarantee that they would. And it stood there while he pondered for some days. Actually Abe was the only one I had consulted. But he had liked the idea so much that I felt certain of the position. Meanwhile Abe was doing some work with Father McGowan, who had not been briefed in advance on the issues and who, both because he was in general friendly to Puerto Ricans and because Muñoz on his arrival had at once set out to cultivate him, had on several occasions come down embarrassingly on the wrong side. Abe convinced him, I think, that we meant well and that the Puerto Ricans were bargaining with us. And after that he was cautious about voting unless he felt certain that he was cognizant of the issues involved.
The truth was that my conversation with the President had not covered any commitment to further change. So far as it related to what we were doing, it ran in quite another direction—one which the Puerto Rican members of the Committee would have been a long way from appreciating if they could have heard it. At first it dwelt on the Auditorial position which Mr. Roosevelt insisted must be a Presidential appointment. I contended vigorously that, out of my experience, I could guarantee this to be unnecessary provided the elected Governor were allowed to keep the fiscal powers now lodged in the office and provided that the United States Commissioner General should have un-questioned freedom to require reports and to make recommendations to the President and the Congress. "But," he said, "how about all the political jobs they like to create? I've heard that they put all the políticos on the legislative pay roll in election years." I pointed out that an Auditor—unless he was something more than just an Auditor—could not prevent this. He could only prevent graft and corruption by the use of his examiners. The creation of jobs could not be limited without actually putting restrictions on local legislation and that, I took it, we did not want to do. He agreed to this after a moment’s thought, and I went on to say that the abuse he mentioned certainly existed but that it was a good deal less in extent than he had evidently been informed—perhaps kept down by veto, but nevertheless not very great. And it was not much more flagrant than the filling of the Departments with political hacks since ways had been found to nullify civil-service regulations, a practice I had tried in vain to eliminate. These same abuses, of course, although it did not excuse them, existed in at least some State governments not to mention certain notorious ones in American cities. We always tended to insist on higher standards in lesser jurisdictions than we were able to meet at home. As a preventive against the worst abuses we could only count on recommendations of the Commissioner General. The Organic Act could be changed if behavior was bad, although the Puerto Ricans would like a commitment against any further changes without their consent. Both these, I said, were serious matters: Puerto Ricans did not want to feel that they were on trial any longer or that there was any question of their political maturity.

As to the United States Commissioner General provided in our draft, the President was thoroughly inquisitorial, the question in his mind being whether that official had been given sufficient status. He started by saying that he should have La Fortaleza for his residence since that was the symbolic home of Governors General. I was startled by this suggestion and protested that to deprive the elected Governor of the traditional residence would confirm the suspicion that his status was going to be an inferior one. Well, the President said, "it certainly could not be expected to be superior to the representative of United States sovereignty," a remark which confirmed the position Abe and I had been maintaining. But, he said, the Casa Blanca
would be almost as good: it was almost equally historic and it should not be left to
the Commanding General while the Commissioner General had to live in a place
altogether inferior in the minds of Puerto Ricans. That would go a long way toward
making the military commander the real power in the island, a thing we should
avoid. This was true, I said, and to have it as a Commissioner General’s residence
would be in every way fitting; it had been built as far back as Ponce de Leon’s
time—was probably the oldest inhabited house under the flag; but, I reminded him,
we had tried to get the Army to give it up on a former occasion and had failed. He
waved this aside and said that he would insist. He recalled the troubles about
building an appropriate house in the Philippines and the niggardliness of certain
Congressmen about it and said that he would handle the Army. He also discussed
ways and means of establishing a salary and allowances which would be "ample."

The whole tenor of his interest indicated clearly enough that he had a sense of what
would be going on—that there would be an inadequate recognition of what
sovereignty required and, along with this, an aggression on the Puerto Ricans’ part,
for home consumption, which, if satisfied, would be very ill advised. He believed also
that there would be a thoughtless tendency on our part to grant them what they
asked without careful examination. The commissioner generalship loomed large in
his mind as the symbol which must be protected so long as we were involved in
Puerto Rican affairs. To give it up would be like not using the flag because some
Puerto Ricans resented the sight of it over the sea of our institutions—even the
ones which were bringing them a help they had to have for survival. I could not help
feeling that my instinct and reasoning in this whole matter had been vindicated and
sustained; and I ventured to tell him a little of the controversy.

At the end we went on to my own situation. For perhaps the dozenth time in our
relationship, I expressed my concern lest retaining me as an official—even in
remote Puerto Rico—might cause him embarrassment. And I reminded him that he
had only to hint at any time to have me withdraw. He laughed and said that no such
embarrassment existed and not to worry about it for a minute. His only concern, he
said, was that I might get disgusted with the constant pressure and quit. As to that,
he said that if he could stand the Hearst Press, the Chicago Tribune and the New
York Daily News, I ought to be able to stand the press in Puerto Rico. Anyway, he
pointed out, they always go too far and the result is that they increase rather than
decrease public support. He had heard, he said, that that was what was going on in
Puerto Rico. The Resident Commissioner had completely discredited himself with
everyone but the opposition press, and the investigating committees were going to

\[5\text{Actually by his son-in-law. Ponce de León never lived in the house, although he planned it.}\]
find themselves laughed at for heavy threats and no action. So, I said, I am definitely to stick it out until an elective Governor succeeds. "That's it," he said, "definitely."

I was encouraged, after this talk with the President, to work for compromise on the issue to which Muñoz still clung. At one time I thought him persuaded and looked for him to join me in the Council proposal. But I could not get him quite to the point of agreeing and, as it turned out, when I presented my motion, he formally laid before the meeting his scheme for a constitutional convention in Puerto Rico which should present its results to the Congress. He wanted a clause which would provide for acceptance in advance of whatever this result was. I felt already defeated, in a way, by not having been able to prevail with him. But there was nothing to be done now except to vote. Neither Abe nor I knew what Father McGowan would decide, although Abe had talked with him and believed him to be on our side. He was inclined, if it turned out that this was not so, to use strong-arm methods and, as Chairman, to rule out the whole issue as beyond our competence. I thought we ought to do our best in persuading and said I had it in mind to make my one extended speech on this matter. I knew it would not persuade the Puerto Ricans; they would all follow Muñoz; but it might persuade Father McGowan. How it happened that my remarks were deleted from the record, I do not know; but they do not appear. My own notes indicate that I drew on the Philippine experience to illustrate the dangers we faced.

I indicated how much there was to lose from cutting connections and showed how unlikely it was that any rational and conscientious leader would really want it to happen. It was true that he often had to appease his irresponsible followers who played on popular prejudice, working up sentiments which could be extremely dangerous to the leader himself if he did not handle them vigorously. Quezon had started something he could not subsequently find any way to stop. He had gone so far at home in competing with other independentistas that, when he finally came into power, it was taken as a mandate. Then the action was transferred to Washington. The advocates of union (or of close relationship) had been so discouraged that they had been relatively ineffective; the combined lobbies finally had seen their chance to kill off competition from at least one source. It was no secret that American oil-and-fats, sugar and dairy lobbyists had worked tirelessly and unscrupulously for the passage of the independence bill and would have provided for cutting all relations immediately if they could. When the passage of the bill had appeared inevitable in spite of everything Quezon could do short of appearing openly against it, he had gone to the President and had been enormously relieved to receive the assurance of veto. But as it turned out not even Presidential veto could defeat the interests now so thoroughly aroused.
It was well enough known now, I said, that the Philippine bill was not a grant of freedom but rather a cynical—and, for Quezon, ironic—cutting adrift of a people whose ties with us were by then necessary to their very existence. And it was well enough known, too, that if the war had not intervened, we should have to modify the terms of withdrawal out of sheer humanitarianism. The political leaders who brought disaster on their country would probably not suffer any of the consequences; they would have had their short day by advocating an issue they must have known was hideously dangerous to posterity, and others would have to rescue later Filipinos from the consequences. But the fact that politicians did so often escape, as in this case, did not make their course a morally defensible one. And this bit of history was so well known and so clear that to enter on the same course for Puerto Rico would certainly draw attention to the inevitable consequences.

To provide for a constitutional convention in Puerto Rico on the status issue without a previous commitment by the United States as to whether its results would be honored was to start a movement, now latent but potentially powerful, which would follow the same course as that in the Philippines. It was tantamount to declaring for independence, since it was well enough known that this was the only status to be had merely for the asking. Any other would require long, difficult, complex negotiations, unsatisfactory for home political consumption, and difficult for a leader to carry on successfully if he were to be harassed continually by minor demagogues. Nevertheless such a course was the only one a conscientious Puerto Rican could undertake. He would have to fight not only an intransigent and unscrupulous minority at home of the most vocal sort, but also certain lobbies and others with an interest in putting Puerto Rico outside the area of American favor. I had hitherto had deep admiration, I said, for the way Muñoz had handled this question. By ruling it out as a Popular issue he had gained the necessary freedom of negotiation. Unfortunately the war had postponed matters, but that might still prove to be beneficial, since it seemed likely that there would be a general questioning of colonialism and a willingness to revise relations with all dependent areas once the problems of a more enduring peace could have everyone’s attention. I for one hoped that he would find the reserves of political strength to persist. It was a decision he himself had to make, but my observation had convinced me not only that the people of Puerto Rico were united to him by unbreakable ties, but also—as he had himself on occasion confessed—that they were opposed to independence. The only reasons he could have for bringing on a movement which would end that way were that he felt it more important to satisfy his minor leaders than the people themselves or that he felt such a change was impending in the United States that independence would be preferable to the treatment which might be anticipated from the Congress and the President of 1945 and subsequent years.
So far as it was directed to Muñoz none of this argument was new: he had had it from me over and over. In fact the whole orientation of my effort, as well as my preaching, had—aside from the constant insistence on the improvement of administration—borne on his responsibility not to lead his people into the impasse of simple independence. That I had had only moderate success I knew: but the undermining of his faith had not been my doing. And he recognized well enough that if the United States were going to be run by liberals for the next few years, my economic and political objectives would be as feasible as they were desirable. It was simply his judgment that this was not going to happen, but that, on the contrary, the reactionaries were going to take over and that he had to take heroic measures in anticipation. He refused to give way. But Father McGowan proved to have been persuaded in his private talk with Abe and Muñoz' proposal was voted down and mine was approved.

We had by then a fairly complete draft, since each day's decisions had been phrased by the staff and returned next day for discussion and final approval. We had in it provision for: a Governor to be elected in 1944 and each four years thereafter; a Cabinet to be appointed by the Governor and to be responsible to him without having a corporate life as an Executive Council; an Auditor to be appointed by him for an eight-year term; judges to be appointed by him; a Commissioner General to be appointed by the President with the power only of requiring reports and making recommendations to Washington but having a status equal to that of the Governor and superior to that of any other Federal official in the island; an Advisory Council, half Puerto Rican and half Continental, supplied with staff and charged to study and report on the means for economic rehabilitation as well as further desirable changes in status. At the end there was surprising harmony, considering some of the passages in our debates, and I guessed that Muñoz himself was relieved at not having carried his resolution for a plebiscite. I should watch his behavior during the next few months with great interest. For his acceptance of what we had done might be generous or might be grudging. If it was generous, I should feel that I had won one kind of victory at least. But I knew, as well as he, that what we had done would not satisfy the independentistas. If he really stood by our commitment, he would sooner or later find himself in a struggle with some of his oldest followers. That would be hard for him to undertake, and I wondered if he would be equal to the moral torment which would be involved.

Abe had asked me to draft the letter transmitting our proposed bill to the President. "It ought," he said, "to be a great document on colonial policy." At the last, I was able to spend one long week end at home in Wilson. And sitting under an old white oak in the back yard, as familiar to me as the faces of my children, and always before a
place where my mind had been at its best, I tried to produce what he wanted. At the end I had written nothing. But I had thought a good deal. It seemed to me finally that what we had done was to elaborate a stopgap rather than to settle anything or even to suggest anything. The relations of people like the Puerto Ricans with their more powerful neighbors would have to be determined in a larger framework. There were policies which had to be laid down before any specific arrangements were made. If what we had done was accepted it would be an evidence of liberal intention; but it would not be a model. The Great Powers had to agree, before models could be whittled out, what they were prepared to give and take in all such cases. That was another and a greater task; no suggestion of its outline could properly accompany so unpretentious a scheme as ours for Puerto Rico. And so I drafted a simple transmission letter, and told Abe, when I got back, what had prevented my doing anything else. It might be that this was too modest a view. It did seem so as I thought it over back in San Juan. For what we had done did approach Commonwealth, after all, and if the Congress accepted it, might have some significance beyond itself. Like anything of the kind it might grow or diminish in operation. But first, of course, it had to be accepted. And there was the indisputable hazard of jealousy among legislators over anything handed to them from outside and especially from the executive. It would be better to see what law our labors resulted in, rather than to take too seriously what was after all merely a project.
FOLLOWING Vincent Sheean's encounters with important people had become a kind of family habit with us. At Caneel Bay and later as plane-reading to and from Washington I had been enjoying the luxurious style and the glittering content of *Between the Thunder and the Sun*. On the trip out from Miami to San Juan I came to the passages which were inspired by recollection of *The Federalist* in these totalitarian times. Suddenly Mr. Sheean began to wonder, there in print, about the principle of Separated Powers, and whether the impact of instantaneous communication on democratic decision had not made that principle an obsolete obstruction. Also whether it was not disastrous that people like Hitler and Mussolini had made this discovery first. Checks and balances had perhaps been useful to us when government was representative in the original sense—that is, when decisions had been wholly delegated. But now, when people not only made up their own minds but did it quickly, they were impatient about electing someone to elect someone else—to meet, presently, and to consider what policy ought to be adopted.

Ordinarily Mr. Sheean did not inspire thought; reading him was more properly called entertainment. But I was sensitized to governmental deficiencies by recent experience and he set me off on a kind of exploration I had begun before but had dropped for more immediate tasks.\(^1\) It was impossible to complete any systematic work on the subject but it furnished the means of escape from immediate pressures for some months and I was grateful for the stimulation. True, it interrupted the composition of this book, but it got back for me some of the serenity which comes from the contemplation of permanent issues and cleared my mind of the rancors which had been accumulating for some time. And someday I might resume the explorations now well begun. I remembered what Pasteur had said in his address to young men about the atmosphere of laboratories and libraries and was sorry for the thousandth time that I had chosen not to stay in them myself.

Perhaps in the Springer case\(^2\) Mr. Justice Holmes had been governed by considerations of this kind when he had castigated the rest of the Court for minding whether, out in the Philippines, there was set up an administrative body which was a governmental melange of legislative and executive representatives. Holmes's instinct for once led him wrong. The trouble with the device he supported was, of course, that it led away from decent administration of public services; and, moreover, that it represented aggression from the wrong side—the legislative. And I

\(^1\)Mr. Sheean's book was published by Random House (1943) and the passages in question begin on p. 282. My own approach to the matter began in *The Directive*, 1942.

\(^2\)Referred to earlier in considering the analogy between Puerto Rico and the Philippines.
came up against the conviction which had been growing, as a result of my recent experiences, that something was very wrong with that part of our political system so wrong that I had been unconsciously wondering what was likely to happen to it as more and more people gradually discovered how it had been transformed as its obsolescence deepened. Many more exhibitions like those of the past few years would have drastic results and it was a scholar's duty to understand and to be prepared with suggestions for the change which seemed probable. What I could do in that direction would have to await my return to academic life; but what was happening within my view was providing a copious stream of material. So blundering and so wholly negative had our national legislature become that it seemed as though the next crisis might prove fatal. After years of fumbling with the events of 1928-33, only giving way abjectly to executive leadership for some six months had saved it—if that which was probably only postponement could be called salvation. And even if, several years later, Justice Cardozo had issued a reprimand for "delegation run riot" in an assertion of the old-fashioned liberalism which rested on legislative superiority, that only underlined what had happened.\(^3\) It was altogether likely that we should have such another situation early in the postwar period. The ineptitudes of the legislative process would then be even more obstructive. The performances of the legislative committees in Puerto Rico were not examples of disinterest and intelligence in public affairs. And who could blame Muñoz if he perceived that every good thing Puerto Rico had had in the past had come from the national executive and every selfish, destructive thing from the legislative?\(^4\) And if the new executive was going to be Republican, he was right to begin orienting himself in that direction. In the weeks after our meeting, my mind, filled with the most disturbing thoughts about our Government, gradually prepared itself for a typical treatment in the Congress of the proposal we had just completed. There would be all sorts of motives playing upon it; there would not be any interest in maintaining the rather delicate structure of compromise we had built up; and there would be little recognition for the step toward Commonwealth symbolized jointly by the elective governorship and the establishment of the office of Commissioner General. Puerto Ricans would attack the commissioner generalship and the Congress would find this office an easy sacrifice to make. In its place they would, in all likelihood, devise some machinery for Congressional interference in Puerto Rican affairs, disguising it under a hypocritical label. And in doing this, furthermore, they would throw out the proposal for a permanent mixed Council—its functions would be said to be, par excellence, Congressional business.

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3This was in the Schechter case which overthrew the N.R.A. in 1935. Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States, 295 U.S. 495, May 27, 1935.
4As has been pointed out, however, he was incapable of applying this lesson within Puerto Rico.
Altogether, in spite of having some complacency about my own part, in the proceedings—having kept to the liberal line and all that—I could not honestly feel optimistic about the end result for Puerto Rico. But there was not much time for retrospection. I had to get back to work after my month in Washington. The zafra over and the slack season for workers having arrived, the numbers of unemployed were rising again and both Army and Navy were cutting down their construction programs from month to month. There were adjustments to be made. Also Puerto Rican soldiers were going away now and the training camps were being emptied. Puerto Ricans were replacing Continentals in all the Caribbean posts—from Cayenne and Surinam all the way to Galápagos and the other Pacific outposts of the Canal. The Continentals were being moved up toward the fronts. This policy was causing a mixed reaction: Puerto Rican mothers were naturally glad that their sons were being placed in peaceful spots; but there were others—not mothers—whose pride was touched and who felt that their boys should be blooded with the others. This policy also gave rise to an ugly rumor which, it seemed to me, might have been anticipated as inevitable. Puerto Ricans, it was whispered, were not considered good enough to fight the Germans: they were being saved for sacrifice against the Japs—one inferior race fighting another.

It was true that some army officers still had doubts. I could not discover that they suspected a lack of courage; but they did feel that discipline was faulty; and they had discovered a widespread, if rather passive, disaffection among insular selectees. This might be attributed to the general feeling among them that they were considered inferior by their continental officers, or, again, to the general atmosphere of inequality which permeated United States-Puerto Rican relationships, and was passed on to the soldiers from the civil population. When it came to motives in this war, there were special problems even with continental boys who, like some of their parents, had not been able to visualize the consequences of unpunished Nazi aggression and who felt that we were unnecessarily interfering in a European quarrel. If the President had to contend with Messrs. Hearst, McCormick, Patterson and others—there were some very prominent and respectable citizens among the America First organizations—it was not strange that young soldiers should not always have clear perceptions. And the Army was still, after nearly two years, not doing enough to provide the materials for learning. Army officers themselves are not usually liberals, and only to the extent that they recognized the deficiency of motive in this war were they disturbed.

And this was not sufficient.

These deficiencies and difficulties were exaggerated among Puerto Rican troops. A sense of inferiority worked like a poison in their minds—not so much inferiority,
perhaps, as unappeased pride. Continental officers gave them none of the exaggerated praise on which a Puerto Rican boy will march farther than he will on rice and beans, and their service was consequently sometimes less than willing.

This was mostly someone else's problem. My task with the civil Government was also growing more rather than less difficult in spite of the efficient staff which I now had at work. For this there were a number of reasons. One was that we were still having constant and senseless trouble with the local administration of the War Production Board which persisted in viewing its task as that of preventing any civilian economic activity of any kind. Even for building projects requiring only local materials and local labor, every resistance was made and every obstacle interposed to our undertaking them. We had, by now, plenty of revenue—so much that our surplus was a source of embarrassment—but we were hampered in using it. We had been forced, months since, to resort to the distribution of minimum money benefits to many thousands of destitute families. But we wanted to provide work and we wanted at the same time to supply some of the many institutional deficiencies in Puerto Rico rather than merely to hand out cash. There were desperately needed such things as schools—the number of children out of school was rising from 30 to 40 per cent—and rural health centers, to name only two of the worst deficiencies. The buildings would be simple, requiring a minimum of imported materials and utilizing our own cement for which the military demand was decreasing. We had worked and argued for months against the bureaucratic stupidity which kept us supine, but we were being defeated. A few things wanted by powerful interests we got. We were permitted to build a bottle factory but had the greatest difficulty with schools or health centers—and we argued for both with equal determination.

The fact that what we wanted to do was thus difficult was exasperating enough; but the corollary fact that the Congressmen began to look with a hostile eye at our growing surplus was downright maddening. The remnants of W.P.A. were being liquidated and free food distribution was being stopped. Both these actions were the result of Bell Committee opposition. But then some members of the Committee also wanted to take away from us the revenue with which these activities might be carried on by ourselves—if the hostility of the War Production Board could be overcome. Mr. Cole introduced a resolution, which, for nearly a year, was to hang over the Puerto Rican economy like an incubus, to take away the revenues from the rum tax. Half was, it was true, if Mr. Cole prevailed, to be devoted to works projects in Puerto Rico, but the Puerto Rican Government would have to pay for half of these. It was also provided that preference should be given to army-navy projects. In other words Puerto Rican revenues were to be taken for United States military construction—not only the yield of the rum tax but revenues from other local
sources. This outrage was played up by the Committee as one of the chief features of its fall campaign. The results, however, were not good. Puerto Ricans were annoyed, and the more thoughtful were a little dismayed that so irresponsible a proposal should be put forward by the member who would be likely to succeed to the chairmanship if the Republicans won control of the House in the coming elections. Mr. Cole was about as unpopular an Americano as was ever discussed in insular circles. But he persisted; and his proposal would come up again and again, slightly modified, or in somewhat different form, throughout the year before election.

If anything was needed to turn the tide of favor in Puerto Rico, this maneuver of Messrs. Cole, Bell, Crawford, et al., was sufficient. These were the allies in the Congress of the Puerto Rican reactionaries. People with friends of this kind were considered dangerous. The volume of support for Muñoz and his Popular Party rose with a powerful and unmistakable swell. Whatever happened to the President and the Democrats in the States, his friend and his allies were going to win in Puerto Rico.

There were lingering reasons for doubt only from one cause: the independentistas were clinging to Muñoz’ coattails and being as noisy as possible in the hope of claiming a share in the coming victory. Muñoz knew that this could still defeat him. Nothing else could—but this went to a deep fear in the people of being cut off from American benefits. There would be danger throughout the year that this issue might, in spite of Muñoz’ attempts to keep it out, inject itself into the campaign. The opposition parties knew well enough how it embarrassed him and they had begun in the press and on the radio a campaign—which even now was well started—to taunt the Populares with being independentistas. This delighted the hundreds of local Popular leaders who cared more about independence than they did about party welfare or, for that matter, Puerto Rican well-being. They began to get quite out of hand and before Muñoz was aware of it an island-wide movement was under way financed by party funds and fed with legislative patronage. Some part was taken, in this movement to capture the party, by a small group of comunistas who were by now active in the Confederación General de Trabajadores, the union which had come up, as the C.I.O. had in the States, to supply the deficiencies and remedy the lethargy of the old A. F. of L. These comunistas were, for the moment, because it was party policy, in favor of the war, and so somewhat cautious about the use of the strike. But in typical communist fashion they worked night and day, admitted no scruples in making decisions and conducted themselves in ways which indicated their contempt for such bourgeois concepts as promises and contracts. Because they were allied with the independentistas Muñoz granted them too much. So he came to extend a dangerous tolerance to the comunistas, forgetting that they had no directed
interest in Puerto Rico but were only using independence as a means of causing trouble for another "capitalist" nation.

About this time we became aware of the affiliations being encouraged by the comunistas between certain Puerto Ricans and communist organizations elsewhere. The leaders in Puerto Rico were quietly visiting abroad, especially in Cuba and México, and emissaries were being received in San Juan. It was not too difficult to infer some relationship in all this to the vastly expanded activities of the comunistas in México, in Cuba and elsewhere in Latin America. When I remonstrated I was informed that it was all because the C.I.O. had taken so unfriendly an attitude toward the Puerto Rican labor movement and because there was felt to be a need for an outside affiliation of some sort. On investigation this "unfriendliness" seemed to be no more than the imposing of certain conditions for affiliation, such as that members should pay dues, that contracts should be scrupulously honored, that elections should be representative and that general national policies should be adhered to. No such conditions were necessary to the international communist affiliation. Nevertheless I hoped that we might get the C.I.O. to unbend and extend a helping hand. So vigorous a movement ought to be given objectives and direction, and it ought to be encouraged to replace its comunistas with genuinely Puerto Rican leaders. For the moment Muñoz would take no action. He was fascinated by what he called the "selflessness" of the leaders I complained of—which meant that he was taken in by the parade they made of poverty. And so they went on undermining him and encouraging the independentistas in their effort to get control of the party.

Even so early in the year as this the maneuvering had begun again as in former years to prepare for a spectacular strike when the zafra should begin in January; and meanwhile the comunistas were showing their claws a little as war consciousness—such as was left by now—evaporated. They were organizing inside the Authorities for what they called "collective bargaining." And we were soon face to face with the problem of unionism in government.

There was a line somewhere between what it was proper to regard as essential public service and what was not—or at least was not in an immediate sense. The extreme case in which interference by a union leader outside the organization could not be tolerated was represented by the police, perhaps, and the firemen. But the Government was in some ways involved in the affairs, for instance, of the plant which manufactured cement. Because the Government owned it, this plant ought not to be immune to union organization or even to collective bargaining. It was like all other cement plants and ought to be regarded as subject to the same rules.5 The

5Except, of course, that it was part of the Government’s plan for rehabilitation of the Puerto Rican economy.
Development Company and other enterprises had been set up outside civil-service and Auditorial controls so that they could escape legislative interference and what is usually called "red tape." They could not very well be regarded as governmental for one purpose and not for another. Still there were in the Authority list some which were almost as vital as the police: the Water Resources (power); Transportation (busses) and Communications (telegraph and telephones).

What ought to be the attitude concerning these? There was, as a matter of fact, not much choice at this time. None of the managers of these enterprises had much sense of labor management. They were not inclined to engage the services of anyone who knew how to establish and conduct labor relations. They had to learn the hard way. And the comunistas were beginning their teaching. The managers would find that however much they might bluster they were no match for communist tactics and they would end by abject surrender. All the public-service enterprises were faced with the choice of strikes or labor management by union officials. Since these officials themselves were more political than union and were often guided, as communists have to be, by a party line established for purposes foreign to mere local industrial management, there was trouble of a significant sort in the making. It was to the workers' interest, of course, to make these enterprises succeed; they, and other citizens, were their owners. But there was no recognition of this. These governmental enterprises were forced to increase their costs much faster than comparable private employers; and steady advantage was taken of the fact that the Government, for political reasons, could ill afford labor disputes. It was obvious that the comunistas were getting ready for the day when the party line of international communism would diverge from policies of the United States. In this there could be no doubt that we were developing a dangerous vulnerability.

We had long had the services of a skilled conciliator. Secretary Perkins had sent us Mr. C. A. Goldsmith more than a year before and he had operated directly out of my office. There were referred to him an average of more than a strike a day, most of them not extensive or important, but still troublesome. By this time, however, he—and I—began to see a pattern in the undisciplined outbreaks in government enterprises. And with my consent he undertook to explore the relations between our activists and the centers of their control in Cuba and Mexico. We found what we expected, but there was nothing we could do except to watch and wait. We could and did try to keep things orderly and at the same time safeguard the competitive position of our enterprises. There was by now an office of the National Labor Relations Board in San Juan and we had, on occasion, appealed to the War Labor Board. We thought we might have to do it again. The sugar employees were making threats.
The year before there had been the excuse of higher living costs for the strike which had delayed the beginning of the zafra for a month; this year we had behind us a record of stabilization which removed that excuse. By subsidizing rice and bean prices with the use of the funds within the control of the Interior Department and by more vigorous enforcement by O.P.A. the cost of living had been kept almost level now for many months. But the signs were unmistakable all the same that both sides were looking for trouble and we expected that it would come in spite of all our efforts at prevention.

The state of the war and our place in it was emphasized by Admiral Hoover’s departure for more active command in the Pacific. Our exchange of parting courtesies was warmer than would have seemed possible to any of his subordinates. And when on the night before his dawn departure, with all his papers packed in navy fashion—departing incumbents take their files with them —and the last of his Martinique rum on the table, we said good-by, I at least felt that resentment which rises from unwilling separation. And he too, I think, for he spoke, against all the rules, of the work we had done together and what we had learned from each other. We stood a moment on the steps in a darkness we had often shared in ignorance of what it hid from us. There was no longer any fear of something monstrous hurtling down at the fortress for which we were responsible. He was moving on to places where that fear was still urgent. I was staying because I had not finished my task. But that it was the close of a period in our lives we both knew.

The Battle of Sicily was over, that of Italy begun. And already out in the Pacific our fleets were prowling the outer bastions of the Nipponese empire and our carrier-based planes were destroying the defenses there. Some awful lessons had been learned concerning the enemy’s ferocity. Admiral Hoover was right to go, but his going did make me feel like a lone survivor. By now the only other, almost, was Tom Phillips, for whom we should soon be able to break out our last few bottles of champagne on the occasion of his being made a Brigadier. But he was still only the Departmental Chief of Staff. He was a disappointed man, knowing himself for one of the most skillful planners the Army possessed, yet, in the greatest struggle of history, finding no place where he could be of real use. Occasionally we consoled each other. But he was wrong in thinking that I too wanted to be back at the center of things. I had had my turn at that. I only wanted now to finish what I had begun here and find a university where I could go back to the studies which seemed to me more and more rewarding. No doubt he would feel that way too once the war was over, and would go back to the writing and teaching which had stopped when war

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*Interior had approached the subsidy reluctantly but was finding that the cost was very slight. The savings to consumers were many times the expenditures which were needed to keep prices down.*
had begun. But he would always feel that he had missed his chance. I did not need to feel that way. My desire to be of use in the crisis had fulfilled itself. We had had a satisfactory struggle with the forces of treason, reaction and hysteria. We had never been tried to the limit by enemy attack but short of that we had proved ourselves. When Hoover left I could no longer pretend that the war in Puerto Rico was not over. There were still submarines about us and shipping was not as free as in times of peace in spite of the enormous quantities being turned out. But the submarines were being beaten. Month by month their sinkings had been diminishing until now there were almost none. A host of newly designed small ships swept the Caribbean and the South Atlantic; converted escort carriers terrorized the packs which harried the big convoys; and the great slow patrol planes ran upon their schedules like sentries of the sea.

The people of Puerto Rico had enough to eat at prices which they could pay. The maneuvers of the importing merchants had been neutralized and the bulk supply system was probably safe from molestation for the duration. Our revenues were rising and our heroic efforts at saving had succeeded. The fiscal position of the Puerto Rican Government had never been so secure as it was at this moment. Even the press had come to accept my presence as an affront which it would ignore until time had had its way with me. Only occasionally did the bile bubble through the crusted resentment now. Comparatively, there was peace. I had other reasons for satisfaction. All the Authorities were getting under way with some success in spite of labor troubles; none of them had made any serious mistakes. And we seemed, in spite of present disturbance, to be on the verge of settling the acrimonious controversy over the acquisition of the private power companies. We thought now that they were going to sell and save us the long ordeal of expropriation which would need to be fought all the way to the Supreme Court. There was, too, an obvious new life stirring within the University. The staff had been improved, there was new emphasis on the social studies and less futile turning about on the small coin of metaphysics. The new Chancellor had not yet found himself sufficiently to take any drastic measures but they were in the air and I believed that he would find the technique to exploit his opportunity.

The people of Puerto Rico were feeling fine. It might not—and did not—seem so to a casual visitor, but one who studied them could see that it was so. Wages, by Puerto Rican standards, were fair; and there was a Minimum Wage Board which actually functioned. Our own relief organization was working into the place which had been occupied by W.P.A., and in spite of restrictions which prevented use of funds for the schools and hospitals we would like to have built, we could always turn to less needed projects—road-building, for instance. But also several thousand of the
unemployed were raising food which in turn was used for the free lunches we were now providing for school children. My wife's milk stations for under-school-age children had grown to fabulous numbers and the Department of Agriculture was still supplying the milk and some of the other foods which were used in them. By now, too, the allowances to the families of our soldiers were becoming an appreciable support to the economy. It seemed that this might be the successor to that varied assortment of agencies which had, since the New Deal began, underpinned Puerto Rican economic life.\(^7\) Taken together with the increased yield of the rum tax, which by now appeared to be creating a real treasury surplus, the near future looked favorable. Or would have looked favorable if it had not been for the haphazard and seemingly accidental way in which these last windfalls had come, just as the others had, and with constant talk of taking them away or of reducing them severely. Under these conditions even those who were comparatively well off cannot appreciate their good fortune. The press made matters worse, of course, by never granting the U.S. any good will and by magnifying every irresponsible threat. In the coming months it was to make of the Bell Committee's attempts to force us to abandon our bulk buying and importation of food a regular campaign and to supplement it by Mr. Cole's attempt to sequester the yield of the rum tax. Actually neither of these was a very formidable threat. They might become that if the Republicans should win in '44 and Mr. Cole should become Chairman of the House Committee; but that was not yet an immediate probability.

And it was difficult to keep the people themselves stirred up. They were by now convinced that whatever had to be done would be taken care of by Muñoz and me. We could be trusted to checkmate hostile Committees and to get from their good friend Mr. Roosevelt whatever they were entitled to have. An invasion was no longer a possibility. And although interest in politics was far from atrophied, the election was after all a year off. Meanwhile there were cockfights, baseball and other intimate concerns to take a man's time. The number of boys taken into the Army by fall equaled the largest relief roll we had ever been able to maintain; and interest grew in the Army as an institution related to many families. What went on in the training camps was watched and commented on everywhere—not always favorably, but much less than it had been as something alien and hostile. The coffee crop was only fair and cane even less favorable in prospect, since our struggle to get fertilizer had not succeeded until a month or two after it should have been in the soil. But there was plenty of food in sight. Rice and beans were plentiful again and they were

\(^7\) F.E.R.A. (1934), C.W.A. (1935), W.P.A. (1937), C.G.G. (1934), P.R.R.A. (1936), Army-Navy construction (1940). There were others, such as AAA, also, which provided benefits of one sort or another to one class or group or another. We figured that it had averaged about fifty millions a year.
everywhere agreed to be of better quality than the private importers had ever furnished. There was some income, however small, for everyone, and a parent could feel safer about children than ever before, what with milk stations, school lunches and the prospect of new schools and health centers as soon as war needs would permit.

Toward the end of August in 1943 there was a meeting in St. Thomas of the Caribbean Commission at which a Research Council was established together with a program of intercolony cooperation in matters relating to nutrition, agricultural production, fisheries and forestry. It was a matter of some pride that the lead on all the scientific committees was at least shared by Puerto Ricans. There was a continuing tendency among the British to nominate Colonial Office officials as representatives of the colonies. There was, in fact, no one present who could be said to belong to any of the areas we expected to serve. The contrast of our representation was so noticeable as to visibly embarrass Sir Frank Stockdale; and Charles and I believed that now we should be able to secure agreement to a really representative meeting sometime ahead. What would happen if British Colonials were exposed to Puerto Ricans I, at least, could not tell, but obviously Sir Frank—and those back of him—did not like to contemplate it. It would probably not result in anything more than an enlivening of democracy in the British areas. But the contrast was very great. Puerto Ricans were bold, forthright, highly competent and willing to take the lead. Their degree of political and economic maturity, as well as the freedom to which they had been trained, gave them an assurance which equaled that of the Colonial Office people themselves. I listened to the debates at St. Thomas and marveled that there were still those in Puerto Rico who talked about Yankee exploitation and "the colossus of the North." The Puerto Rican leaders on exhibit in St. Thomas were a good argument for the American-style possession about which we sometimes became so discouraged. With all its drawbacks it did have some virtues. I wished some of those in Cuba and Mexico who lamented the lack of "freedom" in Puerto Rico could have seen and heard these proceedings. Measured by these products of the last forty years we had at least succeeded in creating something good. It might be that Puerto Rico exhibited all the failings of democracy too: there might be economic exploitation, a venal press, deep divisions in insular life, lack of agreement as to objectives—but that was also true in the States, and, I thought, in Britain.

The British need not be afraid to expose their Colonials to this freshness and competence unless they intended to withhold representative government

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8A Report of this meeting, containing all the recommendations, was later issued by the Commission and is available at the Washington office in the Department of State.
permanently. Sir Frank and the Colonial Welfare Fund were evidences of an intention to work at economic betterment; and we had heard, as I have noted, that constitutional changes were immediately contemplated in Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana and Barbados. These proposals differed; but all of them would result in extended franchises and more independent legislative bodies. Sir Arthur Richards of Jamaica was in fact already in London to perfect the Jamaica proposals. They would perhaps not go far, and when they were done, the contrast with Puerto Rico's universal franchise and wholly elected legislature would probably be considerable, but they were at least something. Taken together with the Welfare Fund they represented a change of attitude which must be amazing to Colonials.

The program worked out at St. Thomas had no bearing on these questions. It was narrower, merely establishing cooperation in research and administration. Yet the conference resolutions did recognize that the people of this area were undernourished, backward in their agricultural practices and wasteful of their land. It was recognized also that these were matters in which governmental intervention was necessary to improvement—research could show the way but only through education, demonstration and intervention could any results be guaranteed. So that the setting up of a Research Council was only the beginning. The encouragement of research and the exchange of findings would have to be followed up by the respective governments or the effort would be wasted.

These preachments, directed at the more conservative colonial officers and at our Congressmen, were too general to be characterized as particularly courageous. But there was one section of the meeting which produced a revolutionary statement. This had to do with land tenure and was led by Mr. José Acosta-Velarde, the Chairman of our Land Authority. It said:

... In the past, the use of the land has been concerned largely with the exploitation of the soil for individual gain. Policies have been directed more to personal or sectional in terests than to the general welfare of the community. The free hold system of land tenure has been in force throughout the Caribbean since its discovery. In many instances, this system has resulted in the abuse of the land with adverse results for the people who live on it and for the whole community. The system extinguishes the right of the community to its natural resources. It permits the existence of land owners who through absenteeism, concentration or fragmentation may not make efficient social use of the land. It allows speculation which often leads to a heavy burden of agricultural debt . . .

It should be recognized that once the abuse of the land or its exclusion from efficient use affects adversely the community interest, governmental action should follow.
Also it is evident that the system of unrestricted private ownership should be modified by suitable control . . . with the community's interest paramount. . . .

This statement had grown out of Caribbean experience. It was direct and simple. But it would require reversal of many policies and attitudes—more so perhaps in the United States than in the United Kingdom, where there had been signs of significant change in recent years. 9 I thought it would be said that I had either written or induced the writing of it. The fact was that it was produced quite independently; but it gave me reason for pride in Mr. Acosta's simple honesty, the quality which had led me to want him for Director of the Land Authority. If it were ever to be read by Messrs. McKellar, McGehee and others of their sort, I knew the effect it would have, but that could not be helped. We discovered that Mr. Acosta felt strongly in the matter; and at his urging the Commission agreed that the next meeting under its auspices should be devoted to a full exploration of the tenure systems in use in the Caribbean and to proposals for reform. We felt very brave in consequence and, as the meeting broke up, were inclined to congratulate ourselves for at last having brought the Commission into a field of permanent usefulness in contrast with its former emergency activities. Perhaps the Congress would want to abolish us; perhaps it would succeed; but that issue may as well come up now as later. We had been functioning with Presidential funds, hitherto, so that we had not had to defend our right to existence before appropriation committees; but we were well aware that we should someday have to do so. We envied the British their detachment from politics, though perhaps, we exaggerated it, and wondered whether we should not be summarily punished for entertaining Mr. Acosta's challenge.

Charles came to stay with me for a few days, and while we traveled to Mayagüez and later to Santo Domingo in General Pratt's plane, we talked about the Commission's future. Would it eventually evolve a government for the Caribbean? There was no indication that it might. On the contrary if it made cooperation, under various governments, possible, it might weaken what had hitherto been the strongest argument for federation, for union or for single-colony management. This argument was, of course, that the Caribbean had unique problems which could be more expertly dealt with in one Colonial Office than in four; and needs which four nations could not be persuaded to meet since to none of them was so small a fragment of empire important. The need for greater understanding in home capitals and Colonial Offices had been discussed over and over. It was the reason for setting up the Research Council—indeed for setting up the Commission itself. Until Lord Moyne's investigation and the establishment of the Commission, the Caribbean islands had

9Cf. for instance the Uthwatt report on the reconstruction of devastated areas. The Control of Land Use, London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1944.
been slipping almost imperceptibly into a Sargasso Sea of neglect. Their apogee had been more than a century in the past when sugar had been an asset rather than just another embarrassing surplus. Their transformation into liabilities had been unacknowledged by the governments which had profited from them in earlier days and which now refused to recognize, much less pay, the debt. Their people had fallen further and further away from a civilized scale of living, their downward curve crossing the rising one of the people whose wards they were. Wages at a shilling a day in the British islands, and the almost complete lack of social services, were facts which represented well enough to anyone with imagination what the situation had become by the beginning of the war. And then the cutting of intercourse by the submarines had severed what hold they still had on civilization. The great nations, in their preoccupation with more pressing matters, had simply let them go. Casualties in the Caribbean—indirect ones—were probably not fewer in the early years of war than in the mother countries. The Commission could claim real credit for having intervened to stop this. But now it was beginning a wholly new endeavor.

On a day early in September I delivered Charles at Ciudad Trujillo and returned to Tortuguero with General Pratt in the early afternoon for my first review of a complete Puerto Rican regiment, one which was just finishing its preliminary training. As we landed on the airstrip we were received by Colonel Serra and toured the regimental front in command cars, stopping occasionally for a closer look. I recognized a number of the boys who had been at the University, or had worked in government offices or on the insular police force. Already, after only thirteen weeks, they had the hard brown look of old soldiers. I wished I could know what was in their minds. They marched past and I, as Governor, took their salute with strangely mixed feelings. They were about to be sent away, some to combat, some to tours of duty at other Caribbean posts. Did they feel themselves sufficiently part of us to justify our requirement of involuntary military service? These were the first of the draftees. Until now recruiting had been voluntary. But these boys marching past had had other business in view. Whatever it was, it had been important to them, and we had required them to give it up. I had no doubt that those of them who survived into the postwar period would look back on their service as a contribution to a necessary settlement with the dictators. But I doubted whether they felt that way now. And I found that their continental officers felt a lack of willingness which, however, they were not doing any more to remedy than they had been right along.

I came back to La Fortaleza after this excursion to deal with the first of several delayed crises whose causes lay in the earlier period of inflation. While the cost of living had been doubling, middle-class incomes—except for those of profiteering traders and merchants—had remained at about the prewar level. Workers had at
least got some relief through strikes and threats of strikes, and farmers' incomes—if not those of farm workers—had followed the rise. But salaried people were becoming more and more restless. In fact at this moment the teachers were threatening not to open the schools for a new term. This group was no worse off than other government employees. Logically, of course, with inflation reducing the dollar's value, all should have been provided with more dollars. In fact the budget would have needed to be doubled if their relative position was to be kept. This had been impossible under the fiscal circumstances of threatened revenues in the spring. But now the situation was easier and in spite of the injustice to others the teachers were given a generous increase to which I consented. But I knew this was the beginning of adjustment to inflated living costs which our tax structure might find it difficult to support. And from then on I had renewed concern about fiscal matters. I was still adhering to the principle that ordinary "expenditures must be met from ordinary revenues and that the enlarged returns from the rum tax (which would be reduced to their old level when the war ended) must be used only for such purposes as relief and public works. If we came to depend on this source of revenue and it suddenly disappeared we should have a crisis graver than any we had yet faced.

Toward the end of September in 1943 my delayed report to the Chavez Committee was published. The delay had come about in ways which had not been explained. I had delivered it to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Ralph Bosch, in Puerto Rico in February, and naturally expected it to appear in the printed record. When this document was made public my statement was missing. Since the allegations, innuendoes and charges of numerous detractors were perhaps its most prominent feature it seemed to me that my case ought in all fairness to have been presented. When I protested I got no satisfaction and in the end I simply notified Mr. Brophy that I was going to make it public myself. It was conveyed to me that there was a good deal of annoyance in the Department, but for this once I went ahead regardless of frowns. For this to me was an important document. It was, for instance, the most careful statement I was able to make, out of my experience, concerning the existing relations between Puerto Rico and the United States; and it suggested ways for improvement. This was the feature of the document, aside from a recitation of events during the crisis just past for which we were presumably being investigated. This, of course, took most of the space. Since the "investigation" had petered out, the Committee doubtless preferred to forget that it had been begun in an atmosphere of threat and promised exposure. And probably Interior officials, in the interest of peace, preferred not to disturb sleeping dogs. But I still smarted. And no one had answered Malcolm, Fitzsimmons, et al. I had a picture of some future reader going through the record and coming to conclusions which were painful to contemplate.
The report made something of a sensation\textsuperscript{10} both at home and abroad among those interested in dependent peoples. The New York Times was moved to remark peevishly that calling attention to our deficiencies was giving aid and comfort to the enemy. This was because I had begun in a vein of soul-searching as an American. It was intimated that nothing had been heard of me for a long time and that it would have been better if nothing had been heard at all. The Times was one of the papers which had a fixed policy about me; and it did not calculate to spoil the effect by praise.

The same general peevish line was followed by most of the press. But it was not universal. There was some generous acknowledgment that the criticism of our policy was justified. And when, next day, the President transmitted to the Congress the Committee’s draft of revisions for the Organic Act, there was, for the moment, quite wide interest in our treatment of dependents and in proposals for change. But it did not last long enough or go deep enough to result in the formation of any intelligent opinion which could be brought to bear on the Congress. It was merely an overnight interest, clouded by personal bias against the President, and, in a minor way, against me. Anyway the thesis that our relations needed not so much to be changed—although some changes were desirable—as to be contractualized, was one which I was sure would not be acceptable to most unthinking people any more than it would to the Congress. It was a somewhat complicated point too, and the press mostly missed it. It was not understood that we must give up threat-and-whim processes for those of negotiation and mutual agreement. I could see from the reaction that what we did with and for Puerto Rico was likely to be kept on a unilateral and philanthropic basis. There was widened willingness to turn the unruly island loose—that was the impulse I was always warning the Puerto Rican políticos not to encourage—but there was very little of the kind of attitude which would support assistance and continued close ties, along with greater autonomy, or even with fixed obligations running into the future around which an insular economic and political policy could be developed. On the whole the few days’ furor counted for a little, but a very little, good, so far as could be seen from reaction in the press and on the radio. And it was with even more skepticism that we awaited action on our proposals in the Congress.

During the first week in October, Mr. Hull passed through on his way to Moscow. He transferred at our naval air base from a Liberator to a cruiser and I saw him only for a few moments of rather casual conversation. The trip out was said to have been his first airplane flight and he appeared not to have enjoyed it. In fact he seemed

\textsuperscript{10}It was printed in San Juan and is available as a public document of the Government of Puerto Rico.
altogether disorganized. But when Secretary Knox arrived a day or two later he created a quite different atmosphere. He had just come from a strenuous trip to England and to the front in Italy. He had watched the establishment of the beachhead at Salerno and his enthusiastic optimism reminded me more than ever of what T.R. must have been like in his most vigorous days. The Salerno operation was already in difficulty but nothing of the sort was admitted by the Secretary. His simple, breezy clarity about everything was a good antidote for the pessimism which had been growing among liberals ever since the first intimations of policy had begun to come from Africa. There was the conciliation of Vichyites and the severity toward other Frenchmen; there was the appeasement of Franco and of the Italian royalists; there was the unconditional-surrender formula which had come from Casablanca; there were the signs that all the small states of prewar Europe were going to be reconstituted, an economic crime which might well have to be expiated in later wars; there was what seemed at that time to be a hopeless controversy with the Russians—about their demands for a second front which had been in no way diminished by the African and Italian campaigns, and about the Polish, Latvian, Estonian and Finnish states on her western borders; there was the worsening quarrel inside China between the Kuomintang and the Communists in which we appeared to have taken the reactionary side; and there was the dominance at home of so determined a reaction that Henry Wallace's mild progressivism seemed to be marking him as a dangerous radical to be attacked daily now in the press in more and more abusive terms.

There was an opportunity at Admiral Cook's house for a two-hour talk with Knox in which we went over a good deal of this ground.\footnote{Vice-admiral A. B. Cook had succeeded Hoover in August 1943. He had the command for less than a year and was succeeded by Vice-admiral Robert C. Giffen, who was in turn replaced by Vice-admiral W. R. Munroe. He did not, however, allay any of my fears and reservations. He defended each of these policies as a necessary item in global strategy, mostly for military reasons. But he did not laugh off my concern. He seemed to feel that what the United States was and would be determined the larger issues, always, and that deviations from our norm would not be wide. We should come out all right because we were sound. That too was like T.R.'s robustness. He did admit that it might perhaps have been a mistake to go into Africa, both from the point of view of setting the war forward and of pleasing Russia rather than Britain. But the experience gained was worth all it had cost if the delay did not prove fatal. We should still have to go into Europe—and not from Africa. He felt that the unconditional-surrender policy was necessary for a Germany which must be humbled and, for a long time, rather strictly controlled lest another Hitler outbreak.
occur. From this we got into an exploration of postwar arrangements. I ran over some of the mistakes made at Versailles in 1918 and the way the League of Nations had been turned into a battleground of imperialists. It had been quite impotent to meet the weakest challenge. The defiance first of Japan, then Italy, then Germany, and the sabotage of the French and British reactionaries, had made it a historic illustration of how not to conduct an international society.

Knox had an interesting suggestion about this. He recalled how the other war had been managed by the Commander in Chief in Paris with the help of the body of generals to which our Tasker Bliss had been a delegate. This time the Combined Chiefs of Staff were in command with vastly improved facilities for control by plane and radio. And their seat was Washington, where there were no imperial ambitions. There would not be a classical armistice this time. Rather the Combined Chiefs of Staff would obtain surrender in one section after another and would remain in occupation. Even as demobilization went on, an effective striking force would be kept under their control, and as focus after focus of violence was stamped out they would come to be a vigilant and mobile peace-enforcement body. In this way, by easy transition, the international police force which had been lacking before would come into being to, serve whatever juridical body might be established in succession to the old League.

It was easy to point out the difficulties—that Combined Chiefs were military people and that after wars in democracies a revulsion against all this kind of thing is almost inevitable. They would almost certainly not be given the latitude necessary to sterilize infections at their outset. In any case, the Combined Chiefs, although they might have the machinery, would be those of the United States, Britain and Russia, with France and China in somewhat minor roles. Suppose one of these should be the aggressor which the police force had to punish! It was of no use to go further with that argument. The peace of the world in the immediate future decades was going to depend on the Great Powers. They had to find an agreed policy. And they had to find a way to discipline themselves. If they could do that, which was still far from certain, the rest would undoubtedly, as Knox pointed out, be sufficiently easy, especially if a real disarmament had been carried out and a modern air-borne force was at the disposal of a central military staff.

Still there remained the fact that the United States and Britain were divided democracies, that the power to make policy was only grudgingly delegated. In both, the pull-and-haul of special interests free to propagandize made the arrival at decision difficult and slow. Even the aggressors might, as they had before, set up propaganda agencies within the democracies to paralyze their police efforts. This kind of thing, alone, had almost enabled Hitler to overwhelm the civilized world;
and, in spite of the narrowly averted catastrophe, reluctance to delegate did not appear to have been modified in the least. No one had suggested, in fact, that it would be necessary to reserve certain areas of decision to the executive in the interest of world peace. I myself thought it necessary to overcome other threatening divisions in this way. Another internal cataclysm such as had begun in 1929 would scarcely be less dangerous than another war. We had got into that because we could not master conflicts or, when the crash came, find a policy for resolution. Special interests had paralyzed every effort and prevented any remedial action.

We talked a little about the likely fate of dependent peoples. It was elementary that the general settlements would be determined first of all by considerations of safety for the Great Powers. This seemed inconsistent, however, with the principle of self-determination which had bulked so large in Wilson's thinking and which had influenced the Versailles arrangements. A small people, really sovereign, could make itself a dreadful nuisance by becoming host to intriguers as well as in other obvious ways. Its economic arrangements might also be ridiculous by any other than sentimental nationalistic standards. This had happened all over eastern Europe after 1918 and had created the tensions and crises of the twenties and the thirties which were the background of this war.

It seemed to me that the Atlantic Charter was in this respect a dangerous document if it were going to be followed literally. But the Russians, at least, and probably the British, had no such confused approach and the final settlements would doubtless result in compromises. Small nations would be allowed as much self-determination as was consistent with larger nations' safety. Coming down to Puerto Rico, the conflict of tendencies was apparent. The island would logically remain the center of the Caribbean defense and it was therefore vital that autonomy should not go so far as to tempt any other power to try to use it. Yet that did not mean that substantial freedom was not possible. Puerto Ricans might have their own local government, for instance, without interference on our part, even if it was inefficient. But there were questions even here. Suppose, to take an instance, that health conditions were allowed to deteriorate to the point at which the island became a focus of infection for typhus, yellow fever, yaws, syphilis, leprosy and filariasis. Ought we to interfere? Or suppose such a movement as the Falange should really get hold of a dominant group. Ought we to suppress it? Many such possibilities were apparent. But they were apparent in Cuba, in Santo Domingo, in Mexico and in the Central Americas too, any of which might embarrass our safety. The single difference in Puerto, Rico was the fact that it was our strategic headquarters and therefore had to be secure.

Knox thought Puerto Rico would have the Caribbean command permanently and that the establishment would be considerable. It had been neglected in the past but
we ought to have learned a lesson from the frights of the defenseless years before 1943. But he was not clear in his mind what that implied for Puerto Rican-United States Relations. Nor was he prepared to, say what attitude the Navy would take toward the proposal for an elective Governor. He managed to hint, however, that the naval influence, even if not made public, would be adverse. It might perhaps be made felt through Mr. Cole, for instance, who was a prominent member of the Naval Affairs Committee as well as, of the Committee on Territories and Insular Possessions of the House. But it was only a hint and I could not be certain that it had even been discussed in the Navy as I knew it had in the Army. But still it seemed unlikely that so crucial an item in strategy had been overlooked.

I came away from Cook's house that evening with mixed feelings. The problem of dependent peoples was not yet up for discussion in any real sense in spite of the Atlantic Charter. That was a kind of hang-over from a past age. It had been composed too before we were actually at war as a kind of justification, in the eyes of the world, of our position. Small nations were bound to approve it, since it gave them everything. But actually it met none of the problems which conflicts among them, and with the Great Powers, posed. It had been intended to help in getting on with the war; but it seemed certain that it would play no great part in future settlements. These had to be oriented to the maintenance of security—mostly security, it was true, for the great nations, but nevertheless peace.

Puerto Rico's case, as I had been thinking, was going to be affected by principles and considerations not yet even apparent, or perhaps just now being discussed in a preliminary way among the representatives of the Great Powers. All that a Governor could do in these circumstances was to wait for policy to be formed and then to see how, within the general pattern, adaptations could be made. It would be thought that so innocuous a proposal as we had just been formulating in Washington, although it looked toward greater autonomy, might nevertheless be approved. Whatever the general policy, it could scarcely be affected. If it were adopted, of course, there would be another Governor and I should not have further responsibility except as a member of the Committee which had done the work.
IN THE ANTILLES there is a saying which is roughly similar in all languages:

June—Too soon,
July—Stand by,
August—Be cautious,
September—Remember,
October—All over.

I had learned to respect the hurricane almost as much as though I had experienced one. The more I studied the incidence of these dangerous disturbances and tried to understand the problems one might raise, the more my worry grew that one might happen while we were unprepared as we must be during the war. It appeared that over a long period any one place was struck only infrequently—perhaps once every twenty or twenty-five years. But that refers to being in the direct path and so subject to winds of one hundred miles or more an hour. Many other disturbances pass close enough to make themselves seriously felt. The island of Puerto Rico was struck about every ten years; and devastation could be considerable for many miles around. There had been severe storms both in 1928 and 1932.

In spite of having great respect for what hurricanes may do, Puerto Ricans are as improvident as other people in preparing for their recurrence. The poor can be forgiven for building flimsy houses which must be completely wrecked in the first succeeding blow; they are overcome by other urges than the fear of storms when

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1As a matter of fact I had—that of 1938—but in New York, not in the West Indies. That storm originated in the Caribbean and followed the usual course, moving eastward and bending toward the north. But to experience one in a city on the continent is quite a different matter from going through it in the subtropics.

2Puerto Ricans’ respect for hurricanes is underlined by their habit of naming them after the saint’s day on which they occur. That of 1928 is called San Felipe II and that of 1932 San Cipriano. These names often come up in conversation. Other events are referred to them: a child was born the year before San Cipriano or the family built a new house the year before San Felipe. The Weather Bureau of the United States maintains an office in San Juan and has gathered data about these tropical storms for some years. A pamphlet, The Hurricane, issued by the Government Printing Office in 1939, gives some general information about them and traces the path of typical ones from 1924 to 1937. Puerto Rico was actually touched by four storms between 1900 and 1944 and two of them did great damage, especially in the coffee regions. Others, perhaps six or eight, came close enough to cause some wind and sudden excessive rainfall. Precipitation of ten to thirty inches within one or two days can do immense damage to crops and even to the soil. Often the damage from water is as great as that from wind.
the skies are blue and the sun is shining. And a shack is all their resources run to anyway. But when there are longer intervals between storms a greater and greater percentage of houses—and other structures—are such as any high wind would blow away. Even the builders of better houses forget caution. The problem of relief after the next storm becomes greater and greater as the interval widens. When I became Governor in 1941, the law of averages should have produced a hurricane for us almost at once. We had existed on borrowed time during 1942; now in 1943 we were, as September ended, just beginning to think we might congratulate ourselves on escaping again. We had taken the usual precautions. We had lined up all the rescue and relief agencies and assigned emergency duties to each; we had kept open until after the season all the civilian-defense casualty stations we were prepared to dismantle; and we had at last persuaded the War Production Board to allow us a government reserve of elementary building materials with which to construct emergency shelters. Moreover, the Emergency Fund, which had been depleted by inappropriate expenditures, was by now built up again to a quite respectable size. Still, a severe storm, with the war emergency only just beginning to lighten and with materials still scarce and dear, and in the political year which was just beginning, was something I hoped we might be spared.

On 12 October we had our third or fourth warning of the season. There was a whirling center southeast of Antigua; its onward movement was slow; but its course lay toward Puerto Rico. From three hundred miles away Puerto Rico was a small target; but on the 13th it had moved up to within a hundred miles and seemed still to be aimed directly at us. That night we were told that it was likely to pass to the south and we went to bed relieved. About daylight, however, we were again warned that it had taken a sharp turn and that it would hit us before noon, probably passing from south to north directly over the center of the island. This would bring Ponce first, and later San Juan, into its path. By now all the preparations it was possible to make had been finished. These, when we got right down to it, seemed fearfully feeble in the face of such a devastating potentiality. About all we could do, really, was to prepare for rescue and relief work afterward; most of the actual defense had to be taken by individuals themselves.

About an hour before the ordeal was due, everything was as ready as we could make it and I felt free to go out into the streets. It was a weird experience. Everyone had come to work thinking the danger past; then the news had spread that this was not so and that the storm was only an hour or two away. The employees. of every

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3These warnings make life unpleasant during the critical months. There are always from three to six or more. And they are followed by days of anxiety while the disturbance develops and shapes its course.
business establishment, every office, every government department, had simply
deserted and gone home to their families. This included La Fortaleza, where one
minute we were all beginning the day’s work and the next only a few of us were left.
Those few were women. They stayed when the men deserted. Luckily most of the
protective measures had been taken the day before. Now there was some sound of
hammering in the streets—which I had always heard was a characteristic of the few
hours before every storm—as a few store proprietors added a board or two to their
defenses, but mostly there was a deathly silence. Almost everyone was inside
somewhere, behind solid shutters or, if improvidence had gone too long, raw lumber
nailed across every opening. The streets were practically deserted, except for the
slums. Out of these, streaming toward the nearest public building—usually a
school—the last stragglers of a great horde were coming. Their homes, such as they
were, would now simply disintegrate and be whirled up into the wind. Such was
their expectation. What thousands and thousands of families camped in the schools
and government offices could do for themselves it was hard to say. They would have
no place to go and our reserve of lumber would replace only a small number of their
houses. We were unprepared, of course, even to feed such multitudes. The schools
bulged with men, women, children and household goods. In a few hours they would
begin to be hungry and thirsty too. We should have a certain number of army field
kitchens, but emergency measures would be deficient and unsatisfactory even at
best. It would not be long either until disease might become a wholesale threat.
Social disorganization in the subtropics forms an ideal background for dysenteries,
typhus and other plagues which spread like flames when once they start.

I got back to La Fortaleza appalled at what lay before us and asked the telephone
office for an emergency connection with Washington. War or no war, relief
materials must be started toward us at once. Before my connection was completed,
however, there was better news of the disturbance from the navy fliers who had
been scouting its edges for several days. Said "Stormy" Sears: "It’s bent again, and
will go straight north through the Mona Passage." He had just landed and I was quite
sure of his accuracy. In enormous relief, I asked all the radio stations to advise the
people that there would be no more than forty-mile winds with heavy rain
anywhere but on the west coast; and that they might safely go home. We got in
touch with west-coast towns and told them they only would be hit and that not
directly, and promised to send help as soon as it was called for. It was anti-climactic
to have got ready and then to have been spared. But after seeing a few of those
bulging schools I was profoundly grateful for the respite. We should, I hoped, never
again be quite so defenseless. By next year we ought to have more reserves of every
kind. Let it come then instead of now!
There were no more scares of that sort. But by the time the cane and the mangoes were again in bloom two other near-disasters of a different sort had occurred. The first of these was the final abandonment by the Federal Government of the work relief which, under one name or another, had gone on since 1932; the second was the discontinuance of distribution to the needy of free food which had begun in what seemed like the far-off days of surpluses. These changes of policy came at the worst possible season, with employment at its lowest, and in the worst possible year, with military construction just being ended. Both were the result of general hostility to us in the Bell Committee. Certain of its members were not satisfied with this punishment either; their threats to take away from us the yield of the tax on rum were increasing. Messrs. Cole, McGehee and Crawford made no secret of their efforts; and although Mr. Bell would never be very active, his hostility was equally well known. It was not very clear whether it was me they objected to or the program which was being carried out in Puerto Rico. Most of their fulminations were directed at me, presumably because this was still considered a way of striking at the President; but they were well enough aware by now, if they had not been before, that the program was not mine alone since much of it had been well begun before my governorship. Presumably they thought that if a change could be forced, the President would very likely turn, as he so often did, to a retired Admiral or General who would at least make it more difficult for the program to proceed. Admiral Leahy had liquidated the Lafayette experiment, for instance, and this could be assumed to be a typical reaction.

Mr. Cole, always the most extreme, went further than this. He proposed that Puerto Rico, and, indeed, the whole Division of Territories and Island Possessions be turned over to the Navy for administration. It was hard to say whether this idea originated with him or somewhere in the Navy Department, but it was beginning to be noticed, by others than those of us who were professionally interested, that the Navy was governing the conquered islands in the Pacific, and that no visible preparation was being made for a succeeding civil administration. It was not at first taken seriously and caused but little discussion in Puerto Rico; but the loss of work relief and of free food for the needy did cause a profound reaction and not only among those directly affected but also among others to whom it was a sharp reminder of ill will. The close association of the hostile members of the Bell Committee with the Coalicionista reactionaries in Puerto Rico was underlined by a new visit of some of their representatives to Washington and renewed hearings—directed toward ousting me. This was one of a long succession of political mistakes on the part of the Coalición.

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4This was the co-operative ownership and operation of a sugar estate and its central on the south coast.
The already marked Popular drift became an unmistakable torrent in the next weeks and months, enlarged time and time again by similar errors of a judgment warped by unreasoning hatred. It became quite apparent that Muñoz and his group need make no campaign at all to win. As he himself told me about this time, only the conviction among the people that a Popular victory implied independence could lose the election now.

The independentistas had also perceived the Popular drift and by now were setting out seriously to capture the party—if necessary to take it away from Muñoz. This tour de force was well conceived. Muñoz was fairly caught between his old independentista sentiment and a new conviction that Puerto Rico could not exist except with United States support. He would not oppose with any vigor the activists who were making this attempt. The independentistas had, by now, some new converts, politicians who saw no other way to a prominence which would challenge that of Muñoz. Mr. Arjona-Siaca, for instance, a lawyer from Humacao, who had been made presiding judge of the Court of Tax Appeals, began to spend a good deal more effort campaigning among the local leaders throughout the island, preaching independence (which was new to him), than he spent in settling tax disputes. He intended to make himself Resident Commissioner on that issue. He perceived that the Populares would win anyway, so that all he had to do was insure himself the nomination; election would follow easily. To do this he would work for independence among those already convinced—an old form of political insurance. It was no secret that Muñoz' candidate was Dr. Antonio Fernós Isern, now Commissioner of Health, a shrewd, able man who had held other administrative posts—such as Director of Civil Defense and Administrator of Supplies—and who was designated to serve as Acting Governor whenever I was away. He had been the candidate in 1940. The fact that Dr. Fernós was supported by Muñoz and in my confidence would seem to have been a secure advantage in getting the nomination. It would have been, too, if Muñoz had not underestimated Arjona-Siaca and the restlessness of the local leaders and had not fallen again into the lethargy which overcame him from time to time. Arjona worked hard to establish the conviction that Muñoz was deliberately smothering independence and that if he—Arjona—went to Washington he would achieve it. Dr. Fernós, curiously enough, found it a disadvantage to be at the head of the Department of Health, although it still was notoriously political. For instead of pleasing the local leaders by his appointments, he infuriated them by not being able to satisfy their extravagant demands. Each thought others must be getting most of the favors. By the time the party convention

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5But had been defeated by the Socialist Bolivar Pagán because his vote was divided with the candidate of the Liberales.
should arrive he would be thoroughly unpopular with practically all of them. This
would be in spite, also, of having been Acting Governor for some time during my
absence in the States. Interim service of this kind would prove to be a handicap
since he could do nothing without my instructions, a lack of freedom misunderstood
by the políticos, who would simply judge that he was building up a following of his
own.

Mr. Arjona-Siaca, if he was a sincere independentista rather than a political
opportunist, was a recent convert. Until shortly before this he had favored, along
with others, a solution short of this. But he himself was unimportant; it was the
strange fact that so many local leaders, interposed between Muñoz and the people,
should be willing to adopt a thoroughly unpopular cause, and one which Muñoz was
trying his best to suppress as an issue, which was significant. As time went on, the
Arjona efforts became more and more successful and it began to seem doubtful
whether Muñoz could control the convention and secure the nomination of a slate
for the legislature which would acknowledge his leadership; and it was even more
doubtful whether he could persuade the delegates to nominate Dr. Fernós for
Resident Commissioner. The strength of the movement, when he belatedly learned
its strength, seemed to have unsettled Muñoz. There were times during the year
when he weighed seriously the chance of success if he went with the activists,
outbidding Arjona-Siaca, and advocating some immediate change. Sometimes he felt
this to be a better tactic than following the line he had established in 1940 of
insisting that status was not at issue. This, of course, was sheer panic. The people
were set against independence and even their eagerness to follow Muñoz’
leadership could hardly have shaken the conviction that separation from the United
States would be a disaster. As one old lady in a bohío near Jájome said to me one
day, pointing to a meager shelf of packaged foods, "We wouldn't have any more of
those if we had independence." This remark at least illustrated the governing
instinct in this matter: someone had to convince Puerto Ricans that they were going
to be able to eat after separation before they would be for it; and that subject the
oratory of the independentistas avoided.

Nevertheless status was an irrepressible issue. Many of those who feared separation
on economic grounds wanted it on sentimental ones; and even those who valued
their United States citizenship above their Puerto Rican affiliation were wholly
dissatisfied with the situation as it existed. That these were in many ways
unreasonable attitudes did not alter the fact of their existence. There was,
consequently, close attention to the progress of our proposal for change in the
Organic Act. It did not satisfy the independentistas any more than it had Muñoz and
for the same reasons—it did not go far enough toward separation with subsidy. But there were many who felt that it represented a substantial advance; and if it could have been adopted by the Congress without much change it; might have satisfied, for some time to come, the insular yearnings for more freedom. But it would have had to be done quickly and generously because it was so dangerously close to obsolescence even when it had just issued from our Committee. A longer step already seemed necessary in the fall of 1943, a step which would decide the question whether future progress was to be toward Statehood, toward Commonwealth, or toward independence. Ours had not been, in this sense, a decisive proposal.

Besides, it was by now gradually becoming apparent that the peace settlements were not likely to include any general arrangements about dependent areas. Those of us who had regarded the war as something more than a punitive expedition had somehow become convinced earlier that one of its results would be what we called the "liberation" of subject peoples and the setting up of a world organization which—among its other endeavors—would seek to prevent future subjections of the weaker nations. I myself had not the illusions which some Puerto Ricans—including, I think, Muñoz—had acquired from a too literal reading of the Atlantic Charter. It was becoming more and more obvious that, in the interest of peace, the pursuit of opposing objectives among nations had to be suppressed. Not every small nation could have everything it might happen to want. Not even the Great Powers could have that if there was to be a reasonably enduring peace. To consider the Caribbean alone: Puerto Rican interests clashed at many points with those of Cuba, Haiti, and Santo Domingo, especially over terms of entry for their products into the United States. Puerto Rico had now an advantage to which she was adjusted and without which she could not live. But Cuba and Santo Domingo resented this and never lost an opportunity to chisel away some of its values. And if in the relatively peaceable Caribbean illustrations could be found, think of the possible ones in the Balkans, around the Mediterranean and in the Far East!

Nevertheless many of the local Popular leaders wanted sovereignty. They thought of Puerto Rico as a "people" within the definition of international law, and not as members of the body of United States citizens. Even I was always forgetting that; and to those less constantly aware of Puerto Rico, it probably never occurred. What

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6 For "divorce with alimony," as Mr. Sumner Welles had put it.
7 That document said, it will be recalled, in its third paragraph, that as for the United States and Great Britain, "They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them." Puerto Ricans thought this applied to them; but they tended to forget that it was a Roosevelt-Churchill declaration and not a Congressional one.
sovereignty implied, Muñoz wanted, of course, only in part. That is to say, as I have so often indicated, he wanted to keep the benefits of the relationship without the disadvantages. This could be most kindly described as local self-government; by the cynics it was said that Muñoz wanted to control the spending of Federal funds. I used to tell him that what he really was after, if the truth were known, was for the United States to become a colony of Puerto Rico, thus reversing the situation to which he now objected. He appreciated this bit of Yankee persiflage.

Britain, apparently, had by now got through the worst of her war; at least she again had the powerful ally which had affected the decision in 1918, and, in spite of the loss of France, had the help of the great Russian armies in the east. She had not found it necessary to modify her colonial policy perceptibly, though there were evidences that modifications were coming. She had held on to India; she showed no sign, even, of weakening her support of the native sovereigns. And she clung to the Chinese coastal concessions when our extraterritorial rights were abandoned as a gesture to a friendly China. In Africa, in the Far East, in the West Indies, the Empire was re-emerging as from so many crises, enlarged rather than diminished. And Mr. Churchill was making it understood all around the Mediterranean that, far from being Italy's Mare Nostrum, that classic sea was still merely a link in Britain's life line. Her policy in Spain, Egypt, Italy, Greece and Arabia was taking the old possessive shape. And it was generally inferred not only that the United States consented but that it was done by arrangement also with Russia. The "Polish question" would be disposed of by Russia with a view to her own security; the Government-in-Exile, so long maintained in London, appeared to have been kept for trading purposes to be given up for que pro quos along the life line.

All this belonged to an old pattern, perhaps an inevitable one for our time, but many of us had not thought so as the struggle began. Had not Britain and France recovered from the degradation of Munich to challenge Hitler over the rape of Poland? I was not incapable of appreciating the corollary of British dominance and the subjection of small nations. The world had outgrown the exaggerated sentimental nationalism which had been so prominent at Versailles. Economically, an independent Austria, severed from her agricultural hinterland, had been a monstrosity; so had been most of the nations of eastern Europe—Czechoslovakia excepted, because she had been an economic whole. Any association of nations which suppressed tariff barriers would be a good thing even if it went by the name of Empire. What the United Kingdom or perhaps Russia gained from it would be less than the small nations

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8 It is to be remembered that I speak of appearances in the fall of 1943. The year succeeding, until Secretary Hull was displaced, would be one in which there would be more criticism of our foreign policy and more misunderstanding of our purposes than at almost any period of our history.
themselves gained—whether or not they liked it. If what was in the making was a three- or four-power (depending on whether France resumed her position) division of Europe, the Near East and Africa, it might protect our interest there, which was, after all, only that the peace should be maintained and that potential aggressors should be kept on the other side of the Atlantic. The British Isles had twice now in a generation served us as a staging base for the suppression of threatened attack. We had an interest in supporting Britain even if it involved violence to nationalistic aspirations among numerous small nations. From this point of view it seemed more possible that association would stop short of what was necessary than that it would go too far. Let the empires expand, let them overshadow the nations on the shores of the North Sea, the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, the Baltic and the China Sea. Let the British Commonwealth become an association within which Hollanders and Belgians, as well as Italians, Moors, Arabians, Greeks and others found a limited freedom. That would suit us very well. No organization of that kind would be a threat to our peace unless it brought on a clash with the Russians.

I could see all this and regard it as justification for what was developing as 1943 ran into 1944. It was perhaps only a more practical form of the free association liberals had hoped would come out of the war. To most of them British regulation, for instance, much less Russian, would never be the same as an association of peoples. But it was undoubtedly as good—or perhaps better—for United States interests, a fact which might as well be recognized.9 Puerto Ricans who thought about the war’s end and its results were as well able to see this as I. But that it had logical implications for the Caribbean seldom seemed to occur to them. Their views of the world and those of their own nationalism did not seem to amalgamate in their minds. Puerto Rico, Cuba, Santo Domingo—and the British, French and Dutch islands, too—had the same relation to the American scheme as Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Finland had to that of Russia; or as Belgium, Italy and Greece had to that of Britain. In the Caribbean, Puerto Rico was the only one of all the Antilles in which the logic of the situation was already substantially embodied in status. Cuba, Haiti and Santo Domingo were free and yet not free, their common people far less well off than they would have been with a more logical relationship.

9But some Britons did not like it. Mr. Harold Laski, when he came a year later to sum up this period, would note that Mr. Churchill, who had seemed to be the natural successor to Lord Chatham, now seemed more like the successor to Lord North, who is remembered by Americans as George III’s Prime Minister. And he spoke of the belief that “the essential principle of his policy is a form of strategic imperialism which it is difficult to reconcile with the building of a peaceful world.” Speaking of the Italian, Belgian and Greek interventions, it seemed clear, he said, that “at the back of Mr. Churchill’s mind is the determination at all costs to maintain ‘traditional Europe’. . . . He has killed the Atlantic Charter with his own hand ... he has lowered British prestige to a point hardly less than the evil reputation it acquired at Munich ... he shows every day more clearly that he belongs to the world that is dying and not to the world that is struggling to be born.” Interview in PM, 24 December 1944.
Evidence of that was apparent in the standard of living in Puerto Rico as compared with the others. As for the possessions of the other powers in the Caribbean, perhaps the peace would clear up the anomaly. European outposts within the shield of the Canal were tolerable only if they were securely neutral. We had suffered danger from those of France, and had faintly suspected those of another power. The British we more or less regarded as our own; the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission was still determinedly exclusive, which showed how united we were even if in some mutual dislike.

In a world atmosphere of this sort, the Chavez Committee of the Senate began and carried out its hearings on the bill we had been at such pains to draw.\(^1\) The Senators in some strange instinctive way seemed to pursue a purpose of their own. And they were completely insensitive to the prevailing atmosphere. For what came about was a bill sent to the Senate and passed with little discussion which would have fastened more tightly on Puerto Rico the governance of Congressional Committees, and so in spite of appearances—an elective Governor and so on—have provided less rather than more self-government without at the same time conferring any compensating economic advantage. It would have made a far more tenuous relationship with the United States executive, and ignored the difficult problem of sovereignty by throwing out the proposed Commissioner General; but at the same time it would have provided for an elected Governor and for Congressional repeal of acts of the local legislature. How this general result came about will not be at all clear to a historian, however faithfully he may read the record of the hearings and debates. For most of it came out of the Congressional unconscious. That year—1944—was a year of general legislative aggression as well as of an executive appeasement which, of course, fed this aggressive spirit. In view of this the initial error of not having included members of the Congress on our drafting committee had multiple results. This was a proposal which had come to them from the President and so had, as a matter of prestige, to be modified. It is interesting to see, in reading the hearings, what impulses and motives were closest to the surface, whatever ones may have been moving deeper down. A clear view of these reduces the mystery of the result because it betrays those which ran beneath.

Again and again as various witnesses appeared and as various of the proposals were discussed, the Senators exhibited prejudice. It was a prejudice of which they were not ashamed. They would have called it liberalism; and they were obviously conscious that most of those present, perhaps most of the general public, would have agreed with them. This prejudice is hard to define; but it is well known to

\(^1\)The hearings were begun on 18 November.
every student of government. It consists of a dislike of the executive because it actually must govern; of a belief that it is a good thing to scatter and dissipate the power of officials so that they check and compete with each other and so bear down less harshly on the individual or are less effective in controlling economic interests; of a feeling that the legislative branch of government is more representative of the people than the executive and is therefore entitled to more and wider freedoms; that the legislative should in fact be regarded as the basic branch of our government and entitled not only to guide but to manage the others, especially the executive. The opposite of this view helps to define it somewhat more precisely. This is that the executive is more representative than the legislative because it represents the whole rather than a district or a part; that only the executive, through a bureaucracy, can create the continuity and certainty so necessary to modern planning and operation of government as well as industry; that responsibility should be centralized so that officials’ actions can be seen and punished or rewarded by the electorate.

The confused tradition of governmental relations in our system is well illustrated in these hearings. They might be used as a text by a teacher who desired to exhibit to his students the ill results of compromise and competition. For our Constitution leaves a large area of undisposed powers which both branches—and sometimes the third, the judicial, as well—constantly endeavor to exercise in competition with one another. Most of them, of course, can only be exercised with any efficiency by the executive. It may be generally understood that the legislative makes policy and provides funds, and that the executive carries out policies thus determined and spends the funds necessary to them; but members of the Congress are never reconciled to these limitations. To take the illustration in point here: it might be expected, if the Congress was only to lay down policy and to provide funds, that it would provide a broad directive and establish in the executive department an organization for management of relations with the Territories. Actually there has been constant interference and harassment; only the most meager excuse for a management office has been tolerated; and power over funds and confirmations has been used repeatedly for pressure purposes.11

The Chavez hearings were a compendium of interferences disguised as freedoms; and the bill which resulted was quite representative of its origin. It is known to Puerto Ricans as S. 1407 and has a little niche of notoriety all its own in insular

11As, for instance, when the fifteen millions had been approved for subsidizing food crops in 1942, but only if I was displaced as Governor; or when Senator Chavez demanded the appointment of Mr. Ralph Bosch to the Insular Supreme Court as a matter of patronage.
The interferences spotted in various places consisted of maintaining Senatorial confirmation of the insular supreme court, of refusing to delete from the Organic Act the Congressional right to repeal acts of the insular legislature, of deleting the provision in our draft which would have declared against further changes in the Act without Puerto Rican consent, and a refusal to substitute for Congressional investigations the permanent Council for which we had provided. Also, of course, the Commissioner General was turned down—not ostensibly because he was a representative of the Executive in Puerto Rico and would have been the channel of communication with Washington, but because he was "expensive," a "super-governor," and so on.

In each of these instances the Senators built up in the hearings, with the use of appropriate sarcasm and judicious examination of witnesses, some kind of a case. Mr. Fowler Harper, Solicitor of the Department of the Interior, explained patiently, following Mr. Ickes and Mr. Thoron, exactly what the Commissioner General was expected to do, and even presented a comparison, in tabular form, of the duties of Governor and Commissioner in the Presidential Committee's draft. But Mr. Ellender, who could by no means be described as unfriendly, disliked the proposal. It was more carpetbagging:

I visited the island of Puerto Rico here recently and I got the impression from some sources that it was because of interference by Washington and through the Governor that this agitation has been brought about. Whether this is true I do not know, but I do know a lot of people on the island think so, and they would like to have an opportunity to show that they are able to handle their own business without interference from Washington.

Mr. Harper thereupon explained all over again that the Commissioner General was not going to interfere in "Puerto Rican business," but that he was going to coordinate Federal affairs there and act in a generally helpful capacity. He tried, also, to convey the concept of sovereignty represented in the office. Mr. Ellender thought that this "could probably be done by a $5,000-a-year man, rather than build this big mansion for him and give him automobiles to travel around the island and just give the people there a chance to criticize our Government further and say, 'Well, now, the money that is being spent there ought to come to us.'" Whereupon Senator Chavez said, yes, this year the Governor’s expenses down there amount to $175,000. Mr. Thoron, not recognizing a little demagoguery when he saw it, indignantly

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12The volume of hearings is, of course, a Senate document: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs, United States Senate, 78th Congress, First Session, on S. 1407. Washington, D.C. November 16, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26 and December 1, 1943.

reminded the gentlemen that this sum covered everything that would be found in any governmental executive office, for instance, an Office of Statistics and a Bureau of the Budget. "But," said Senator Chavez, "it does mean servants, social functions, automobiles, and the like."

Mr. Harper pointed out that a certain dignity ought to be associated with a Presidential Representative and that an ambassador, if Puerto Rico were independent, would have all these perquisites—and more. But the Senators were unconvinced. Later they invited, from certain volunteer Puerto Ricans, testimony of the sort they wanted. A Mr. Leslie Highley, for instance, representing the Puerto Rico Farmers' Association, after indicating that the present Governor cost altogether too much, said, "I wish to object to the United States Commissioner General as the representative of the President of the United States, the way the bill is drafted, will soon develop that a super-Governor is being sent down there . . ."

Mr. Highley, of course, was not a person of importance; and even his connection with the Farmers' Association was tenuous. But he did voice the attitude of many Puerto Ricans in the professional and middle-classes. This was the simple provincial reaction to which I have often referred (foreigners, even if needed, were not wanted); but it was not related in any way to United States interests, about which unthinking local people are after all not required to be concerned. And those who put it forward had not asked themselves whether, if Puerto Rico rejected supervision, she would be allowed assistance. All that was forgot in such emotional circumstances. Mr. Highley's statement was, in fact, less impassioned than that of Justice Travieso when the proposal had been before our drafting Committee.

Puerto Rico watched the beginning of the hearings and opinion crystallized very quickly. One of the first occurrences was the public repudiation, by Mr. Ramírez Santibáñez and Mr. Celestino Iriarte, of the proposal for a Commissioner General. They could see unpopularity in it, and forgot conveniently what had been conceded for their acquiescence. But Muñoz stood by our compromise. All through the discussions he said only that he stood for the original bill as a whole—which included the Commissioner General. But Puerto Ricans after a little could be seen to be concluding that this was just another Congressional show which was more than likely to come to nothing. Not one of the original group went to Washington as a witness; and neither did any other citizen of political importance. The Senators were reduced to taking long testimony from two or three self-appointed independentistas and from a miscellany of expatriates none of whom understood the complex situation into which they unhesitatingly plunged. It was evident that the Senators had something of their own in mind and shrewd Puerto Ricans began almost at once to sense what it was. The Congress was going to draft an extension of its controls,
and, under the guise of liberalizing the Organic Act, make all the uncertainties, the repeated disappointments and the humiliations worse. Muñoz predicted this almost from the first. And that was the kind of draft which emerged. But nobody believed it would become law.

The bill began to be visible when it was sent to the full Committee on Territories and Insular Affairs on 1 October. The discussions there were perfunctory and the Committee sent it on to the Senate, where it was passed without a record vote on 15 February 1944. And that was that. Even then there was no widespread belief that it would progress further.

The subcommittee of the House did not permit the Senate bill to make any progress there. Its hostile members had ideas of their own. But they were not bothering with liberal camouflage. They proposed to follow Senator Vandenberg’s lead, and to declare my office vacant. Then they meant to annul all the legislation they objected to as "fascistic." With the laws of 1941-42 wiped out and with a conservative governor in San Juan to exercise veto power, Puerto Ricans would be brought back to "American ways." That program shaped up very quickly. And, although there was a good deal of discussion, with many recriminations on both sides, the winter was on the whole a less disturbed one than that of the year before. The investigations were past. The windy threats had not come to anything. The worst had been done and had not amounted to much.

Puerto Ricans temporarily lost interest in Washington. But the political pot at home was spouting steam. By spring the campaign for the November election would have entered a kind of perpetual maintenance phase which had to be experienced to be believed at all. To a Northerner it was enormously exhausting. To the home folks it was like bread to the hungry. Every night they belabored one another in the most extravagant and outrageous terms—and I came in for a good deal of it too. For a long time I thought something must surely burst. So did the F.B.I. They were confused, alarmed and full of warnings. But nothing did burst. It simply went on and on... .

During the fall I had occasion to send directly to the Bell Committee two letters which tell their own story. The first had to do with the Fitzsimmons testimony, which only now had reached me in official form:

I have only recently received and read the printed transcript of former Auditor Fitzsimmons’ testimony before your Committee. It seems important to point out that it concerns matters which were not within the proper sphere of his activities as Auditor and, in addition, conflicts rather directly with certain fundamental tenets of democratic government.
Mr. Fitzsimmons disagrees with almost everything the Government of Puerto Rico has done and, more important, indicts the Government, including myself, for not legislating and executing the laws in accordance with his notions. Although conceding that the Organic Act intends that his functions be similar to those of the Comptroller General, Mr. Fitzsimmons extracts this remarkable prerogative from the further provision that "It shall be the duty of the Auditor to bring to the attention of the proper administrative officer expenditures of funds or property which, in his opinion, are extravagant, excessive, unnecessary or irregular." Does this give the Auditor the right to question the wisdom of substantive enactments and appropriations by the legislature? I think that the answer is an emphatic no.

The Organic Act intended that Puerto Rico should have a large degree of local autonomy. The Supreme Court of the United States has said that "The grant of legislative power in respect of local matters ... is as broad and comprehensive as language could make it." (People of Puerto Rico vs. Rubert Hermanos, Inc., 309 U.S. 543). It is patently inconsistent with this view to hold that the act which granted this autonomy gave to a Presidentially appointed Auditor the authority to nullify it. What the Act did give the Auditor was the authority to see that expenditures are made in accordance with legislative wish. As part of this authority he might advise an administrative official that an expenditure, even though legally within the legislative circumscription, was extravagant. By this it certainly was not meant that he would be justified in imposing his judgment regarding an expenditure that clearly effectuated a legislative purpose.

Mr. Fitzsimmons is not without regret that even this claimed power extends only to advising appropriate officials on the desirability of appropriations and substantive legislation! He would rectify this by, in his own words, having the Congress provide that the Auditor "have authority to make those things null and void, regardless of whether the legislature created them or not." (Transcript, page 183). These things include:

(1) The annual session of the legislature, since meeting each year is more expensive than meeting biannually, and since the legislature of all the states except three meet biannually; (2) enlarged appropriations for the Labor Department; (3) the Puerto Rico Communications Authority; (4) the Puerto Rico Water Resources Authority; (5) the Puerto Rico Development Bank; (6) the Puerto Rico Planning, Urbanizing and Zoning Board; (7) the Co-ordinator of Information; (8) the high wages that are paid to labor in Puerto Rico; (9) 14,400 of the 17,000 positions in the insular Government; (10) the 500-acre limitation of the Organic Act and its enforcing agency, the Land Authority of Puerto Rico; (11) the Puerto Rico Transportation Authority; (12) the Bureau of the Budget; (13) the Park Service; (14) the prizes for
the Cultivation of Literature; (15) agricultural fairs; (16) the State Guard; (17) the Office of Statistics.

Mr. Fitzsimmons feels that "these things" are not necessary. (Transcript, p. 183). Several of them are "not concerned . . . with government, but solely with purely commercial, nonessential enterprises." Moreover, some of the States do not have them. And most important of all they represent a system of government which, it is his understanding, "we are at war to prevent." (Transcript, p. 179).

Reasoning thusly, Mr. Fitzsimmons concludes that these things should not be. That they exist means that money is being spent for needless purposes and that the Federal Government must supply funds to meet essential needs of the Puerto Rican people which might otherwise be met by these squandered local revenues. This is an injustice to the Congress and to the American taxpayer and it is therefore a matter of right for Congress to decide how Puerto Rico shall spend its money and to establish the Auditor as the embodiment and executor of this Congressional prerogative. (Transcript, p. 183).

To state Mr. Fitzsimmons' case, and I think I have stated it fairly, if succinctly, would seem to me, in a society of reasonable men with some belief in democratic institutions, to answer it. It seems hardly necessary to discuss the relative merits of the measures which Mr. Fitzsimmons would render null and void—it is enough to know that his conception of the "American way" includes as a matter of right the nullification by him of the acts of a legislature because he thinks that they "are not necessary." It seems superfluous to inquire into the validity of the analogy that because Mississippi or Arkansas has not established particular institutions; therefore such institutions have no justification in Puerto Rico—it is enough to know that the scheme of the Federal Constitution, preserving to the several States autonomy to legislate however their individual characteristics dictate so long as republican forms be maintained, finds no appreciation or understanding in Mr. Fitzsimmons' mind. It is not necessary to treat at length Mr. Fitzsimmons' indisposition toward the recently established public corporations on the ground that they are "not concerned with government, but solely with purely commercial, nonessential enterprises" and as such squander money and perpetuate Federal expenditure. It is enough to call attention to his failure to appreciate that the need which called forth these corporations was the necessity of increasing through every possible means the productive wealth of the island that self-sufficiency might be approached and reliance on Federal subsidy might be relieved. Finally, it is not necessary to assay a defense of these measures against the charge that "they represent a system of government which we are at war to prevent" when Mr. Fitzsimmons is himself unable to see, or if he sees, be impressed by, the relationship
that his desired suppression of them by individual fiat bears to the behavior and belief of a thoroughgoing anti-democrat.

Mr. Fitzsimmons' only recommendation for meeting the economic problems of Puerto Rico, beyond his desired emasculation of governmental functions and personnel, is mass emigration. I have thought, and I would have assumed that Mr. Fitzsimmons realized, that faced for so long with the deep sores of overpopulation, the Puerto Rican legislature would by now have provided for "large-scale assisted emigration" if there existed a desire for it in the people; or even if there were any place for them to go. That the legislature has failed so to provide confirms for me what was an early observation—that these people strongly love their homeland, are disinclined to leave it and prefer to meet the problem of overpopulation at home through measures which, though "not necessary" in Mr. Fitzsimmons' opinion, seem to them worthy.

The expansion in the governmental function which has characterized these last three years in Puerto Rico and which these measures represent are what the Puerto Ricans look upon as their only alternative to mass emigration or continued and increasing dependence on Federal relief. Contrary to Mr. Fitzsimmons, these are not my creations but are the embodiment of solemn campaign promises of the majority party, made long before I assumed office. The function of these more recent creations of government is to provide new sources of income and employment, in other words to broaden the economic base of the island.

By 1933 overpopulation and underemployment had made this a necessity that could not be blinked and the Federal Government undertook to accomplish it through the P.R.R.A. When the P.R.R.A. program died, the failure to carry on its function would have had tremendous repercussions within this society if army and navy construction, employing as many as are employed by the entire sugar industry, had not come as an effective stopgap. It was in the knowledge that this was but a stopgap and that the basic problem remained unsolved and was growing greater with each passing year that the Puerto Rican people courageously increased their tax burden and devoted the revenues derived therefrom to the creation of agencies whose function is the broadening of the island's economic base. It seems fitting and necessary to point out that only a mind trained to an obsolete and imperialistic colonial attitude could justify the practical denial of local autonomy—which is what withdrawal of Federal interest and assistance on the ground that this local legislation is unnecessary would represent.

The second communication to the Bell Committee grew out of the continuing agitation in Puerto Rico over the efforts of Committee members to take away from
us the revenues from rum, which were now reaching a maximum. I saw in them real hope for carrying out a program of industrialization and for making a new attempt at the diversification of agriculture (through an Agricultural Development Company such as I had been unable to persuade the Federal Government to undertake), and I was determined, if I could, to prevent their diversion or their loss. The Committee, evidently despairing of taking these revenues away entirely, now proposed to give them to a Federal agency.

From watching the press during the last few days I infer that the Committee has received with some approval the suggestion that the tax on Puerto Rican rum should be allocated to the Federal Works Administration for relief purposes in Puerto Rico. I should like to comment.

In the first place more than the yield of the rum tax for the last year is currently allocated to relief purposes and is being spent by the Puerto Rican Government. I am prepared to undertake that this policy will be continued, construing "relief" to cover health and welfare activities as well as work relief. I believe the legislative leaders will join me in this pledge.

But in the second place you must be reminded that to take such action as has been proposed would make a fundamental change in Puerto Rican status and do it under subterfuge which would be deeply resented here. To explain: it is part of the undertaking of the Organic Act that in exchange for not having the privileges of statehood, and therefore not being represented in our Congress, Puerto Rico shall not be included in our revenue system. Those who wrote and amended, from time to time, the Organic Act, understood this clearly. The pledge is not to retain the tariffs on foreign goods coming to Puerto Rico and not to lay revenue taxes on goods originating in Puerto Rico. To do the latter would be, in effect, to lay a tariff against Puerto Rican products.

If your Committee should consent to this proposal it would be favoring taxation without representation, the issue on which Americans separated from Britain and went to war. Unless, that is, it is intended actually to change Puerto Rican status. In this case Puerto Rico would begin to pay upwards of twenty millions in Federal income taxes but would automatically be admitted to some forty millions in social-security benefits. In this case, also, it would be necessary to grant representation in the Congress. Puerto Rico would then have five Representatives and two Senators to guard interests which are now voteless.

It is unthinkable that at this stage in world history, when we are trying to convince the subject peoples of the world that we are fairer than our opponents in the war now going on, we should administer this setback to the gains we have made in good
will. Such an act by your Committee would be worth a great military victory to the Axis powers by virtue of the ill will it would generate for us among all the world's weaker peoples.

If, nevertheless, your Committee should advise that our contract with Puerto Rico be broken in this way, it would also find itself in the position of depriving these insular people of the only favorable effect of the war on their economy. They have suffered blockade which the United States was unable to prevent, and under our guardianship many of them have been reduced almost to starvation; unemployment has risen through the exhaustion of building and other materials; the cost of living has increased at rates double and triple those on the mainland; and in many other ways the war has brought them hardships.

At the same time their sons are serving in our armies (nearly 40,000 now); and they have in every way been loyal participants in our war effort. Now that, unexpectedly, the tax on rum has risen in yield and can be devoted to repairing some of the damage and relieving some of the suffering, it is proposed to deprive them of the privilege of doing so or of administering their own funds.

The arguments I have cited against such a policy seem to me so strong that others are superfluous. However, it might also be remembered that a large part (perhaps 50-70 per cent) of the Federal funds allocated to work relief in Puerto Rico are spent either on military installations, on the widening and improvement of military highways (unnecessary for insular purposes), or on hospitals for venereal cases, malarial and other health work around army cantonments, and so on. Puerto Ricans quite legitimately consider these to be expenditures which are war-connected rather than wholly insular; and to take their own taxes for such expenditure would be to add insult to injury, especially after they have contributed with great generosity to the war effort. To mention only one instance of this last, the Government of Puerto Rico has given to the United States Government either in fee or rent-free for the duration some twenty-eight millions of dollars' worth of property. This generosity ought to be matched by us rather than received in the niggardly spirit represented by the proposal to segregate the tax on rum.

I hope your Committee will decide against such a policy.

During the next week I had occasion to write Mr. Ickes on a subject which has been discussed before in this book:

I have your letter inquiring about the Falange situation as described in Mr. Allen Chase's book. I read it some time ago; and, of course, I saw Mr. Chase while he was here. I should describe his chapter on Puerto Rico by saying that he has the right
generalization but not always the correct facts. For instance, it is not true that civil defense is infiltrated with *falangistas*. He got that idea because I transferred a man from police chief to a secretaryship there to settle an administrative difficulty. Anyway civil defense is rapidly folding up here as elsewhere and being absorbed by other agencies.

Some time ago the F.B.I, made a report on the Falange in Puerto Rico. It took them some time and some prodding on my part to discover that in this war not communists but falangistas are the practical problem here. But they have done a good deal lately. Mr. Biddle could furnish you with that report.

The way in which religion, riches and politics are mixed here is very complex. Often it is hard to tell them apart. Because most of the determined Franco-philes are also members of the "best families" and prominent churchmen, our people (F.B.I, and other officials) tend to be confused by their conservatism and respectability. It seems to be hard to believe that several million dollars and a good deal of piety can be your enemy. You probably remember that our Federal District Judge here admitted some of these people to citizenship after the war started. That comes, you see, from looking at them merely as respectable wealthy people.

There is no danger from them now. They are trying to prove their patriotism by buying lots of bonds, etc., etc., and acting as though Franco was a name they never heard before.

I am, of course, prejudiced. It was the crowd which was behind the opposition to me, and, incidentally, to you. But I can be charitable too—except to those up home who fall in with them and help to play their game.

22 November. Muñoz begins to talk about extreme measures as likelihood of action on our amendments to the Organic Act fades. Flis is a difficult situation now which probably will not improve soon. Many gestures toward change in status have been made but there has been no real progress. He is aware of _ the need for continued assistance, however, and this makes any demonstration of displeasure unpolitic.

I must record one more unfavorable development. The Azores, by recent agreement with Portugal, is to be an important air base on the trans-Atlantic run. Puerto Rico will probably lose most or all of the traffic which has gone through here now for more than two years.

24 November. The Rules Committee of the House (Mr. Sabath, Chairman) seems to have refused a rule for the consideration of the bill which would take away the rum tax.
The Battle of Italy appears to have reached a stalemate one hundred miles south of Rome. There is speculation now whether this campaign was not a big diversion. It seems not to have been adequately implemented.

Intensive work on the budget for next year with many uncertainties as to revenue. But just now we are prosperous. The entire current year’s budget is already covered by receipts. The remainder will go to surplus.

Bloom on the cane began about 10 November and is full now.

28 November. Most of the past week devoted to setting up an insular relief organization to take the place of W.P.A., now dead at the hands of our enemies in the House. Fortunate to get Mr. Paul Edwards, lately Comptroller of the Water Resources Authority and once Federal Relief Director, as Administrator. But long quarrels with Muñoz to abstract the organization from politics did not succeed. He is determined not to see that done and insists on putting the Commissioner of Labor over Edwards—an arrangement sure to cause trouble. I cannot prevail because the funds were entrusted to an Emergency Council (made up of the Cabinet, which is confirmed by the Senate, plus the Auditor), not to me. Perhaps I should not have signed the relief bill of last spring in that form. But it could not otherwise have passed and, like other Governors before me, I gave in against my better judgment.

A weekend at Jájome with Muñoz ended friendly enough but had some bitter moments. I warned him frankly, as I felt it my duty to do, of the perils of some of his present policies. I tried to convey to him, what has been growing in my mind, that he has to discover new procedures and better organization or he will find that the movement is too large to be controlled. There is the further danger of the movement turning to other ends than those it began with. It has to keep close to the people and only his leadership, democratically managed, can ensure that. I urged strongly that he work now at renewing his hold on the people. This will be easy for him if his ideas are clear, and if he is persistent. He resented this analysis but I believe that when he thinks it over he will appreciate its truth. He is concerned about what is going to happen in his party but he expects to handle the coming crisis in the wrong way—or, rather, by not having carefully prepared for it, he will fall into the wrong way. His mind is full of fugitive, rather unorganized, but apparently unwise expedients. I urged a consistent course, above intrigue, above patronage, above recrimination. His hold on the people is such that it is not only possible for him but obviously indicated. He must strengthen his direct contacts with them and subordinate the local leadership to them and, as a result, to him. But he is afraid to try it, talks of my being an amateur, says that elections are won by contented party workers, etc., etc., all of which I have heard again and again. But my position is
getting stronger because his policy is so obviously failing him. We went over and over these matters for many hours, discussing them in the light of the numerous local events with which we are both familiar. It all came to no decision, of course, because it is a matter he has to work out in practice. I did not even succeed in getting an admission that my analysis was correct. Perhaps persistent recurrence will have some eventual effect. But it was not a very happy occasion and we were left in what appeared to be as complete disagreement as in the beginning.

2 December. The President is meeting—probably somewhere in Iran—with Stalin. He, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek met in Cairo; and he and Churchill went on to confer with Stalin. The grand strategy seems to be the same one announced at Casablanca—unconditional surrender, closing in from all sides and crushing first Germany and then Japan and the setting up of a permanent body for consultation among the Great Powers.

From Cairo there came an announcement that the Japanese Empire would be dismembered. I know where that came from!

We have taken the Gilberts with terrible losses at Tarawa. Apparently we have not yet found the secret of amphibious warfare. But it must be found if we are to carry out a Central Pacific drive paralleling that of MacArthur in New Guinea and aimed eventually at the Philippines and the Chinese coast.

g December. Sir Frank Stockdale stopped here the other day on his way back to Barbados from Washington. Aside from a considerable budget of gossip he had nothing important. We discussed, in a desultory way, the forthcoming conference. This is the one conceived by Charles and me as a meeting of peoples' representatives rather than colonial officials. Sir Frank is obviously hesitant.

The newspapers say that Beany Baldwin is going to the C.I.O., apparently as head of a political committee. This is the best news for a long time. He is a-political genius and he might just win what looks now like a very doubtful election for the President. But it is another indication that the progressives are getting out of the Government rapidly. This may be because of what everyone seems to regard as a Republican trend, which is deduced by charting diminishing Democratic majorities and projecting them over the next election. This system of forecasting has impressed all the journalists and many others as well. It is the most important thing in Muñoz' mind, for instance. He is shaping all his policy toward a Republican victory. It is leading him to renew a drive for an immediate reform bill even though it is unsatisfactory. The minimum such a bill could contain, he reasons, would be the elective governorship and this would at least save Puerto Rico from a reactionary Presidential appointee. I expect to hear much more of this as time goes on.
13 December. Admiral King, Mr. Lewis Douglas, Sir John Dill, etc., here on their way home from Cairo and Teheran. Admiral Cook had a dinner for them. It was an interesting evening although they gave away no secrets if they had any to give. It lifted our eyes beyond Puerto Rico for an hour. What was of most interest to me was that none of these had given the slightest thought to dependent areas—not that military men or others, like Douglas, closely engaged in war activities, would be expected to, really, except that one of the principal decisions taken at Teheran must have dealt with the small nations and their relation to the Great Powers—Poland, for instance, and the Mediterranean countries. But if it was, none of the overflow seems to have reached these "experts."

14 December. Fortas' attempt to enter the Navy has ended in discharge for "tuberculosis of the retina." It is not altogether certain that he will return to Interior; but I must hope so.

As Christmas approached it became more evident that we were in for one of the droughts which periodically hit the West Indies so hard. We had had so severe a deficiency of rainfall for months that the estimates of the forthcoming sugar crop were alarming. Whenever these estimates appeared in the States, the drought was only incidentally mentioned. What was most prominent was "the communist policy in Puerto Rico." There would never be another good crop so long as the Government persisted in harassing the producers, it was said. And we were blamed, too, for not having got larger allocations of fertilizer. The last months of 1943 and the first of 1944 were in many ways the worst of the war for those of us who had any responsibility for public affairs. The people of Puerto Rico were not discontented with what had been done to mitigate the rigors natural to such a time: they had food and clothing at reasonable prices if they kept away from loan sharks and black markets; they had relief work, army allowances or outright cash benefits from the insular Government. They would not become wealthy on any of these but they had not expected that anyway. They were as free as usual to do the things they liked to do and nobody was pushing them around. But businessmen of all sorts were acutely unhappy. They were prosperous but thought they had been treated unjustly because they could not become more so. The importers resented our bulk buying; and the many thousand small merchants resented the price inspectors who kept them from profiteering. All these, however, were in bliss compared with the planters whose crop this year was off perhaps thirty per cent because of the drought. It was only human that they should blame "the" Government," of course, and especially since they had a grudge against it anyway.

These and others joined also to blame us for the lack of trans-portionation. Puerto Rico's sole connection with the mainland for two years now had been two daily
flights of Pan American planes. Deducting the seats required by the Army, there were some twenty or thirty available for the civilians in a population of two millions. Pan American had a backlog of four thousand authentic applications for passage; and was administering, as best it could, the job of selecting those who could go and those who could not. This task had a way of falling on the Governor’s Office, in spite of our efforts to push it away, since prospective passengers were told that if the Governor would certify urgency, priorities would be established. There is no way of spreading twenty or thirty seats among hundreds of daily applicants so that anyone who has been unsuccessful will believe that justice has been done. I am sure that we never succeeded. And our melancholy protests were filed somewhere in Washington; everything about the war was more important now than Puerto Rican content.

We were saddened by the departure of our friends. Among others General Pratt had gone; and hundreds of officers together with squadrons, battalions and batteries of men. They were no longer in the places where we had got used to seeing them. The small fields, the roofs, the roadsides and the points running out into the sea which had swarmed with soldiers going about the complicated business of keeping in shape and using radars, searchlights and anti-aircraft guns were all empty and silent. The roofs were bare and the vacant lots vacant once more. What to us in La Fortaleza was the most noticeable change of all was now complete—the training squadrons of PBM’s which had roared and glided over and around us for more than a year had melted away into the west toward the Pacific. The Atlantic War was over.

Perhaps the most tormenting thing to a public administrator now was the rising tide of slums. Since the war had begun there had not been a house built in Puerto Rico—that is, legally and officially. But actually many thousands had been thrown together, since the war did not keep boys and girls from marrying. They were constructed of scraps of lumber, tin, leather—any material which could be scavenged in back yards or from rubbish heaps. They had no latrines, no access to supplies of water, no streets. They were an invitation to the parasitic life of the subtropics; and the rats ran in hordes through the yards and into and out of the houses. This is the way plagues start. But there was nothing we could do except to organize ineffective cleanup campaigns now and again. Houses were being built on the continent by the hundred thousand for war workers. Not one was allowed to Puerto Rico.

What there was to do in contrast with what we could do was maddening. We perhaps protested, complained and fought with those who controlled materials more than was seemly. But we had the responsibility for this malarial and plague-threatened island; we had to suffer the slums and the filth; we had to think of the thousands of diseased without care of any kind; we had to see the children
neglected and unschooled. It is no wonder that sometimes we lost our tempers. It might even have been better if it had been done oftener. But the war, if not a reason, was always a sufficient excuse for brushing us off. And we got nowhere. The fact was that in health work, education, public works, housing, water supplies, sewage disposal and garbage collection, street repairs—all the items of state and municipal housekeeping we fell further and further behind. That was the unhappy fact which obsessed us along with the apparent torpor into which the war effort, for all that could be seen on the surface, seemed to have fallen.

This was the time when MacArthur’s road to the Philippines, say nothing of Japan, seemed endless. Mere casual thought of the logistics involved in supplying a modern army of any size across the seven thousand miles of that sea was so staggering that to most of us it seemed impossible that the Japanese should ever be defeated. We were taking a sober look too at the Italian campaign. Awful mistakes seemed to have been made and the penalties for them exacted. And Japanese defeat had seemed no more impossible than that we should be able to drive the Germans all the way up the Peninsula and through the Alpine passes—the best defensive terrain, surely, in all the world. There was no hint, yet, of an alternative, say the sandy plains of the Camargue which led so easily into the Valley of the Rhone, or the stretch of shore just east of Cannes which Napoleon had chosen because it gave access to the passes in the Alpes-Maritimes leading to Grenoble.

Young men were dying before Cassino and on the beachhead at Anzio, and since it came to nothing, all of us at home became lay strategists. It was discouraging because there-seemed inevitably to be too little for so much. We had not yet grasped the enormity of the output of our factories or the effectiveness of modern services of supply. We heard from the press only about strikes and the wickedness of labor, not about the miracle of its loyalty and productiveness. And when our Generals spoke they either seemed so foolishly optimistic as to be disregarded or, if it was General Somervell, for instance, to be professionally pessimistic in the interest of enormous stores of everything without discrimination. No one spoke in a clear voice to still our fears or to encourage our effort. Even the President in these days began to seem tired. That élan which had carried him through eleven years of mounting crisis, always opposed by nearly half—the richest, most resourceful half—of America, was failing. He was withdrawn. He no longer had the energy for a killing day’s work and for reassurance to all of us too. We were having to do without the reassurance.

We had a tintello tree down from the forest again for Christmas and hung it with the baubles and the tinsel which had survived the Christmases of ’41 and ’42. It made an unexpectedly brave show, and when the guests began to come for our Christmas party and the orchestras broke into the boleros and danzas, the face of confidence
seemed, for that night, to have turned toward us. The irrepressible gaiety in human hearts gave an illusory assurance of permanency. The next days were, of course, darker than ever. We had to find the resolution now that so many peoples had had to find for war, to go on without certainty and make our struggle from day to day as best we could.

But it was encouraging to have so many of the political leaders, especially those outside San Juan, though this was not an exclusive rule, come, in these trying days, to see where wisdom lay. Something about contact with the full wisdom of the jíbaros gave local políticos a more solid grounding. They thought more of economics and less of status. Among the names of those I learned to trust and find friendliness in were Piñero, Rivera, Burgos, Seoane, Bauermeister, Dávila, Díaz, Palmer, and Berrios-Berdecia. But there were others, many of them. I wished we had a better system so that we need not differ about patronage and such matters—but perhaps that could be developed too. I resolved to try harder and to remember that on friendship all else could be built.
ALL DURING 1943 there had been reason for satisfaction with our work to protect the food supply; and now at the beginning of 1944 we had begun to feel that we had found the way to stabilize prices. These were unspectacular achievements. They were noticed only when they were attacked by the Chamber of Commerce or the Bell Committee. But the results showed, nevertheless, in people’s faces. They and their children had a little more to eat of a good deal better quality. They did not go around praising those who fought and worked for this result, but they had a sure enough sense of its source, as anyone could discover by the most superficial inquiry. They attributed it to Muñoz and to me. There was some error in this, for Muñoz gave it almost no current attention and I very little. It was by now, as a matter of fact, routinized. The Office of Distribution of the Department of Agriculture worked smoothly; the space allocations for goods not brought in by that Office were made effectively by Mr. Vicens Ríos; price controls functioned better; and the small amounts needed for subsidy were now taken from the fifteen-million-dollar fund about which I have already written.

For Mr. Vicens Ríos I often gave thanks. He was as unspectacular as the job he did. He had the appearance of a prosperous merchant, possibly because that was what he had been. But he was touched, in the way a certain unlikely few of the prosperous sometimes are, by the lean bodies of the poor and by the stunted growth of their children. The thirty per cent extracted from the price of rice and beans by the importers had become an obsession with him. He was aware that it came not out of accounts but out of flesh. And he undertook the thankless and difficult work of supply with missionary enthusiasm. In addition to allocating space, he held himself ready to step in wherever the Office of Distribution failed us; he managed our hurricane stock pile; he set up a service organization for the whole Government; he bought machinery and materials for the work-relief program; and whenever I asked him how he stood, he answered that he had "paid expenses."

The old tense days of waiting for ships which did not come seemed now to be far in the past. We still had only about half the shipping of the prewar years; but because it was allocated carefully to essentials and because every ship was loaded efficiently, we had no complaint to make. There were fewer shortages now in our island than there were from time to time, and in certain localities, in the States. The ships were still coming in convoy, although losses were diminished, and the elapsed time of voyages was long, so that in the humidity of the Gulf and the Caribbean there were some spoilages. But from the terrace overlooking the harbor I could now see regularly the great gray shapes of cargo carriers steering through the gate in the submarine net stretched across the harbor below us. They came in past El Morro
wallowing in the winter surf, their life rafts tilted across their rails, and found still water within. The relief on the merchant mariners' faces as they gazed again at our green hills and old buildings was easily seen through a glass. We had a club now for these civilian sailors who had served us so well. It stood near the old Casino which had become the headquarters for the U.S.O. Between them they created a lively neighborhood. It was a government building: but we vacated it gladly for the duration.

All our affairs were running more easily. I myself had a competent staff and was eased of much of my burden. Fred Bartlett1 was gone now—to the naval school of government at Columbia and Tom Hayes was going back to the University as librarian; but I now had acquired Mr. Mason Barr and Mr. Campos del Toro. These, with my military aide, Captain Angel Martin, who managed La Fortaleza, and my naval aide, Lieutenant Thomas Karsten, were quite capable of running my office with only a minimum of direction. I had time for more consideration of what was going on in the world and of our relation to it. Not that there was great satisfaction to be found in the spectacle just now; but that whether I liked it or not I was required to find some directions and adjustments. No one from outside was giving us any help of this sort. What we got from Interior was support rather than leading and the President was busy elsewhere. Congressmen rarely let a week pass without harrying us a little; sometimes several gave voice together and created some mental disturbance. All during the year the focus of these unorganized attacks would be the yield from the tax on rum. Several bills would be introduced and many statements and speeches made in pursuit of that effort. Messrs. Cole, Crawford and McGehee were in a continual state of annoyance that our insular departures from the "American way" should be financed by this unexpected surplus which freed us from begging for funds. I had times, as did all the rest, when I thought this effort might succeed. As the year began I should not have thought we could get through it without this loss. The House group had already, it will be recalled, taken away from us the W.P.A. and the traditional distribution of free food for the poor; the War Production Board had cut our supplies of materials savagely2 so that we could use our revenues only for made-work of the most useless sort or simple distribution of funds with which the hordes of the unemployed could buy food. But this we were doing; and people were eating. The funds we furnished enabled them to buy the rice and beans which the Agriculture people sent us in those deeply loaded ships. There

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1Where he was a classmate of my predecessor, Mr. Swope. He was later to go to the Philippines and to Okinawa.
2Puerto Ricans were perfectly well aware that even while we were paralyzed for lack of materials a veritable building boom was taking place in Santo Domingo, in Venezuela and in the Central American countries. But there, as they cynically observed, Tío Samuel needed good neighbors.
was another outrage in store for us, however; as part of a deal with Cuba, and in order to secure her molasses for making alcohol, our production of rum was arbitrarily limited. From that time on our revenues declined and presently we should have financial problems again. But for the moment our surplus was sufficient to prevent worries of that sort. We had another, however; and it was an immediate one. The Christmas breezes, as these first winter winds are called in the neighboring Virgins, blew on onto the winter months drier than anyone could remember them to have been before. We were, in fact, facing a severe drought; and soon we became aware that it was general throughout the Caribbean. Those dry winds destroyed the crops in the gardens we had been so proud of and our home-grown-food program came to nothing for that whole year. Soon the countryside was autumn-brown. It was then that I learned how large families had ordinarily lived on so little cash as most of them got. They had foraged; and now, as I understood from visits to the country, they could not do it any more. During most of the year some fruit tree is bearing; odd little patches in arroyos or in distant corners grow a small crop of ñames or yautias; a dozen gandule bushes make rows beside the bohíos; a few plantains or papayas push up in the half-shade of breadfruit trees. A household of children in the country come home daily with at least a little something. And there is an inflexible taboo against cutting down any fruit tree no matter how high the price of charcoal to tempt the jíbaro to its sacrifice. But then, too, almost half a million children had been getting from our various free kitchens at least one meal a day.\footnote{We had been keeping up, and we now expanded the school-lunch program, the milk stations (for children from two to seven) and the infant-feeding clinics where formulas were prepared for mothers to take home. The drought did not break until late in May of 1944.}

Now the ñames were stunted, the plantains sickly, the gandule leaves curled. Only the hardiest tree crops were available. In the municipal market places there was almost no local produce. More than ever rice, beans and dried fish were depended on. The drought went on and on, incredibly, even in those usually humid valleys where it had seemed to rain every hour. The cane suffered; the tobacco wilted on dusty hillsides; and there was little work in the harvest. More and more of the unemployed had to depend on relief works which, since the War Production Board still refused us materials—even the use of our own—became the worst sort of boondoggling.

Perhaps the drought helped to bring about the final act in the long-drawn-out struggle for public ownership of power. Since the seizure of the private distribution lines in the metropolitan area a year and a half before, the company's lawyers had harassed us continuously and their Washington lobbyists had been equally industrious. Mr. Crawford, always sensitive to their wrongs, had interested himself actively in their behalf. For some time there had been hovering in and out of the
Federal District Court in San Juan charges of bad faith and conspiracy which were always, it seemed, about to be brought to hearing. Actually our first order of taking had been invalidated and had gone to the Third Circuit in Boston. There the company’s lawyer had made an intemperate speech\(^4\) in which he had said that Ickes and myself had fooled the President into the seizure, being that sort anyway, and that the so-called Lanham Act had not been intended for such a purpose as it had been used for here. This speech was sent out by one of the press associations by a suspiciously convenient error, as a pronouncement of the court, and we had another moment of infamy in the continental press. Actually the Boston court did decide against us and we had to do the taking all over under the President’s war powers. This was at once attacked too; and it was clear that in so unfriendly an atmosphere in the courts we might lose altogether. We had a vision of the Canadian interests, in fact, taking over the public power, since if we could not take the private lines, and integration was necessary, that would be the only recourse. In fact moves were being made in that direction which seemed to us inspired by the War Production Board and viewed sympathetically by the courts.

Thus driven, we finally bought and paid for the distribution system out of court. I felt that the price we paid was outrageous; but we had done our best. That it was a good investment, however, we had the assurance of the New York bankers who loaned us the funds for the purchase as well as for extensions and improvements. The negotiations leading up to this had been long and devious and had to be parallel with those for the purchase. If the Canadian interests did not lose, neither did the bankers, of course, though we expected that. In fact, when we finally came to the point of paying too much and borrowing under conditions and at rates calculated to please Wall Street, we were suddenly regarded benignly by all the powers that be. I had thought that we ought to be castigated for the deal. But that did not happen. There was not a word of criticism and a good deal of congratulation. The people of Puerto Rico would pay for it over a period of some twenty years in inflated rates; but absolutely no one showed any concern over that.

So one day there gathered in my office Mr. Brown, counsel, who had served the Canadian power interests so well, all the local officials of the company, sad at losing their jobs, our own counsel Mr. Curry, and all the rest of us. Mr. Lucchetti was with the bankers in New York. And over an open line we made simultaneously a purchase in San Juan and a borrowing in New York of the funds wherewith to pay. Someone furnished a case of champagne. And we drank each to his own objective: Mr. Brown and the power officials, I suppose, to a cushioned retirement; Mr. Curry and I, at

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least, to the genuine dedication of this public service. It was done. Mr. Curry and I looked at each other. "Telephones next?" he asked. "You bet," I said in the enthusiasm of the moment. And I really thought that might be easier. We never learn.

At the middle of January we had a preview of the coming election. As early as that new voters are required to register, one of the exaggerated precautions which surround the election process in Puerto Rico. One group—that which supposes it has a majority—is always devising insurance against fraud; the other—the presumed minority—is just as continually seeking to win by smartness if it cannot win by votes. Since majorities make laws, the electoral code had by this time become so elaborate and the machinery so cumbersome that only the most experienced políticos understood it and could make it work. Throughout the year the most devious maneuvers would be carried out by both sides in the hope of gaining or offsetting an advantage. The inscription started it off. For the Populares seemed to have registered about twice as many new voters as all other parties combined. This fact was not admitted openly by the Coalición, and, of course, there was no official count, but subsequent developments showed how frightened its leaders were.5

My wife and I registered. I saw no reason why we should not. If we did not have a franchise in Puerto Rico, we had none anywhere; it was our residence.6 Our inscription did us no good, however, for presently the Supreme Court supported the invalidation of ours along with some 85,000 others on technical grounds. It was probably believed by the Coalición at this time that this number would be sufficient to overcome the Popular lead. This was, of course, on the theory that the voters already registered were about evenly divided, whereas the new ones were predominantly Popular. They hoped by other means to gain—or, as they claimed, keep, for they had always said that among them they had a majority—the old voters. Having eliminated all these new registrants, and subsequently several thousand others, they went seriously to work. This evidence of partiality on the part of the court, and others which would follow, seriously injured the reputation of our judicial processes for fairness and impartiality. It was felt that the justices had sacrificed their dignidad for partisan purposes. And this was so fiercely resented that anyone could predict what would happen in the event of a Popular victory: there would be an attempt at court reorganization. Of course the justices of the

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5 An unofficial count is made by the collection of receipts. Party watchers gather these as registrants leave and make their own calculations.

6 Nevertheless Mr. Congressman Cole took exception.
Supreme Court were Presidential appointees; but the lower courts whose partisanship was even more flagrant were within the power of the legislature.7

Another source of irritation to the Populares was the fact that the Board of Elections, which supervised the voting machinery, was dominated by the Coalición. This was because, for this purpose, it was made up of three separate parties. It had, in fact, after the defection of the Liberales, which presently occurred, three votes to one. It was this board which first disqualified the 85,000 voters, against violent protests from the Popular members, and was upheld in the Supreme Court. Muñoz' answer to this was to create two dummy parties of his own. It was no task at all for him to secure the required signatures for the creation of a Proletario and an Auténtico party. The Republicanos tried to keep their advantage by creating a new party of their own. But they could not find the signatures. So after a while voting in the Board of Elections was evened up. By that time it was too late to reconsider the cases of the disenfranchised 85,000; but it served to prevent any more such flagrant abuses of power. And anyway Muñoz felt some confidence that he could do without them. I had advised him to carry the case to the Circuit Court but because of some fear he had not wanted to do that. He thus first exhibited the strange mixture of confidence and uncertainty which would torment him throughout the year. He seemed unable quite to believe that matters were as they appeared and he felt it necessary, for this reason, to resort to every possible means just to make certain. Yet he was aware that the Popular lead was so enormous that only a miracle could win for the opposition.

This was somewhat the same as his impulse to hedge on the national election, with which I had to contend throughout the year. About this I had no justification for annoyance, as I told myself, but this did not keep it from being a nuisance. From his point of view he had to take all the measures he could think of to be prepared for the advent of "Ole Gandule." To me these were absurd because I had no doubt that the President would win against anyone except Willkie; and I felt that the conservative Republicans had had enough of him. Dewey seemed to be favored, and Dewey would be easy to defeat. Presently Muñoz' hedging would become more than a difficulty when, without open acknowledgment, he reversed his attitude on the bill passed by the Senate to amend the Organic Act, and sent two emissaries to Washington instructed to work for its passage. This naturally confused Mr. Brophy and others in Interior and they turned in again and worked violently for the bill. At first their efforts would be carefully defined as being in behalf of the "original draft" as it had come from the President's Committee. But later on, and especially in the summer,

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7 It may be interesting to know what portion this 85,019 was of the total. The official count, when the election was over, would show a total of 591,978: It was, therefore 14.4 per cent which might well have been decisive.
when panic seized them, they forgot this and abjectly asked for any bill at all so long as it contained provision for the elective governorship.\(^8\)

When the legislature met at its regular session in mid-February, it was already evident that Muñoz had lost control. Mr. Rodríguez Pacheco, the single Liberal in the lower house, the one-man majority whose support had been nursed through three sessions, had by now become too costly. In the session’s first days Muñoz told me what the price would be—or at least part of it—in patronage and other favors, and I advised against paying it.

The legislative program was fairly complete. I still wanted an Agricultural Development Company to exploit some of the possibilities I thought neglected because of long preoccupation with sugar.\(^9\) But aside from this there remained only the telephone-taking, which needed another formal resolution of approval, and the various reforms in government—the civil service, the police, etc., for which I had been asking. These I had no hope of getting anyway until after the election, and I thought the telephone matter was one which was so generally approved by the public that it might have non-partisan support. In this last I was mistaken. Not only the Republicanos, to a man, and the Socialistas, of all people, but Mr. Rodríguez Pacheco too, would mysteriously reverse themselves and defy public opinion. Try as we might we could not get through an approving resolution.

I was not worried about the budget. There was no danger that the government might come to a halt if no appropriations for current expenses were made. The provision in the Organic Act for continuation of last year’s authorizations in such a case took care of that. I was worried about the provision for relief; but about this, again, public opinion was so clear that opposition to it seemed unlikely. Here again I was mistaken. The incredible political stupidity of the Coalicionistas led them to the greatest blunder of all in this matter. They refused to vote for the bill, which entrusted expenditure of the funds to an Emergency Council consisting of the

\(^8\)Muñoz would explain to me afterward that his instructions to Messrs. Pinero and Ellsworth to this effect were given as a result of a visit to him of Mr. Irwin Silverman of the Solicitor’s office when he was in San Juan. Mr. Silverman conveyed to him, he said, “the Department’s uneasiness about the election” and the feeling that an elective Governor, even with an otherwise defective bill, would be better than the virtual certainty of a Dewey appointee—who might even be Mr. Malcolm. As a matter of fact, in the middle of the campaign, Mr. Dewey did say that one of his first acts as President would be to replace me. But he did not say who would succeed.

\(^9\)Among them off-season citrus fruits and avocados, pineapples, essential oils, soy beans, of which a new variety was available, various tropical tree fruits such as the mango, the sapodillo, the níspero, the guava, the guanábana, etc., and grapes, both of the table variety and the new hybrid crosses between the vinifera of France and native tropical stock. These last were already growing at Mayagüez waiting for large-scale trial. None of these, except pineapples, and those only in a small way, had come into farming practice. It seemed unlikely that they would without further demonstration of their profitableness.
Cabinet and the Auditor, unless the controlling provisions were changed; they demanded that the funds be given to a new junta to be named by the presidents of the political parties. They claimed, of course, that relief was now being used by the Populares for political purposes; but this was no more than a nominal argument. They scarcely bothered to conceal the fact that this was a maneuver to get relief funds into their own hands by a three-to-one majority.\textsuperscript{10}

On this rock the relief bill was wrecked. Finally, because of the legislative deadlock, none at all was passed. All of us were worried about this, of course, but for somewhat different reasons. I had no political fears. Muñoz would not be blamed, I thought, and in fact, if anything further was needed, this would serve as the final weight in the election balance. To oppose relief in an election year, or even to propose that its administration should be entrusted to the políticos, was such an abysmal error that those who made it could certainly be written off as formidable opponents. Muñoz contended that the truth was quite otherwise. What the people were getting, he said, they gave him credit for but also they expected him to see to it that it was kept up. Explanations were impossible. If relief stopped he would be blamed no matter what the excuse and no matter what efforts were made to convey it to the voters. Both of us were, however, agreed on the fact that somehow a way had to be found to give work to the unemployed and to support the unemployable. This was for sheer humanitarian reasons. So, after prolonged discussion, we determined to take all the legal chances involved and to profess the conviction that relief was just as much a current expense as any other budget item. On this basis we should assume that the old appropriation was renewed for the forthcoming fiscal year. It still seemed incredible that the Coalición would pursue its opposition into the courts. If it did, it would be pictured throughout the campaign as favoring oppression of the poor, supporting injustice to the unemployed and so on, all of which would be marvelous material for election orators. Nevertheless that is what, in their fatuous enragement, they would do. The case, before a Republicano judge in the San Juan District Court, would be lost to us; it would be lost again in the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico and again in Boston; by that time the District Court judge would have provided the final dream of a politician’s heart. He would send my entire Cabinet to jail for contempt—that is, for keeping on giving relief. I would come to wonder where the Republicanos—by now the Socialistas would have taken

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\textsuperscript{10}I had Mr. Paul Edwards in the relief organization to guard against the effectiveness of any allegation of political favoritism; and, although he was having plenty of trouble with insistent Populares, I was satisfied that he was keeping the organization reasonably clean. He was my hedge, also, against such stories gaining credence in Washington. He was known as an honest and able administrator. It was one of my greatest disappointments that immediately after the election, Mr. Edwards was sacrificed to the políticos.
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Uneasiness assailed the opposition, of course; and still another mistake was piled on all the rest. They tried to prevent the election from being held at all. Mr. Bolivar Pagán busied himself with personal interviews in Washington. Senator Chavez and, of course, Interior officials rejected the suggestion. But it was not left at that. A formidable press campaign was undertaken to prove that, under my direction, a fair election was impossible. Specifications were not given. It was realized that most Continentals, including members of the Congress—regard election procedures in Puerto Rico as probably corrupt and certainly strange. That they are less so than in most of the states would not be believed. This general uneasiness about foreign ways predisposes to belief in fantastic tales of all sorts, however unlikely. It was said that I would control the election and swing it to the communist-fascist group with which I was allied. The idea that a Governor in Puerto Rico might influence, not to say control, an election would arouse the special risibilities which Puerto Ricans reserve for Continentals. I have said something here of the elaborate machinery of avoidance manufactured by the legislature to prevent any great control of their affairs by Governors from outside. In so important a matter (to the políticos) as the control of election procedures they would be unlikely to have admitted gubernatorial influence anywhere* And they had not, as a matter of fact. There existed a Commissioner of Elections who was a member of a Board composed of Representatives designated by the Presidents of political parties. It was this Board which ran the show.

Muñoz took seriously the effort for postponement; so did my colleagues in Interior. Muñoz proposed to me several times that, for the election period, I secure a substitute about whom there could be no question—someone like Admiral Leahy, for instance, in whose fairness everyone would believe. I took a good deal of pleasure in digging up and sending him—and the people in Interior—a series of highly intemperate diatribes from the press, printed both before and after the elections of 1940, castigating the Admiral as partial, unfair, dishonest and so on.

"General Phillips, who, as you know, has been here for some time, warns me that the situation is serious—that there is a large slush fund and that its users are prepared to stop at nothing. "You may expect anything to happen between now and November. I shall do my best with it but a good deal of help and forbearance will be needed. Among others you will be deluged with stories of incompetence, partiality, etc. That is clearly indicated. I only ask that I do not be put on trial there as well as here. . . ."

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11 In a letter of 28 February to Mr. Ickes, I said: "At the risk of seeming to exaggerate I believe I should warn you of heightened determination on the part of the Coalition to cause real trouble—if possible, trouble enough to prevent any election at all from being held, since it is by now clear that the Populares have an overwhelming majority. "General Phillips, who, as you know, has been here for some time, warns me that the situation is serious—that there is a large slush fund and that its users are prepared to stop at nothing. "You may expect anything to happen between now and November. I shall do my best with it but a good deal of help and forbearance will be needed. Among others you will be deluged with stories of incompetence, partiality, etc. That is clearly indicated. I only ask that I do not be put on trial there as well as here. . . ."
These came from the Coalicionistas of that year who perceived that their power was fading and who were discounting their certain defeat. They preferred to charge the Governor with partiality. Muñoz probably was not convinced because he was thinking of continental opinion. He was going to win and he wanted no question as to the legitimacy of the victory. I was a little indignant and, naturally, refused to entertain the suggestion that I should be publicly put in the position of admitting the reality of the fantasy created by the Coalición.

As a matter of fact, this idea was not pursued with the diligence of similar previous campaigns. The Coalicionistas did not want someone else to preside in Puerto Rico at election time; they wanted not to have an election at all. Allegations of my unfairness were only meant to contribute to this. Mr. Bolivar Pagán's main argument was that since Puerto Rico was to be given a new status anyway, elections under the old Organic Act would merely perpetuate the old regime. Why not let matters rest until the new status was in being? This argument had its origin in the fact that for one thing Mr. Bolivar Pagán would continue to keep his seat in the Congress as Resident Commissioner, and for another, that in Puerto Rico, after three years of paying through the nose for one single Liberal vote in the lower house, the Populares had quit and there had resulted a legislative impasse which was of considerable more advantage to the Coalición than anything they were likely to get from an election. In spite of prompt repudiations by everyone of importance this idea would be kept alive almost until election time. As late as September a Coalición delegation, with all the customary drumbeating, would go to Washington crying for release from the tyranny of Tugwell and for postponement of the elections.

One of the first acts of the lower house, after the defection of Mr. Rodríguez Pacheco, was to elect him Speaker. This was part of his reward for switching. But promptly afterward a resolution followed which cited a long list of wrongs at my hands and prayed for my removal. The Senate countered with a recital of my virtues and entered on its -records a vote of confidence. Each house passed its own relief bill and then, in effect, adjourned. It was apparent that there would be no result from trying to reach a compromise. We failed, in the same way, to get approval for the telephone-taking; and the end of the session came in a welter of charges and recriminations from which Muñoz wearily abstained. There was nothing more to be done until the people had spoken. But the relief and telephone issues underlined the differences: there was a reactionary and a radical group; the choice lay between them. I, of course, made heroic gestures of neutrality. But I had been openly adopted by the Populares long since; and long since repudiated by the Coalición, I was, in spite of myself, caught in the campaign. I was, in fact, a principal issue. The Coalición
talked of communistic carpetbaggers, thereby hooking onto both local and continental prejudices. The *Populares* extolled me as a paragon of all the virtues and enlarged on my sense of justice, my sympathy with the suffering poor and my leadership of the forces of reconstruction.

Aside from the engrossing affairs of our insular life into which I was sinking more and more deeply, our only contribution during that winter and spring of 1944 to the larger world outside was participation in the West Indian Conference. This was the long-awaited "meeting of peoples" which the British had approached so reluctantly and we with such determination. In January a joint communique was issued by "His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States." Its opening paragraphs read as follows:

In recent years His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the United States Government have devoted special attention to the improvement of social and economic conditions in the territories under their jurisdiction in the Caribbean. Nearly two years ago the two Governments agreed to collaborate closely in the solution of problems of common concern in this area and to assist them in this purpose they established the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission.

With the support and co-operation of the Governments of the territories concerned and of the existing British and United States agencies and organizations, much useful work has already been accomplished and long-range planning over a wide field has begun.

In the field of research there was recently established as an advisory body to the Commission the Caribbean Research Council, for the co-ordination of scientific and technical work on problems of the Caribbean area.

It remained, however, to broaden the base for approach to Caribbean problems to include consultations with local rep resentatives—not necessarily officials—of the territories and colonies concerned. The value of such counsel is recognised and provision has now been made for its expression through a regular system of West Indian Conferences, which, by agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the United States Government, is to be inaugurated under the auspices of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission to discuss matters of common interest and especially of social and economic significance to the Caribbean countries.

The Conference will convene from time to time to consider specific subjects; that is, when problems arise which are at once alive and capable of being profitably discussed at such a Conference. The Conference will be a standing body; it will have
a continuing existence and a central secretariat, although representatives will change according to the nature of the subjects to be discussed.  

The arrangement was that to this Conference "each British colony or group of colonies and each United States territory" in the Caribbean area would be entitled to send two delegates. It had been our idea that these delegates should be unofficial—that is, a member, perhaps, of the elected body in each colony or some other individual who could honestly be said to represent local interests rather than those of the Colonial Office. In this we had only partial success; it was actually provided that the representation would be achieved "in the manner most appropriate to each area"; and it was said frankly that as to "the British colonies, for example, one of their two representatives will normally be unofficial." This was a victory for the Colonial Office; and taken together with the provision that "the Conference will be purely advisory and will have no executive powers, unless such powers are specifically entrusted to it by the governments of the territories and colonies which participate," there was ample insurance against any subversive activity; and even fair likelihood that no embarrassing discussions would take place.

It was without anticipation of any great success in achieving an inclusive agenda, therefore, that I had set out for Barbados late in January, commissioned to consult with Sir Frank Stockdale. It was agreeable to be able to prevail, at least to a degree; and in place of his proposal that the program include nothing more exciting than the West Indies Schooner Pool and the Future of Caribbean Fisheries, it was agreed that a number of other items should be included. Among these were: the Means of Raising Nutritional Levels; the Reabsorption into Civil Life of Persons Engaged in War Employment; the Planning of Public Works for the Improvement of Agriculture, Education, Housing and Public Health; and Industrial Development in the Caribbean.

Some of these were not going to be too happily received by the Colonial Office. For instance, how would the United Kingdom or even Canada, for that matter, regard expressions of local opinion about industrialization? There was sure to be some finger-pointing, some talk about monopolized prices, dumping and the like. Also the repercussions in other colonies from frank talk about malnutrition, and the responsibility "for it, might not be so pleasant. I had, of course, pressed for the inclusion of political items without any hope of success. One of the career men, Secretary to the Comptroller, who for some reason was brought by Sir Frank to all our discussions until I objected, jumped like a spurred colt every time I came around to these subjects. Sir Frank, I think, saw through my tactic; anyway, we traded

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gracefully, and for consenting to the exclusion of any political subject I was given an inclusive economic agenda.

We were in Barbados for two weeks. I was backed up there by two Puerto Rican friends, Mr. Jaime Benitez, Chancellor of the University, and Mr. Sergio Cuevas, Commissioner of the Interior. Their presence carried the emphasis on local participation which it was always our wish to suggest and which the English found it so difficult to understand. When we came back we stopped for a day with the new Governor at Antigua. Mr. Leslie Brian Freeston¹³ was a product of the service. He startled me a little by his thoughtlessly voiced opposition to the Commission and its work.

I discovered ultimately that he had not meant to startle; he had simply assumed, as Englishmen are so apt to do, that what they happen to believe is the only possible belief anyone can hold. In telling me that the Commission was fancy and theoretical, that it never would accomplish anything and so on, he was paying me the compliment of treating me as another Englishman. It must have annoyed him to have me suggest, however gently, that it was his attitude which was unrealistic, theoretical if one wanted* to put it that way, in the sense that it sought to bury facts rather than to uncover them. We found safer ground in discussing the administrative problems common to Governors, and West Indian events of a century or more ago. As a matter of fact we visited Englishtown harbor, a project I had long had in mind, and for a few hours explored the haunts of Rodney, Nelson and the Duke of Clarence. The Duke's house, overlooking the harbor works, is still in livable order and a fine survival from the eighteenth century. The roofs of the sail loft and the workshops were falling in; and in the Admiral's house there was left of the furnishings only a bed or two and a few other heavy pieces with moldy remnants of decoration. But the clear hint of elegance in these surviving articles evoked the small-clothes-wig-and-snuff era of British naval life. It was quite possible to picture the fleet being fitted for Trafalgar.

As we traveled back to St. John's it was interesting to see the populace gathered to see the new Governor and the good will he had to count on. There was cheering at every corner. I pondered some on the contrast with Puerto Rico. It was obvious that in these smaller islands the British had to do only a very little to hold on to loyalty. We had done much more in Puerto Rico for the people and, in doing it, had failed somehow to establish any great good will. Were they right and we wrong? Had the riots of a few years before been merely hunger riots without political significance? There was hardship here now. Food was still terribly scarce, even if not too dear.

¹³Later made, as is the custom, Sir Brian.
And there was little employment. But there was friendship. That might, of course, be an evidence that little had been done, if to advance a people meant to create in them, among other ambitions, the will to self-government, perhaps, even discontent. There was plenty of that will in Puerto Rico and plenty of discontent. There had been Puerto Rican Governors who had gone in fear of their lives from *nacionalista* terrorists not so long ago. I remarked on this to Mr. Freeston. But he could contribute nothing to my education.\(^\text{14}\)

I could see as I thought about it afterward that I had overlooked the complete lack of analogy between an island with thirty-five thousand people, of miniature size, and Puerto Rico with two millions and 3,435 square miles. There are twenty-one States in the Union with less population. Antigua's few thousand lived in a backwater which had had some importance more than a century ago but none since. A half dozen generations had lived and died since then. Puerto Rico had not given up. She was not only conscious of a cultural past—perhaps overconscious of it—but shaken with the effort, so difficult to maintain in the Caribbean climate, to rebuild her social and economic life. The one was a thoroughly beaten people; the other a people obsessed with pride and filled with energy. They lacked material resources and trained man power; they were, nevertheless, fiercely intent on progress. Loyalty to any sovereignty or any idea outside their island was not easy to grasp and was certainly not instinctive. They were impatient with discipline, wanted always to go too fast, were distrustful of outsiders, demanded praise like children. These were not the faults of apathy but of ambition. No wonder Governors had a bad time with them! I wished one of Britain's K.C.M.G.'s could have my task for a while; we should see then what the famous Colonial Service was worth!

This journey was in January; the Conference took place at the end of March. At the last moment ill health kept me home. But in my place I sent Dr. Fernós; and with him Dr. Rafael Picó, Chairman of our Planning Board; Mr. Teodoro Moscoso, once my own assistant but now President of the Development Company; Dr. Arturo Roque, Director of the Insular Agricultural Experiment Station and Dr. Pablo Morales Otero, Director of the School of Tropical Medicine. No legislative delegates could be sent because the legislature was then in regular session. Muñoz was scornful anyway, it has to be recorded, and would not in any case have gone. When I discussed it with him he dismissed it as "an Empire Show." "When you have the independent nations in it, then I'll go," he said. To which I replied that perhaps he would rather meet with Batista, Trujillo and the Central American dictators, but as for me, I was willing to

\(^{14}\text{He evidently misinterpreted my remark. It was reported to me by a later visitor who was expatiating on the New Deal in Puerto Rico that he said I had confessed to going through the streets in fear of being stoned!}\)
work with what we had. It stopped there; and we did not discuss it again. I had no way of knowing what his later thoughts in the matter were, if he had any; and he pretended, at least, to take no interest whatever in the selection of delegates or in their instruction. If he had any report from them when they returned, I did not know that either.

They had an interesting report to make, however; and I had my own pride in the part they had played on their own and without current direction from above. The United States was never better represented in any international meeting than in this one by these Puerto Ricans. They may have been Puerto Ricans first of all, and I guess that they were, but at Barbados they were proudly citizens of the United States speaking equally to Britishers. Two of them were Doctors of Medicine and two others were Doctors of Philosophy from continental universities. Their attitudes and reactions were intelligent, liberal, scientific—whatever characterization one gives to the typical product of our higher education. And they were good; in fact they pretty well ran the show because they were more pushing and capable than anyone else there.

The expected disturbances arose. Canadian and British interests were disturbed, partly by the hint of greater economic autonomy in the suggestion for industrialization, and partly by the general air of self-help which pervaded the agenda. The Colonial Office was in the habit of establishing policy by transmitting it through a clerkly hierarchy to the far parts of earth. Among these was the West Indies. It was a professed objective that the colonies were being prepared for self-government. No other objective was tolerable to the public opinion of the world. It had little meaning for the West Indies whose people long years before had fallen into the hopeless lassitude of subjection to a colonial élite with close connections in the countinghouses of London and Montreal. If there was new life stirring, the masters of the countinghouses wanted to know it. The colonial officials, if I have made myself clear at all, are inevitably leagued, by the nature of their tasks, with this élite. They tend, in fact, to become part of its system, in the sense that they draw support from it both locally and in the homeland. A Governor or a Colonial Secretary who is disapproved seriously by the great merchant and planter families with all their dependents and connections must suffer the penalties of social ostracism; and the marks on his report card will inevitably indicate bad conduct, a matter of life and death to any career officer. This is simply to say, I suppose, that bureaucrats do not bring about social and economic changes—do not create policy—they accept the system in which they must work. The colonial system of all the empires—British, French or Dutch—is alike in this, that the Government is upper-class, exploitative, unresponsive to popular needs or opinion when those are unorthodox.
It makes, if it can, tame cats of any individuals who show the least talent for leadership; this, of course, is usually cheap and easy through a graduated system of large and small honors. The whole result is necessarily to exclude the colony from the democratic way of life which has been expanding now for centuries. In these meetings between American and British delegates there were exhibited all the contrasts and differences of our two systems. However willfully and carelessly the Congress of the United States may have treated Puerto Rico, her citizens had become anything but tame cats. She was, in fact, just emerging into an era of autonomy of one kind or another, filled with a sense of sufficiency. She did not take her policies ready-made. She was beginning to industrialize in spite of several continental business giants with whom, of course, the test of strength was yet to come; she had taken her power resources away from the most powerful Canadian interests; she had gone to bulk purchase and distribution of staple foods in defiance of her rich importers. In politics, she did not hesitate to establish and maintain a New Deal in defiance of the Congressional reactionaries who were determined to liquidate it; she supported a Governor whose apparent backing at home had disappeared.

No greater contrasts of ideology or circumstance were possible than were present at that Conference. It hardly seemed possible that any common ground could be found. Yet it was. Tame as the Britishers were, they found some courage. They approved a resolution for industrialization and for interisland exchange; and through resolutions on public health and nutrition they boldly challenged the hunger and disease which might be said by now to be institutionalized in the British Caribbean. This result, in spite of the reluctance with which Sir Frank’s whole organization approached the Conference, must have been a substantial support for its work. It was proceeding, careful always not to stir up the economic lions, to reforms in health, education and so on which, if they were ever completed, would be revolutionary. These objectives had, of course, been found out. In Barbados the mission was regarded as little better than communistic. Its work was proceeding nevertheless; and the support accepted so unwillingly from a Conference pushed by the restless and brilliant Puerto Ricans must have been of use. These results were not achieved without many excitements, controversies and contretemps which I heard all about when the Puerto Ricans came home. Hearing them I felt for the first time some real optimism about the halfway measures which the Commission represented. I had never been wholly reconciled to the giving up, in favor of mere "con-sultation," of the more drastic plan I had formulated in 1941. It could not be said what would have been accomplished by a general Caribbean government which consolidated, for administrative and representational purposes, the territories of the two captive and one endangered empires together with our own. Puerto Rican leadership might have made it a success if supported by economic reorganization.
and extension to it of such assistance as we are familiar with under the name of state aid. I still had no hope that any island would succeed in raising its standards by very much so long as the old colonial merchant and planter families kept their monopolies and so long as the continental empires persisted in subsidizing beet-sugar production at home. About neither of these, apparently, could the Commission do much. But at Barbados it at least resolved to try. There was scheduled, as the Commission’s next activity, a land-tenure conference which would explore one of these monopolies. It still remained to be seen, of course, how the recommendations of the Conference would be received. It was not difficult to guess that there would be some dithering in the Colonial Office but that nevertheless there would be careful consideration; and that in our Interior Department a few officials would read them, but that the Congressional Committees, who alone could do anything about them, would never get around to their study.\textsuperscript{15}

Would the Congress ever establish in the executive branch an office comparable in freedom and competence to those which the empires had? Or would it allow us to retreat within our ocean borders? It seemed impossible that we should go on longer without adopting one alternate or the other. Yet where the Congress was concerned in such a matter everything was happy confusion, futility and smug unwillingness to admit incompetence. We might, in consequence, go on and on. But if we did why should the British or even the Dutch or the French continue to take us seriously? Why should they "collaborate"? I thought that possibly Colonel Stanley, the Colonial Secretary, might simply brush us off. That, however, was not the case. Later in the year\textsuperscript{16} memoranda from him to the Governors of all West Indian colonies would consider in detail the possibilities outlined by the Conference recommendations. Some would be endorsed for implementation, some would be marked for further study and some would be tagged politely as inoperable. But a responsible member of the Cabinet with executive authority would have indicated that the Conference’s findings ought either to be carried out or explained away. Colonel Stanley, furthermore, would suggest that, from his Government’s point of view, the success had been sufficient so that plans ought to be made for another similar meeting in the not distant future. It might be that, after all, a significant piece of international machinery had been created!

Toward the end of March there came our way, also, the British Commission on Higher Education in the Antilles, part, also, of Colonel Stanley’s rehabilitation effort.

\textsuperscript{15}There has never been the slightest suggestion that Committee members have considered any of the findings or recommendations of this or any other Commission conference, except, perhaps, that the Bell Committee continually pressed for a return to the private importers of the bulk food purchase plan in Puerto Rico, thus going directly against (if it knew) the Commission’s recommendations.

\textsuperscript{16}26 and 29 September 1944.
I had invited this group to Puerto Rico with the idea that we might join in establishing centers for medical, engineering, government administration, natural science and other branches of higher education. Our own plans for a medical school were advancing and it seemed an unnecessary duplication to establish another in Jamaica. I did not get far with this suggestion—the British obviously had no very good opinion of our education—but we had interesting interchanges with the Commission members. Miss Margery Perham, especially, was Reader in Colonial Administration at Oxford University and, as such, in charge of the training given there for the service. Her description of the layout of work and of refresher and in-service courses was enough to make any American official sinfully envious. I naturally, perhaps, reacted by pointing out all the deficiencies of the service observable in the Caribbean: the lack of imagination, the class consciousness, the attitude that "natives" were inferior, the sacrifice of local to "home" interests and so on. She amazed me by admitting everything but offered two extenuations. The first was that the best officers were not sent to the Caribbean colonies which long ago had been written off as hopeless. In that I took no stock. I pointed out the numerous cases I knew of in which Caribbean officers had gone to or come from Africa and the Far East. The second was more interesting. Colonial officers, she said, cannot be better than the society they move in and serve; they should not be expected to be revolutionists, or even, perhaps, socially sensitive, since they function best as technicians. Enlarging on this she went on to defend the Empire idea as a continuing and desirable part of world organization. She knew, she said, that it was under criticism in America. She thought that might be not because we really believed in freedom for dependent peoples—we did not exhibit any great consideration for our own minorities, Indians, Negroes, Mexicans, Japanese—but because we did it so badly. She pointed out that, moreover, the Philippines had been freed, whatever we said now, because home lobbyists for sugar and fat interests wanted that commonwealth outside our tariff wall. The separation of the Philippines could now, by the way, be said to be a mistake. I interrupted to say that our Philippine loyalties had proved stronger than Britain’s in Malaya and Burma, but she was thinking, she said, of the time after the war when the Philippines would, necessarily, and whatever our scruples, be our outpost in the East. Take it altogether she regarded our view of the British colonies as hypocritical and immature. Not that she was prepared to defend the conduct of insensitive officials or instances of neglect, but that on the whole it was better than any other arrangement—especially independence—for the peoples themselves.

17They were: Sir James Irvine, Chairman, Dr. R. E. Priestley, Miss Margery Perham from the United Kingdom and H. Springer and P. Sherlock from Barbados. Their report was issued in 1945. It ignored all my suggestions for collaboration.
That there was a good deal in what she said, I had, in all conscience, to admit. We ended amicably, as I could always do with colonial officers, by talking about problems of administration. I wished I could follow Miss Perham to Washington and to some of our universities and hear her discussions with the more dogmatic of our liberal but inexperienced academicians. I did not neglect to remind her that Britons were fundamentally biased on the colonial problem, especially in modern times, since the United Kingdom had itself shrunk in importance. She enlarged on that quite frankly. Small islands in the cold North Sea were of slight importance in the world, she said; it was Empire which gave them their significance.

While these interesting occurrences were going on in the Caribbean and our anxieties over the drought were deepening, another spring offensive was building up in Washington with all the (by now) familiar accompaniments. There was the difference, however, that the press took but little interest, even the Puerto Rican press. All the other manifestations were orthodox. Mr. McGehee offered himself as the entrepreneur. On 1 April he introduced the following resolution in the House:

Whereas Rexford Guy Tugwell has shown a disinclination to uphold the dignity of the Government of the United States through his tacit consent to the appointment of one Robert Morss Lovett, whom the Congress had voted from the United States pay rolls of the Department of the Interior, to a position of trust and importance with the University of Puerto Rico where Lovett would be in a position to indoctrinate the youth of Puerto Rico with the subversive and un-American theories he holds; and

Whereas Governor Tugwell has enjoyed nominal as well as actual control over the insular legislature through his powers to appoint individuals to public office and has used that power for the establishment of a socialized form of government to the extent that private business enterprises have been coerced and intimidated while the insular government continued its concerted drive to bring all economic life under bureaucratic and socialized controls; and

Whereas Governor Tugwell has written articles in contradic-tion of the policies of the United States Government in ad-ministration of the affairs of its insular possessions which prove a disregard for his responsibilities to his Government in the discharge of his duties; and

Whereas the thinking people and the leading civic and insular groups, such as the insular branch of the American Fed-eration of Labor, the Puerto Rican Farmers’ Association, the Chamber of Commerce of Puerto Rico, the Ponce Rotary Club, and other similar organizations have a deep and lasting fear for the future of their island’s governmental stability; and
Whereas the President and the Congress of the United States are morally obligated to guarantee to the people of the island of Puerto Rico an election of its officers through honest, fair, and impartial elections this year: Therefore be it

Resolved, That the continued service of Rexford Guy Tugwell as Governor of Puerto Rico is considered obnoxious and detrimental to the best interests of the island and its citizens and those of American citizens on the mainland, and the President of the United States is hereby requested to remove Rexford Guy Tugwell from the governorship of Puerto Rico so that he may appoint in his stead a Governor who would be more able and capable and willing to conduct an impartial and fair election in the island and who could give a better administration of the duties of the governorship in keeping with the fundamental principles of the Government of the United States.¹⁸

The staging base for the new offensive, it will be seen, was the person of Mr. Robert Morss Lovett. This was quite all right with me. It made my issue with the reactionary Democrats quite clear for once. This time I was not a bad administrator, an extravagant executive or an unjust Governor: I was a friend of Bob Lovett and associated with all he stood for. It was something in which, even at this late date, I could find the old zest.

To liberals of my age in America the name of Robert Morss Lovett was a symbol. He belonged to the school of Herbert Croly, Walter E. Weyl, Lincoln Steffens, et al., a generation which had been already mature in my youth, and whom I had revered and hoped to emulate as a young man. Mr. Lovett—Bob as he had become to me in late years—had been a distinguished author and a professor of English literature at Chicago, a very learned scholar of the sort which is given the name savant abroad. Rather late in life—at fifty or so—he had been convicted of sin. He had felt suddenly, worthy and famous as he was, that he had not justified his journey through this life and had given himself, from then on, in a way only saints can do, to good works. He went to live at Hull House among the poor, he eschewed many of the good things of life to which his income and position entitled him and shared with those who had less. If this sounds a little priggish, I do not mean it so. For everything he did was salved with a tolerance and humor which made his life beautiful as well as useful. His company was sought by all sorts of men and women. He was adored by his students; and even his colleagues allowed him an unusually ungrudging admiration. As the years ran on and he grew old, he, finally, and without enthusiasm, retired from his professorship at Chicago and even from his editorship of the New Republic, and, having been asked by Mr. Harold Ickes in a moment of inspiration to be

¹⁸H. Res. 496, 1 April 1944.
Government Secretary in the Virgin Islands, he had come to live in Charlotte Amalie. There my acquaintance with him had been renewed.

For a year or more, with my navy friends, I had been flying about our neighborhood. In Puerto Rico there were a dozen air strips and small fields, manned by a varying number of soldiers—sometimes fighters’ or patrol-ships’ crews, sometimes anti-aircraft batteries, sometimes merely maintenance men—and it had been our habit, usually on a Saturday, to start off in the morning and, having flown around the mountains and over the sea, to land about noon and ask for lunch. It was a way to know our soldiers—to know, for that matter, our bit of the war. Besides it was a lot of fun. There were other landing places than those in Puerto Rico—on St. Thomas and St. Croix, on the islands farther down and on Santo Domingo. Besides we often used an amphibian and landed on some remote bay. At one time or another we landed on most of the air strips in this unannounced way and visited a good many out-of-the-way defense batteries. By now—1944—they were beginning to be abandoned; and my pilot friends were going where there was fighting: But among the good things I could look back to were several encounters with Bob Lovett as he did his work. He was an old man now, heavy, somewhat slow, and the charming storybook; grandmother who was his wife was ridden with arthritis. They had long seemed to be ready for an old folks’ home. But they were not seeking any such nirvana. Every day to them was a new adventure in kindness, a chance to explore the exciting goodnesses of human nature.

They did more work, actually, than any young couple around them, and did it with a positively Elizabethan gusto. They were an inspiration to me—one, as I felt, to be a renewal of my youth—and I never lost a chance to take a drink or a meal as their guest. They took me and my pilot friends—usually the most extreme social reactionaries—in their usual course, as they had been taking people young and old all their lives. Many an hour and many a tale had passed among us by now. And then one day I heard the outrageous news that those Congressmen who posed as inimical to "un-American activities" had cited old Bob as an enemy of his country and unfit for the service he was in. What a strange, outlandish perversion of all that was sweet and sound and whole in life to the uses of malice and intolerance! Un-American J He who believed so much in the war against the Nazis that, his wife complained, she patched his underwear until it fell apart, and could not persuade him to replace his ragged suits and old shoes because the soldiers needed cloth and leather; he who was the father and the grandfather-in-law of soldiers himself.

I cannot go on through the whole tale of degradation which told itself that spring. It ended in stopping his work among the Virgin Islanders—who regarded him as a kind of Saint Francis—by providing that his position should be eliminated from the
Federal budget. We were proud, the University Chancellor and I—although there were those in the Interior Department who thought we were merely defiant—to ask him to come and renew his work with students. He became a professor again and was, I think, reasonably happy, except that it disturbed him to have them harrying me about it.

The whole affair blew over in spite of Interior’s fears. The truth was that the press was ashamed, for once, of its part in dislodging him. It was this outrage which, as much as anything else, caused the political demise of Messrs. Dies, Kerr, Starnes, Costello and the others who had so damaged the American spirit. When the next Congress met, they would not be present. But Bob Lovett would be at the University of Puerto Rico, still learned, still doing good, humorously, and still beloved of all.19

This did not end that spring’s offensive. In fact it was prolonged into summer and merged with the movement to postpone elections or to replace me with a more amenable executive. But it did not have the accustomed vicious energy. It drew rejoinders from the Secretary; it annoyed and worried us in Puerto Rico from time to time but not with the rancorous resentment we had allowed ourselves to feel in other years. The fact was that the worst had passed.

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19He and the others who were displaced with him won restitution in the U. S. Court of Claims. The Court castigated the culpable Congressmen in most satisfactory terms. The Congressmen carried their case to the Supreme Court, where they also lost; whereupon, Mr. Rankin hinted darkly at impeachment for the Justices.
FOR AMERICANS EVERYWHERE the spring of 1944 was one long suffocating suspense. There was so little secrecy about the impending invasion of the continent as to cause wide speculation. Probably it had been decided that, because of the necessary scale on which the planning of operations and the assembly of its materials had to be done, strategic surprise was impossible. But the effect on ordinary citizens as the months passed was almost paralyzing. The Russians were crowding down across Poland, but our effort in Italy had begun to seem futile and events in the Pacific had not yet taken on the proportions of grandeur which would begin with the Battle of Leyte.

6 May. Still breathlessly waiting for the great invasion. It is possible to speculate on the possibility that the goings on in England which are so well advertised may be a magnificent hoax. Everyone thinks it fantastic but it does not seem to me incredible that the Allies might go in through the Balkans, moving up on the Russians’ left wing, and rolling up the Germans into Austria against the mountains there and in Bohemia, and ultimately against the Westwall with the bombers hammering them from English airfields.

But the pattern of air attack seems now to indicate a change in preparation for actual invasion. What we have learned to call "birth-control bombing" seems to be giving way to the destruction of communications and supply dumps back of the coast. This would seem to indicate approaching attempts to isolate beachheads—or even, possibly airheads, if technique can be so far advanced.

9 May. Yesterday a new low was reached in the Coalicionista campaign. Judge Belaval was asked to disqualify himself from hearing an application to mandamus the Board of Elections for admission to the qualified lists of the 85,000 voters who were thrown out a few weeks ago. It was said to his face that he had agreed in advance because I had promised him a promotion to the San Juan court. The lawyer—a partner of Iriarte—even had the colossal nerve to offer proof. Belaval did not think quickly enough to demand this proof and to cite the lawyer for contempt on the spot as should have been done. He rather offered a long explanation for his sitting in the case. It may be that he feared perjured witnesses or manufactured evidence; there cannot be any real evidence, because he and I have had no exchange whatever in the matter even if we were the kind of people implied in the charge. At any rate BelavaPs failure to act decisively has opened up another sensation of the sort so well liked by the continental newspapers. "Bribing judges, now," they will say with an air of having thought all along that something like this would happen.

This is part of the campaign to prevent an election from taking place this year. Such a suggestion would seem incredible in the States. But to the Coalicionista políticos it seems worth earnest effort to achieve. I have been warning Ickes for some time that, since it had become quite clear that the Populares would win the election, something desperate from
the other side might be expected. The early campaign to discredit me as a supervisor, on
the plea that I would allow the election to be stolen from them, has turned into an all-out
campaign to convince Continentals that fraud, conspiracy, confusion and near-
revolutionary conditions exist.

An instance of this is furnished by the following A.P. dispatch:

Resident Commissioner Bolivar Pagán in a statement and interview yesterday again
demanded the resignation of Governor Tugwell. "The island is almost on the verge of
revolution" said Pagán. "If the American flag were not waving over Puerto Rico the people
would already have gone into open revolt by arms. What the people want right now is the
re-establishment and enforcement of the present Organic Act and the removal of Tugwell
to re-establish in Puerto Rico the government of law and honesty. Tugwel's dictatorial
attitude can be matched only by Hitler's and Mussolini's tactics. ... We have a most
scandalous situation. ... Puerto Rico is overexcited and almost on the verge of revolution.
Sensible persons wonder how the United States can hold the banner as the champion of
democracy throughout the world while two million American citizens continue to live
under a most incapable, corrupt and undemocratic government.

I was a little surprised at the violence of this statement. Mr. McKnight, editor of the World
Journal, the English-language paper in which it was first published, called on me next day
and suggested that I answer it. When I asked him, in a discouraged way, why I should, he
said, "Because the Associated Press has featured it all over the nation." He said that he had
started to throw it in the wastebasket as just another effusion when he had noted that it
was marked for featuring— which guaranteed that it would be universally published, since
featured material was supposed to be of first importance. He had even queried the New
York office as to why this old stuff should be sent out again now as important. He had got
no answer; but he was indignant and said that he would guarantee circulation as wide as
that for the original statement if I would answer. I knew that he could guarantee no such
thing but I got up a statement nevertheless saying that it was all nonsense and that people
ought not to be fooled by an expiring politico's rage. I admitted that there had been some
rioting in San Juan on the very day Mr. Pagán had given his interview; but said that the
crowds had been out to see the great Mexican comic, Gantinflas, who was visiting us. This
was the kind of thing to be expected in Milwaukee or Oklahoma City. It indicated that
Puerto Ricans were like everyone else and not strange tense creatures in a perpetual state
of revolt against their government.

But, of course, all this did no good. My statement was either not published anywhere, so far
as I could find, or else it was effectively buried, which was just what I had expected.

12 May 1944. Ickes testified yesterday before the Bell Committee — an unexciting plea for
the original draft of our Organic Act reforms.
Busy all week with bills to be disposed of before the 15th. Managed to approve most of them. But the most troublesome are the bills which were not passed—the budget and relief measures. As to the budget, the Organic Act is clear: this year's budget will be in force for next year. But there is question concerning relief. Is it "ordinary current expenditure"? We are bound to try to keep relief going but the courts may well prevent. To start things off yesterday the Insular Emergency Council requested that I direct the Auditor to set up on the books for its use the same sum as was used during last year. It is to be expected that the Coalicionistas who refused to pass the bill will oppose it in the courts. Under ordinary circumstances it would certainly not be predicted that politicians would oppose the expenditure of funds already in surplus accounts for relief; but these are not politicians in the shrewd, detached sense. They have surrendered to rage and are therefore unpredictable.

We are resting on an opinion of a very unhappy Acting Attorney General, holding that the clause of the Organic Act which says that if appropriation bills for ordinary expenditure are not passed by the legislature they shall be in effect for the succeeding year. The word "bills" appears in the plural and so must mean more than just the budget, and since we expended funds for this purpose last year we are going on—unless stopped by the courts.

Thoron writes that Bolivar Pagán has shopped all around Washington to see if he could find support for his proposed resolution to postpone elections but that he has failed everywhere.

13 May. Crazy as it seems for políticos to do such a thing, the papers today carry definite threats to challenge the allocation of funds for relief from both Iriarte and Padrón Rivera, the Republicano and Socialista leaders.

14 May. It still does not seem clear whether the changes proposed for the Organic Act will come to anything in the House. The hostile members would undoubtedly like a change in regime here; but a change from me to a Popular leader is not what they want. They may well decide to wait in the hope that if the Republicans win in November they can arrange an appointment more to their liking. Even the Coalición, mad as its leaders seem to be, must realize that this election cannot be won. Its only hope, too, must be for a reactionary appointed Governor. It is likely, on the whole, therefore, that the House Committee will simply not act at all.

15 May. It looks as though the Allies are going to wait until there is overpowering strength both on the east and on the west fronts before going into Germany. The suspense deepens daily, although it long ago reached a stage which then seemed unbearable.

16 May. Baldwin, as executive of the G.I.O. Committee on Political Action, has had some significant victories in the past weeks' primaries. First, and most notable, Dies has
announced his retirement, facing certain defeat; but also Starnes (his second) lost his primary. And Costello is also losing in California. To make all really better both Pepper and Hill, in spite of serious opposition, won their nominations. In each of these the Political Action Committee seems to have been decisive.

17 May. According to press reports from Washington Messrs. Cole and Crawford favor the scheme to postpone elections and the project may not be as dead as Thoron has indicated.

18 May. Mr. McGehee in an interview says that he will insist on consideration of his resolution asking for my removal from office. This is today's sensation. The project will not get far; but such persistent animus is at least curious.

How slowly the weeks and months of war pass with tension building up from one impossible level to another. Nobody talks or thinks now of anything else. Logistic difficulties are undoubtedly determining the delay. As usual the public believes these problems to be several times as easy as they really are. As a result people and press are impatient to the breaking point. It would seem to me an almost incredible performance if we were ready by early summer for a full-scale invasion—if that is what we are intending. The Nazis have at least seventy and perhaps ninety divisions in the west. We might approach that number this summer but we ought to exceed it greatly if we are to be certain. And a failure would be fatal. The whole bet will be down once invasion begins.

30 May. Reception last night for Vice-Admiral Robert Carlyle Giffen, new commander of the Tenth Naval District and of the Caribbean Sea Frontier.

Spent the week of 20-27 May at Mona Island, going from Mayagüez in the Coast Guard patrol boat Marion. Mona is almost a desert; but the fisheries in the neighborhood are commercially exploitable and the island itself will grow some timber.

The long drought is just now breaking. The sugar crop will be about 25 per cent short. There are numerous—and serious—articles in the continental press blaming me and my policies for the shortness.

31 May. Lindsay Rogers here for the annual meeting of the Superior Council of Education. Between us we have almost reduced the world to an order which was gradually escaping my unaided perceptions. My expectations concerning his good influence on the University have been met. In fact, there has been more progress made during the past two years than in its whole past history—not that he is more than a little responsible: Jaime Benitez has labored and I have seen to the revenue.

The Italian campaign seems now to be really rolling toward Rome. General Alexander announces it as the "first invasion battle" and says its object is to destroy the twenty-five German divisions which are opposed to the Fifth and Eighth Armies. Probably, however, he
hopes more realistically to keep them pinned down. If the European invasion is really imminent he cannot have been given great reinforcements. There is no other indication yet except the monstrous attacks by our bombers, our almost open preparations in England and the preparations of the Russians on the Polish border.

Apparently the Japanese in China have now gained possession of enough territory to insure land communications all the way to Burma. This has to be understood in relation to Stillwell’s campaign for the Lido Road in upper Burma and the reported difference of opinion with Mountbatten who wants, apparently, to proceed by going into Malaya, taking back Singapore and other fleet bases, so preparing to attack the Philippines with MacArthur and later going up the ladder of the Ryukyus to Japan. There has been an inside struggle over some such difference in objective. If we have staked much on driving a land wedge between the Japanese home islands (and Manchuria) and their conquests in the South Seas, we have lost.

Horticultural note: the toronjas (grapefruit) were blooming the other day as we drove toward Arecibo on our way to Mona so that it was sometimes like driving through a cloud of perfume. The flamboyantes, too, are just coming out again after the long drought. Next year's sugar crop will be affected by the drought too. How much it is too early to tell; but the planting this spring was in drought and its first months of growth were unfavorable.

4 June. A radio announcer this Sunday afternoon said that Rome is being evacuated and that the Allies are entering.

5 June. The House yesterday on Mr. Bell's motion eliminated the authorization for the bulk purchase and shipment of foodstuffs. This further manifestation of ill will is a serious matter for the common consumer here. It will mean a rise of about 25 per cent in the cost of living on top of a rise, before we succeed in checking it with the present plan, of about twice what it was in the States. We have held the level now for a year and a half. We must pray that the Senate will have more humanity.

Yesterday I was elected a delegate, and my wife an alternate, to the Democratic convention in Chicago.

6 June. D Day. They seem to have gone straight across the channel to the Valley of the Seine and to Normandy. But we can expect no real news for perhaps a week. They must be fighting on the beaches now.

Later. The plan seems to be very like that taught in the War College—described to me, among others, months ago by some of my army friends who knew nothing whatever about what was going on, except that the Brittany peninsula was indicated in their old studies. If
this is the same general plan the peninsula will first be crossed and Cherbourg cut off, thus gaining the depth within which to mount a thrust north and eastward.

12 June. A week of wearing anxiety. Nothing seems to have been settled definitely. It is not even clear that the Normandy invasion is the only effort. I hope the Germans are as uncertain as the American public. Today’s best news is that Carentan has fallen. The only other city captured so far is Bayeux. Caen is still not taken.

I remember seeing this country on two occasions but only from the train in trips from Cherbourg to Paris. But I once spent a summer in and around Dinard-St. Malo and it must be very similar. My most vivid recollection is that of vast marshy grasslands with large herds of red-and-white cattle. I imagine our soldiers will find that plenty of dairy products are to be had.

There appear to have been terrible struggles on the beaches and progress in depth has been slow. Either the weather forecasts were incredibly bad or the momentum of preparations would not allow further delay, for there were storms throughout the first five days which must have been worth an army to the Germans.

By now it is estimated that three or four hundred thousand men have been landed. There must be a couple of million more somewhere; but persistent stories of other invasion fleets in the Mediterranean and on the south coast of Brittany have not been substantiated.

Meanwhile the Germans in Italy are withdrawing to a defense line further up the Peninsula.

Yesterday Admiral Ingram was in town and came up to Jájome for lunch—with Admiral Giffen and Bill Hollenbeck. It was a merry heavyweight trio. Ingram was full of interesting accounts of his two years in the South Atlantic and of his diplomatic adventures with the Brazilians and Argentinians. There was a time or two when some large muscle had to be bared and Ingram must have been a good one to do it. The day after one of his interviews with the Colonels, they broke with the Axis. He seems to have enjoyed it all.

But the most interesting was the fact that he had twice seen the President—at the beginning and at the end of his month’s leave. The first time, he said, the President looked ghastly. And he came away saying to himself that surely he must be incurably ill. The last time, however, he looked much better, but very thin. This explained his virtual disappearance from the White House in the early spring. He had a persistent pneumonia which could not be thrown off.

Muñoz, these days, is in a strange state, a pitiable one. He is struggling to know, obviously, what is best to be done for his people. He cannot make up his mind even what the facts are—which I suppose is because he is unable to predict with the certainty which, for instance, I feel about certain matters in the future. He is still apprehensive about the
election and impressed with the likelihood that he may have to deal with a Republican administration. This led to reversal of his stand on the bill to reform the Organic Act, in which he did not consult me. His two envoys are in Washington now working for the bill. Interior is evidently working for it too. It is certainly a thoroughly bad bill for Puerto Rico as amended in the Senate. And up to now everyone has agreed on demanding either the original bill or nothing. Now Muñoz, at least, seems to be willing to settle for almost anything so long as it provides for a Governor not appointed by Mr. Dewey.

I had not been in Washington now for nearly a year, mostly because of my growing sense of confusion whenever I went. It is probably true that I tended to exaggerate the unseemly aspects of the war effort as it was to be seen in the capital; and probably visiting there made me a little homesick for the old New Deal days. Whatever the reason, good or bad, I had an unreasonable aversion to going. There was by now, necessarily, an accumulation of matters to be decided, and since my wife was willing to go along and since there was the prospect of a week or two with my parents in Wilson I finally went. It proved to be a tragic trip. My wife was taken ill on the way and after several weeks of dreadful uncertainty the navy physicians at the Bethesda medical center determined that an old pulmonary lesion had opened and that she faced the long ordeal of a tuberculosis cure. She had put too much of a vitality she should have hoarded into her work for the children of Puerto Rico.

Then, too, I found the President so thin that, in spite of a good color and a cheerful confidence, I could not avoid the conclusion of approaching trouble. I told myself that his parents had lived to a very old age and that his resilience had always been phenomenal; but the truth was that he was worn to the point of collapse and that even now after a long rest at the Baruch plantation in the South, he seemed wasted. I talked about it with General Watson; but he would not admit to any worry. That the genial General himself had less than a year to live I should not have guessed. Talking loudly and freely as usual in the President’s outer office, he gave me all the family gossip. Marvin McIntyre was gone now; so was Marguerite Le Hand. But Stephen Early and Grace Tully were still on the job. Of all of them only Miss Tully went back to the earliest precampaign days in Albany. Not even Harry Hopkins went back that far.

I went over to see Harry in one of the big south bedrooms of the White House and met the relatively new wife whom I had never seen. We had a long reminiscent talk and before we were through he was enthused about a project for an evening with the President which would be limited to the original New Dealers. We were saddened as we added them up. Not so many were in Washington any more, and even fewer were in the Government.

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¹ He would die on 20 February 1945 on the trip home from the Yalta conference.
Besides Harry and myself, we could name only Bob La Follette, Henry Wallace, Adolf Berle, Aubrey Williams, Bob Wagner, Hugo Black and a few others. There were also Tom Corcoran and Ben Cohen, but they belonged to the Second New Deal rather than to ours. I knew as we talked that nothing would come of it. Harry himself seemed to be almost finished. For years now he had lived on borrowed time with very little of his stomach left after a radical ulcer operation at the Mayo Clinic. He had the parchmentlike look of extreme exhaustion. I came away in terrible depression, thinking of the President and Harry working together deep into the nights there in the White House, drawing more and more on the reserves of vitality which already appeared to have been completely drained. And a fourth-term campaign was about to begin; and in the midst of war!

In my talk with the President I told him of the frightening reports about his health I had had from Jonas Ingram. He told me that he had been very sick for about three months with a pneumonia which seemed to leave him with "spots on the lungs." These had, however, cleared up, finally; and now he was feeling chipper—true, he was thinner, but that was a good thing. There was then a flash of the old Roosevelt and he told me with the gusto I recalled so well a story about General Watson. The General was known to all of us as "Pa," of course, and was greatly loved by the President for the atmosphere of genial confidence he seemed to create wherever he went. But Pa was sanguine; it was part of his nature to be a great eater, and his weight had become enormous. Frances, his wife, had conspired with the President to put him on a diet. She was to keep down his breakfast and the President to control his luncheon. Frances was, however, a little strict. She limited him to orange juice and a morning walk with prescription as to its length. All their care seemed to produce unduly small results, which puzzled everyone concerned —until one morning Frances unexpectedly went with him on his walk. They had not gone far before they passed a restaurant whose proprietor, just going in the door, and looking around amazedly at the General marching by, called out, "Why, General, aren't you coming in this morning?"

The President roared with the same laughter I used to hear so often in the past, cascading out of half-opened doors and filling the whole mansion at Albany, or the house at Warm Springs, or the White House itself. There was such a constriction in my throat that I could hardly go on. But he had one more matter he wanted to tell me about—and then, he said, we must have a long talk before I went back, about dependent areas and the trouble he was having with Churchill to establish the principle of trusteeship.

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2 Who had drawn further and further away from the President in recent years.
3 With whom we were both out of touch.
4 Who was now with the National Farmers' Union but who would presently be nominated for Rural Electrification Administrator and rejected by the Senate in one of the most disgraceful proceedings in our political history.
What he wanted to tell me had to do with Bolivar Págán, the Resident Commissioner, who, in the course of his campaign for the postponement of elections in Puerto Rico, had strangely supposed he might get the President's help. The detail in which he recalled, during the next few moments, the history of Puerto Rico's political changes was a revelation even to me who had had numerous experiences with his recollections of local history. He placed Mr. Págán nicely among the insular políticos and recalled the one or two occasions on which he had visited the White House—embarrassing ones for him, I should think, from what the President said. And as to this most recent communication, the President had told him it was "one of the most un-American suggestions" which had ever come to the White House and showed how little, after all, the gentleman understood our institutions.

He then brought up the matter of my going to the Democratic convention, which was to start in about a week. I had been chosen, I told him, at the insular convention. It was true that the party in Puerto Rico was small and that it was usually dominated by a few officeholders—postmasters, customs officials and such. But this year it had escaped from being bossed and had selected a delegation instructed for a fourth term. The reason I had accepted was that there had been a strong crowd in opposition whose purpose it was to set up an uninstructed delegation to oppose a fourth term. I was certain that neither he nor Harold Ickes had understood what was going on. I had resented summary instructions to withdraw and had not complied until I could be certain that the delegation would behave. I thought it just as well, however, for appointed Governors to stay out of party politics generally, and so I was going to spend a week with my parents instead of at the convention.

He went on then to tell me something of what had gone on behind the scenes—of the Farley movement, part of which had centered in minor officials of the Democratic committee, and of the determination to substitute someone else for Henry Wallace. He did not say who that would be, but he told me why it seemed to him to be necessary. By that time we must have been talking for an hour and General Watson had begun to wander in and out looking grieved. Once he had actually interrupted—the next visitor had arrived. But the President had put him off. I had even thought we were prolonging things a little by the time I left; but I thought I understood when I saw who the next visitor was to be—General Charles de Gaulle. And I smiled to myself when I saw that the General's interpreter had been instructed to stay in the outer office. I knew what the President's French was like.

It had been pleasant to see him face to face again, to watch the old smile crinkle his cheeks and to hear him wander off into unimportant factual byways as he loved to do with friends. Like all well-regulated personages he never seemed to be busy; and in that light oval room, with the windows running down to the floors and so seeming to let the lawns and terraces flow almost up to his desk, it was difficult to maintain, as we talked, any sense of the burden which by now had marked him so unmistakably. For the cheeks which wrinkled
with smiles were now gaunt, the flesh under his chin was flabby and sallow, and his eyes, once the tan was penetrated, lay in great dark shadows. I told myself again, however, what startling resilience he had and how always before he had come back strongly from periods of exhaustion. Time after time I had seen him go gray with sheer tiredness and, after a week or two at sea, or even a long week end down the Potomac, change to what could only be described as heartiness.

Harold Ickes, however, who was now well past seventy, to the President’s mere sixty-two, seemed to have reached one of life’s plateaus. It was frightening to compare the President with the same man ten years before; but the Secretary, so far as I could see, had changed not at all. He sat as solidly as ever at his desk, his feet square on the floor, his belly hard and large and his Pennsylvania Dutch face registering the same old quality of disgust. He was as querulous as ever. He would, he said in our first talk, not be here long—meaning in Washington. He was the forgotten member of the Cabinet. It wasn’t much use to discuss Puerto Rican policy because the issues would be settled by someone else anyway. I had heard him talk this way ever since the earliest days of the New Deal when he presided over the first Board of Public Works and I often had had to try to soften what seemed to him arbitrary decisions of the President. He still was the same kind of determined and aggressive administrator. He still felt that he ought to be supported more unquestioningly at the White House. He still resented the President’s habit of delaying difficult decisions and of compromising among insistent claimants for power. There had been many such issues in the past, that over control of the Forest Service and other agencies having to do with land having been the hottest and longest-drawn-out of them all. The current one had to do with the administration of public power resources. The question was whether we were to proceed on the T.V.A. model to set up Authorities on the Missouri, the Columbia and other rivers, or whether an overall administration should be given charge. The Power Division of Interior was now responsible for such great projects as Grand Coulee and Bonneville and the Secretary was an ardent partisan of expansion. He was annoyed by Mr. David Lilienthal’s pro-Pan-American and chafing because the President would not decide between the protagonists.\(^5\)

It was all familiar but unsatisfactory. He was obviously annoyed with me for having precipitated his letter telling me to stay away from the convention; and I thought he was ashamed of having helped to take the Vice-Presidential nomination away from Henry Wallace—not that he feared Henry less as a possible President but that he feared more the unknown who was to replace him. He had about concluded that it would not be another liberal.

\(^5\)Mr. Ickes’ bill would have made the Secretary of the Interior Chairman of a River Basin Development Board. This Board would include the Chief of Army Engineers and the administrators of all Authorities.
During my weeks in Washington that summer I tried to discover what world organization was taking shape in our planners' minds and what would be the attitude toward dependent areas.

At the middle of June there had been two announcements which seemed significant. The first was that the new B729 Superfortresses were to be put into action as an autonomous task force. They would act independently, it was said, under the direct command of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This looked like the first implementation of the postwar effort for policing the world and preventing war. The second was a statement of the President that there were being perfected plans for the creation of an association of all nations "which love peace." It seemed that we were at last approaching what soldiers and civilians alike had been waiting for—a foreshadowing of the postwar world.

It was clear that there were to be three world organizations: the three (or four or five) great nations were to assume supreme power in peace as they had assumed supreme responsibility in the war; the smaller nations were to be formed into a consultative council; there was to be a judicial body for the settlement of such disputes as were referred to it. The power of the great nations would, it seemed, be made manifest through task forces at the command of the Combined Chiefs of Staff which presumably would become a permanent body. This was the outline. The filling in of the outline was to be begun at Dumbarton Oaks, the old Georgetown house where experts from the various foreign offices were to meet. Following this, the Big Three, as Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill were now being called by the press, would meet to settle issues about which controversy had grown up or which were beyond the experts' competence. Everyone at once asked about discipline among the Great Powers. Was each to have an absolute veto over joint action? And what would result from quarreling among themselves? This started me, along with everyone else who was at all habituated to geophysical speculation, on a renewed hunt for latent conflicts in the postwar world to be deduced from the President's statement and from contemporary happenings.

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What the President said was this: "The maintenance of peace and security must be the joint responsibility of all nations which love peace. We are trying consequently to perfect plans for the creation of an organization which will include all those nations. The basis of organization will be the maintenance of peace and security by helping to create with international co-operation such conditions of stability as well as welfare as are necessary if there are to be peaceable and friendly relations among nations. We think consequently that the organization must be a body completely representative, with full responsibility for promoting and facilitating international co-operation with such agencies as seem necessary and for considering and settling such problems as may disturb relationships in the world. We think, also, that this organization ought to have a council, elected annually, to represent all nations, and in which the four great powers will figure, together with an adequate number of other nations. The council will principally act to find peaceable solutions for settling international disputes and to prevent breaches of the peace. There will need to be, also, an International Court of Justice which will be empowered to decide legal disputes."
I guessed that the next generation would live in a world divided among the United States, Russia, Great Britain, China and France, either in fact or in influence. The other nations, some of them imperial after a fashion—the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Belgians—and some considerable continental powers—Argentina, Brazil—would not be allowed to have disputes rising to dangerous quarrels among themselves. That might keep Balkan issues from starting new world wars. But would it? Disputes strictly among small nations had never really become significant until some larger nation, for reasons of its own, had intervened on one side or the other, thus engaging the unfavorable attention of still another power. There would be no quarrels between Russia and the United States: that at least seemed reasonably certain. It would require incredible stupidity among statesmen to bring the two great continental imperia into conflict either in the Atlantic or the Pacific. (Unless, of course, some successor of Stalin’s should be seized with the madness of Hitler and should try for a world dictatorship.) That was not true of Great Britain and Russia or even of Russia and France or China. Russia was still confined to the cold North, and her centuries-old desire for warm-water ports and tropical resources seemed still unlikely to be wholly abated either by the discovery of new synthetics or by international arrangements for sharing trade with dependent areas to the south. The war had not altered Britain’s insistence on absolute control of passage through the Mediterranean, and this in itself confined Russia to the North. France had tropical holdings in the East; and China might object to what the Russians would regard as safe buffers along her Far Eastern borders.

The question whether the United States might be dragged into the hypothetical future conflict between Britain and Russia had to be explored. The fact that the United Kingdom was by now our familiar staging base for European invasion as well as the home source of our traditional culture could not be regarded lightly. Nevertheless, unless we should be seized with crusading zeal to keep Russia weak— or to keep her away from the English Channel, it seemed hard to believe that England as a deployment area would be necessary to us in the future. Unless the British succeeded in getting us to guarantee a status which might sometime be provocative to Russia, and we should be drawn in to protect our commitment, it seemed likely that our sons and grandsons in America might live in peace. But it was evident that we ought to watch the British maneuvers, in the negotiations just beginning, with the utmost skepticism. There lay the weakness and the danger.

These were the large issues I was free to ponder during the rest of the summer: I began in Wilson during two idyllic weeks in the familiar old house by the lake, scarcely interrupted, the truth is, by the radio accounts of the convention. In that I had lost interest. The President was to be renominated and with any luck it would not matter much who was to be Vice-President. Aside from satellite peoples, of which Puerto Rico was certainly one, I had no professional interest in these matters; I was not going to be asked, it seemed, to
offer an opinion. Abe Fortas, as Under Secretary, was already a member of the committee on dependent areas; but he had not seemed to be anxious to discuss its work. Even if I was outside, however, I still had an interest which was legitimatized not only by being Governor of Puerto Rico but also by having two small sons who might be involved if the next war came within two or three decades. I had a fierce hope that they might have lives lived in peace.

We discussed this, sitting on the terrace under the old white oak, on days when my wife could be up for a little while. My parents were now in their late seventies, but both, as far as appearances went, were as interested in the world as ever—perhaps more than ever, since they had withdrawn from so many of the activities which had filled their busy lives. We looked back over their more than seventy-five years and my more than fifty. They had grown up, married and produced me, then two brothers and a sister (all dead now), as millions of other Americans of that time had done, in a small town, within a confined circle of friends and acquaintances. They had been guided by easy precepts into secure and established ways. They lived in a large house under a hill. My father had inherited a good small business and had run it with careless competence until his ambitions had enlarged and he had moved into bigger business and more responsibility—which had taken him out of the Chautauqua hills and onto the shore of Lake Ontario. Not even the loss of two of their babies had shaken their basic confidence. Gradually they had, in their forties and fifties, become business and community leaders, prosperous, confident and complete. They had been moved by the war of 1917-18; but that had not lasted long. It had taken me to France, but not as a soldier, and they had not known fear—that is, the bottomless, endless fear so many people in the world have known in this later conflict. Not until the late twenties, when my father, in the familiar American cycle, had progressed from businessman to banker, and had been betrayed by bigger bankers in New York, did fear invade their hearts. Then everything had gone to pieces. Just then, too, my sister, beloved only daughter, had died. And suddenly they had seen that the world was insecure, that life was one long balancing on the edge of a pit into which illness, mischance in business, or what is ironically called "an act of God" may precipitate the best along with the worst of people.

Only gradually and feebly in the years after that had they come to terms with existence again. This time it was a different bargain. The old sense of confidence was gone only to be recovered in extreme age. They knew now the risk of bare existence, say nothing of comfort, of happiness and of easy adherence to virtue. But—having no position to sustain, being in the same position as village neighbors, and having, as they gradually discovered, a million small goods and privileges to appreciate which they had never really seen before but which had always been there—the pleasure of quiet talk, of neighborly help, of growing things, of grandchildren—they found that they watched the world with a new detachment which had its own pleasures. Its fortunes meant nothing material to them. They would
neither lose nor gain, however the great issues of the day were settled. But they came to
care greatly in pure philanthropy. I often wished—and sometimes told him so—that the
President could feel the strong, warm current of love that went out to him from my parents.
Perhaps he did. For it must have come to him in the same way from many of those who
were old or, for some other reason, were withdrawn from the daily struggle and so able to
care about him in the genuine sense of that word. Perhaps it was a comfort in his ever more
burdensome days. My parents sent out to him, and to other men they judged to be of good
will, just as they reached out to me, their son, and to their grandchildren, invisible
blessings. Their restricted village life, more restricted now, but not actually uncomfortable,
because of the war, was not an unpleasant introduction to the hereafter. And it provided a
disconcertingly clear view of a world writhing in man-made agonies and an America
determined not to dry up the sources of discord.

My parents were only a little more than twenty years older than I. There had been
something more than usually idyllic about their courtship and marriage. My father had
been assured, popular and prosperous; my mother had been a lively schoolteacher. Their
wedding photograph in the family Bible shows him handsome in the high-nosed way of the
English (that community in the Chautauqua hills had been almost translated whole from
southern England), his cutaway very close-fitting, his boutonniere very fresh; she was
enough, in her young beauty, to make any man’s heart turn over, with her cloud of black
curly hair, her vivid blue eyes and her completely regular features. That was the way they
began, and the firm quality of their union, based as it was on physical perfection and
proceeding out of a community life which had accepted and unquestioned ways, had given
me an exceptional boyhood. No one in that community expected to be very rich, but it was
almost unthinkable that there should be fear of want. One of my most vivid recollections
from those years was that of an eccentric old woman who lived in a ramshackle house next
to the creamery, to whose door I was often commissioned to carry baskets of food. The
recollection is vivid because she was the only one so situated in our village. It was because
she was poor that she was thought eccentric. I do not recall her name or anything else
about her except that she always dressed in rusty black and was a satisfactory figure of
mystery for a small boy like myself. That there was no other widow-woman or spinster in
that town, and no family whose earner had been crippled, may seem strange. And in
thinking back I realize that there were such but that everyone was provided for, either by
living with relatives or by sharing out in some other way. It was not until I was grown,
almost, that I learned that Chautauqua County had a poor farm, though, of course, "Over the
Hill to the Poorhouse" was the tag line of a song we all knew. If it saddened us, however, it
was with a vague bathos. No one I knew ever went hungry or was cold—much less went to
the poorhouse.
To my children the life of my boyhood in that town would seem incredibly simple, no doubt. We went barefoot in summer; the balls we played with were often wound and covered by ourselves; we made our own skis and sleds; and one of my daily duties was to go down to pasture lot and bring home the cow for milking. But they are sensible children and they would probably appreciate the riches I had which they have missed. We had fourteen driving horses in the barn; I had a flock of chickens; a hutch of rabbits and a maple-sugar house all my own. And dogs—I always had one and sometimes four or five. I could relate the history of every one of them to this day. We spent every summer—or part of it—on Chautauqua Lake, where I could distinguish the steamboats as far away as my boys can now spot a Mariner or a Marauder. And I knew them by their whistles too. If I should wake up in the night now and hear the old Pittsburgh or the Cleveland, I should be as certain of its identity as young Tyler is of the special sound of a Clipper’s motor.

My parents do not know what changed their world—and neither do I, for that matter. The one we have now seems to have evolved mysteriously out of that simpler, perhaps more satisfying, and certainly more secure, one into which I was born. I am at least privileged to feel that my experience spans the transition from one kind of civilization to another. Like others of my age I cannot tell whether I like better the old or the new. My parents have no such doubts—perhaps because they have outlived insecurity. They like the new. They do not like everything. But they consider wars, heavy taxes, governmental regulation of people’s lives and so on to be errors which will be corrected. They like automobiles and good roads, airplanes, radios, improved bathrooms and all the appurtenances of modernity which I am inclined to regard as too high a price for wars, governmental interferences and all the rest of it. . . .

My interlude came to an end too soon. We went back to Washington and gradually back to San Juan, where my wife faced the long tedious months of bed rest which are indispensable to the care for tuberculosis. Because I thought it discreet not to arrive back in San Juan before the party conventions, I lingered a week each in Haiti and Santo Domingo, learning at least that there is a great difference in dictatorships. What I stopped for in these neighboring countries was not any such general observation, however, but rather the more prosaic one of investigating the possibilities of trade. During the war, because the Federal Government bought and transported foodstuffs, any surpluses those countries had were easily brought to Puerto Rico. It would be different after the war unless we could work out a mutual arrangement for reduced tariffs and have it approved in Washington. Our new factories would turn out some manufactured goods which Haitians and Santo Domingans could use and we would be glad to buy their corn, rice, meat, lumber and so on. I had no official standing, of course, but by staying safely vague I succeeded in my object without worrying the Ambassadors too much; and the way was open for later, more specific
By the time I arrived in Puerto Rico the conventions were safely past and it could not be said that I had in any way influenced them. Muñoz, at the Popular meeting in Ponce, had been deeply humiliated. For more than two hours the delegates had been uproariously out of hand. Led by Mr. Arjona-Siaca, whose labors of many months now reached their climax, they refused to nominate Dr. Fernós as Resident Commissioner in Washington. They finally—but only after a touch-and-go struggle — accepted Mr. Jesús Piñero as a compromise, thus disappointing grievously Mr. Arjona who, however, was nominated as a Senator-at-large. When I first saw Muñoz after getting back, he was frightened and depressed. He visualized the loss of party leadership after the election, and perhaps even the loss of the election, in spite of all the signs. I tried to strengthen his courage by reminding him that he was the real leader; that the others were only his seconds; that none of them had any hold on the people’s affections; that none of them would be trusted as he was. It was his picture which hung in so many bohíos and his words to which the humble people all over the island listened.

Meanwhile in the States the political contest was being practically ignored. More exciting events were occurring. The great breakthrough at St. Lo and the subsequent demonstration of American skill in a campaign of movement had seemed to bring very close the actual end of the war in Europe. There was no logical stopping place. Paris had been liberated and Patton’s army was surmounting difficulties of supply which a month ago had seemed impossible to overcome. The question in everyone’s mind was whether the Westwall or the Rhine would prove to be barriers. But also everyone suddenly became conscious of the problems of peace. The stockmarket fell; an increase of wildcat strikes reflected the insecurity of workers; the W.P.B. produced a reconversion plan which was promptly disowned by the Army. And the President on 5 September 1944, at the urging of I ekes, sent a letter to Mr. Bell of the House Committee urging the passage of the reform bill. Mr. Bell promptly replied that passage at this session was now impossible largely for lack of a quorum. And so died our effort at home rule.

By the middle of September I had spent a week in Mayagüez and another in St. Thomas on business of the Commission. The meeting at Mayagüez had been the long-projected discussion of land tenure in the Caribbean, the most controversial of all subjects except possibly that of political status. It was a fruitful meeting. There were, for the first time, delegates from Cuba, Haiti and Santo Domingo as well as from the Dutch and British

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7At Chapultepec, the following March, the Santo Domingan representative would advocate further moves. He would suggest, what I had not wanted to be the first to mention, that Santo Domingo, in exchange for favored markets in Puerto Rico, would accept a large number of immigrants. This was obviously a matter of mutual benefit. Puerto Rico was crowded and had a scarcity of land; Santo Domingo had large areas of land which were almost unoccupied. But with the war coming to an end, and the need for a base there diminishing, the Santo Domingan regime would be frowned on by the State Department and any commercial arrangements would become impossible.
colonies. And for the first time anywhere in our hemisphere, so far as I am aware, there was a reasoned defense of what amounted to collective farming. The family farm, homestead plots and all the sentimental nonsense which had for so long formed the basis for the official program of the Extension Service in the United States and was regarded as the one untouchable subject in rural discussions everywhere, came in for a thorough exposure. The Haitians, whose history for the last century is one long story of economic retrogression because of fractionalization of the land, were on the defensive. Mr. Acosta-Velarde of our Land Authority was the prophet of change. He had only one instance to show as yet, but everyone was fascinated by its possibilities and most were convinced by his reasoning. Once again there was cause for pride in a purely Puerto Rican accomplishment. At St. Thomas we had a different kind of meeting, one of administrative scientists in all the different fields, to review progress made in the past and to arrange for coordinated effort in the future. In agriculture, in industry, in fisheries, in conservation and forestation, in public health, in education, and so on, committees were formed and arrangements made for exchange.

Meanwhile Muñoz had recovered from his momentary discouragement after the setback at Ponce and was handling his crisis with complete correctness. He finally met the aggressions of the independentistas by reiterating his own position: that status was not an issue and that a Popular victory was not to be interpreted as a mandate for any action. This I felt was a triumph for his reasoned judgment over both his sentiment and his fears. And, although there was reason to believe that Dewey's recent aggressiveness would make a close election in the States, it seemed reasonably certain, at the end of September, that things would go well both there and in Puerto Rico. The final month of a campaign, I have always felt, is not likely to change an election result. All the heat of the last few weeks might as well be conserved. As we went into those weeks the Coalicionistas were still maintaining that under my administration there could not be a fair election; but their protests did not have the old vicious energy. To be sure, Mr. Bolivar Pagán made a trip to Washington which was widely advertised as one he was instructed to take by the Coalición "to demand assurances of an honest election." But the signs were plain that what he really went for was to do his packing. For Mr. Pagán had not been renominated. He had committed political suicide; and the most his colleagues would yield him was nomination for a seat in the local legislature.

Progress in the European war had stopped. The armies had finally outrun their supplies and it was apparent that until ports could be cleared and transportation established they could not go further. It looked like a winter in the field and a wave of pessimism swept the country—one of those depressions which had alternated with equally unreasoning optimism ever since the war began. Politically, however, this pessimism seemed to favor the President. It brought about serious headshaking in the most unexpected places over
"changing horses in midstream." Many a reactionary who had hated Roosevelt's very shadow admitted reluctantly now that "that man" was necessary to the successful conclusion of the war.

The local campaign—Populares against Coalicionistas—reached a kind of climax in October. After one rather serious political riot in which there was a good deal of shooting, all the political leaders—except Mr. Iriarte, who continued to advocate extreme violence—declared a sort of truce and we drifted toward election in a kind of heavenly calm. But there was to be one more colossal error on the part of the Coalición which would make everything certain for the Populares. It had to do with keeping up relief. Ever since June we had been in the courts for carrying on expenditures as we had the year before on the theory that these were governed by the clause in the Organic Act which provided against the stoppage of government if the legislature refused to approve a budget. The court cases had gone against us; but pending appeal, stays had been issued under which we had gone right on. This had infuriated the Coalicionista políticos; and two Coalicionista judges had undertaken more than once to discipline all of us and to stop all expenditures. It was in such a fit of fury that, losing all discretion and ignoring the stay of the Third Circuit Court, District Judge Romany had one day ordered the entire Executive Council put in jail for contempt, thus himself furnishing on the eve of election, the Coalicionista coup de grace. Never, in all my political experience have I seen a campaign document so effective as the picture of those Commissioners looking out determinedly from behind the bars of La Princessa. To the jíbaro and the obrero it was plain that the members of his Government, all but one, Populares had suffered the humiliations of prison in order to protect his right to an income during unemployment. The whole effort of the Populares to redistribute social benefits in Puerto Rico was thus symbolized. It seemed not unlikely, after this incident, that the Popular victory might be so great as to be embarrassing. It was difficult to see how the Coalición could win anywhere at all. They might, of course, still claim that I had stolen the election from them and had presented it to the Populares. They had carefully prepared the way for some such repudiation. But even that failed them at the last. They ended not only with an infinitesimal representation in the legislature but also without any explanation of their political insanity. They were completely bankrupt.
THE PROPER TITLE for what I have to say further would be, I believe, "L'envoi." For what has happened after the election (until now, which is July of 1945) is easily inferred from what has here been related: the effect on Puerto Rico of the war's end; the outcome of the elections in the States and in Puerto Rico; the death of the man to whom my public life had been attached; and the further postponement of decision as to Puerto Rico's status. As I write this "envoi," I am still Governor; V-E Day has come and gone with its mixed feeling of relief, of grief and of apprehension as to the future. Puerto Rico is, of course, completely out of danger\(^1\) but also completely at a loss in both the political and the economic senses; neither Statehood nor Independence nor even Commonwealth is on the immediate horizon. And how she shall maintain herself in the postwar years is to me at least far from clear. I myself, months after my chief's going, am still in shock; and this the longed-for end of the European conflict has seemed rather to prolong than to lighten.

This account of the war years in the Caribbean lacks the ending, therefore, which I had hoped it might have. It is a drama— if I may call it that at all—without conclusion. I had hoped that President Roosevelt—and I—could rate as liberators on our Puerto Rican record. The most to be claimed actually is that the burden of the war was shared here loyally and that the Puerto Rican Government has begun to be (but only begun and with many hazards still not overcome) an instrument of and for the people rather than the élite. I am unable to claim any showy contribution to the events or even the discussions of these years. I tried to make Puerto Rico an example but succeeded only moderately. I cannot maintain that political jobbery has been overcome, I have fought it, but my successor will find the serpent still alive in its several pieces. I am even profoundly doubtful whether the experiments in governmental enterprise will succeed: not that I doubt their complete feasibility, but for one weakness; that however is a profound one; it is the lack of discipline among the workers themselves and their leaders; and this is inextricably mixed with the perils of political interference because the leaders of the workers also are inner members of the Popular party. For all these reasons my book has an ending which is as unsatisfactory to me as it must be to the reader.

I cannot control these conditions as a novelist may. The reader knows that the President won a hard campaign against an unfair adversary; he knows now, too, what that victory

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\(^1\)Although two months after Germany's surrender, the submarine net is still stretched across the harbor mouth and its gate is carefully closed at dusk and opened again at dawn. I told some navy friends the other day that I should be interested to come back in later years and find out whether, as I suspect, the boys on the guardship have been forgot in Washington. Will they still be opening and closing the gates when they are bearded oldsters because their orders never came? My friends, being reserve officers, thought such a thing quite likely. They suspect the regulars of being unwilling to disestablish any of their war gains—until Congressional Committees discover their uselessness; and that, they say, may be quite a while.
cost. He knows (although the event was not reported in the continental press) that the Populares won a fantastic victory in Puerto Rico — every seat but three in both houses of the legislature, and those only because not enough at-large candidates had been nominated. He knows that V-E Day came on 6 May 1945, leaving a most frightening chaos in the world. The only remaining clear purpose seemed to be our will to defeat Japan, which was more because we were still enraged about Pearl Harbor than because we felt compelled to purge the world of totalitarians. Perhaps this last was not quite so true as it seemed on V-E Day. The San Francisco conference, which had been arranged among the Big Three at Yalta, was in progress. But the differences there loomed larger than the agreements and no one, except the cheerful Mr. Stettinius, seemed to hope for much from it. It might be that the war had been fought to put down a revolution. That idea was comforting millions whose hopes for something more positive — some guarantee of future order and, with it, peace — had withered just after the African invasion when they had begun, somewhat aghast, to comprehend our policy there toward the Vichy French. They had somehow contrived to believe that our attitude toward the Franco regime in Spain was one of expediency. And it was not until we took up with the French reactionaries that they began to understand our position.

The accomplishment was sufficiently sweet, of course, as the tanks rumbled to a stop deep in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The boys could come home, those who had survived and were not wanted in the Pacific; and we could resume our old careless freedoms now that the Hitler gang was exterminated. Future students might deduce that we had fought a competent war merely to suppress an ambitious upstart who had appealed to the worst in human nature and had had an uncanny skill in organizing for his purposes. But I felt strongly that there had been more in it than that. The young men who had risked — and some who had given — their lives must have known that nothing in this world could be worked out so long as Nazis and Fascists existed. They could not have expected shells, flame, rockets and bombs to remake the world or change human ambitions. People were not going to be less competitive and nationalistic; they might even be more so. They might stay frightened for a while, but a new generation would outgrow that. However, selfish, greedy and unprincipled men are never in the majority in an approximately free society. And given the chance which is furnished by approximate freedom, mankind might haltingly and painfully come to workable solutions for its problems. Only one thing was completely and finally certain: nothing could be done in a Nazi-Fascist world which men of sense, men with liberty in their hearts, could approve. So it was after all a great gain to have smashed the beast which had crawled out of the mists of pre-German fable and threatened to consume the spirit of man. We could all go out again into the sun; we could light our cities at night; we could argue and quarrel among ourselves; we could seek and hold to what seemed to us the truth. And no damned Nazi or Fascist could tell us what to do, what
to think, or what to believe. I was thinking then that our soldiers must have felt all this. Perhaps some of them did. Or perhaps I read it into their intentions.

Puerto Ricans had not had more than a creditable part in the war. They had, for two years, occupied all the posts in the Caribbean from French Guiana to western Cuba, but they had not been left to this duty until after the defeat of Rommel at El Alamein and even then their senior officers had been *Americans*. After long and severe jungle training at home and in Panamá the 65th Infantry had been put in line in Africa and had gone through the Italian campaign. It was now in line in the high Alps, having gone into France as part of the Seventh Army. But no complete units had gone to the more appropriate China-India-Burma theater; and Mac Arthur had refused Puerto Rican troops altogether for his operations. The distrust of army officials was well enough reflected in these dispositions. Finally, however, in June one unit was having its final finishing for combat in Hawaii with the prospect of action in the battles for Japan. By now upwards of sixty thousand had been inducted into the service.

If there were disappointments from the war even in victory, it was because so many of us had been incorrigibly unrealistic. There was nothing about war which made men more trusting, more cooperative, more creative. In the exaltation of war’s beginning it had seemed that out of the vast movement and disturbance new institutions might be shaped. Now it was clear that nothing of the sort should have been expected. The young men who had fought had rid the world of gangsters. They could now create what they would have created if there had not been a threat to put them all into brown-shirt marching clubs. Those of us who were their fathers could almost certainly look forward to lives lived out in peace. We could participate with our declining strength in the intrigues, the arrangements, the investigations of the future; and we could do it without that particular constriction in the chest which comes of knowing that sons’ and daughters’ lives are in jeopardy to war.

No one was forgetting, on V-E Day, that there was still a war in the East. Its end was inevitable and so not a cause for elemental worry such as had characterized the struggle we had been going through in the years from 1940 to 1944. The cost was certain to be great and it was dreaded; but its payment could be foreseen, and, to an extent, discounted. Many more boys would be gone when the end came; but others—enough to make a nation—would be left. Since Leyte no one had doubted that. No one had doubted since, but they realized, then, that they had been doubting before. Of course, there had immediately preceded this the operations in the Western Carolines in September with landings on Peleliu and Angaur, islands mostly unknown hitherto to Americans; and before and during these operations there had been progress all along the New Guinea coast. So that obviously something big was being prepared; and it could be—though it seemed early—reoccupation of the Philippines themselves. Distances in the Pacific were so great that every considerable move had to be prepared by establishing not only naval bases but bomber bases as well.
part way to the objective. And sometimes the battles involved in these preliminary occupations were serious. But by October land-based planes were operating from Biak; Morotai and Halmahera had been neutralized; and the Palaus had been terrorized by the fast carrier task forces which were now ranging everywhere in the Pacific wastes. Late in October the pattern became suggestive; for carrier planes were sweeping Formosa, the Pescadores, Okinawa, the Bonins, and Luzon itself, clearing the seas for the great armada sortieing out of harbors in New Guinea and in the Admiralties. There was only less suspense than there had been before the Normandy landings in June. MacArthur’s return to the Philippines was a point of honor with every American alive. The humiliations of 1941 on Bataan and Corregidor rankled hotly still.

The Leyte landing had begun on 20 October amidst national jubilation. When news, obscure at first and unofficial, about the Japanese reaction had come, there had been realization everywhere that this was the test which had so long been postponed. The Japanese fleet was now challenging ours. We should learn whether our new men and ships, retrained and remade in the three years since Pearl Harbor, were qualified to carry our hopes. In the succeeding week we had found that they were. When it was over we had learned that there had been three distinct but related battles—that for Leyte Gulf itself, that for Surigao Strait and that off Samar. In all of them we had won—with such completeness, in fact, that even a layman could see what the consequences were: Japan had been destroyed as a naval power. What she had left could be scarcely a modern task force. Nothing in God’s world now could keep us from winning this war too. We were supreme in the Pacific.

It had been done in the modern way. The ships had struck a each other from scores of miles, hundreds of miles away. The plane from the carrier had become the projectile bearer. Ours were more numerous, and at least as good, as theirs. We had had the advantage of initiative and unorthodoxy; we had had strength to waste, if necessary. The secondary result had been the successful landing on Leyte then and later at Ormoc and on the beaches of Lingayen Gulf. MacArthur was soon to look from Manila toward Tokyo . . .

But by that time the ordeal of the election would be past. For us in Puerto Rico there was the anxiety arising from the long strain of vicious campaigning by the Coalicionistas which doubled the fears that the President might lose. As the canvass had progressed Mr. Dewey had begun to follow a new line of attack. In addition to accusing the President of wasteful and extravagant administration and to attacking the New Deal (already disowned) as harebrained radicalism, he did not hesitate to question the conduct of the war—something much more serious because at the least it undermined the national morale and at the worst it risked the lives of fighting men. So far as could be judged, the contest grew closer as election day approached. Finally the President himself left our end of the war to run itself while he went out, tired and gaunt, to meet this new threat. While Mr. Dewey's cocksure
baritone, implemented by all the facilities to be bought with unlimited funds, assailed the voters' ears with charges which hardly hesitated this side of calumny and slander, the old campaign hat and cape were brought out, speeches in defense were prepared and the fourth-time candidate took to the hustings. It was necessary, so worn and ill he looked, to make a great show of vigor. And on one final occasion he toured the boroughs of New York in a chill persistent rain, in an open car, going from meeting to meeting, shaking hands with hundreds of local leaders, giving here a smile and there a cheering word. It was enough to make a detached observer wonder—if he had not wondered before—what possessed Americans to drive their commander so. In my own mind I marked up another point for the British Parliamentary as against the American Congressional system in the continuous comparison which goes on in the mind of every student of government. The British did not have to stop in the midst of war for an election: they had enough confidence in democratic institutions to use them with a certain flexibility.

In spite of appearances the President did not win by a very considerable margin. The popular vote was much closer than the electoral vote would indicate. It was worth rejoicing over, however, that the Democratic majority in the Congress was substantially increased; there would, in consequence of this, be less need for appeasing the reactionary bloc. This had begun to appear by early morning on the day after election and it served to make my satisfaction substantial. I thought the end of the war could be seen and that, with such an election result, the President would have it easier now. Moreover, the expected landslide had occurred in Puerto Rico; it had been so overwhelming that all arguments were settled. Not even the most contentious Coalicionista could dispute the defeat. No possible alteration in procedure, no possible assistance from outside, could have changed the result. It was magnificent for the Populares and ignominious for their opponents. And there was no hiding the fact that I was involved in the victory too—not that I had taken part in the campaign, but that I had been consistently praised by my side and vilified by the other. Those who had been with and for me had won; the others had lost. My behavior had been correct; no one could say otherwise; but I did not feel called on to refrain from appropriate celebration now with my friends. Muñoz was exhausted even though for ten days before the election there had been no political meetings and his campaigning had come thus to an unexpectedly early end; but he was not so exhausted as not to be alarmed by the prospect he confronted. He had, as everyone saw at once, elected his own opposition and was likely to have as much trouble with it as for four years past he had had with the Coalición.

The peaceableness of the election was caused not so much by the one-sided vote as by the precautions we took to avoid trouble. The electoral law itself is almost comic in the extravagance of its provisions against fraud. Enrollment had taken place as long ago as January; and after a combing of the rolls by an election board made up of representatives of all parties (and with an experienced continental chairman), and resort to the courts in
contested cases,² the voters were all required to be at the polling places en masse before one o’clock, whereupon they were let out one by one as their votes were cast. Obviously, unless in some instance the counting may be falsified, this is a fraud-proof device. In addition, however, there had been provided a system of Governor’s watchers—not one for every polling place, but at least one for every community—who were to be on hand to settle disputes, to report any deviation from regularity and, in fact, to act as a general representative of impartial authority. I naturally had taken pains in the selection and instruction of these watchers and had made provision for the direct reporting to me of any disturbance or of any question, legal or otherwise, to which my watcher did not know the answer.

There were police precautions, too. During the previous spring the Chief of Police had resigned and I had prevailed on Mr. Joshua Hellinger, one of my legal assistants, to take the job. He had given the department good administration and its morale was high. In the few actual physical skirmishes among the partisans during the campaign, the police had conducted themselves becomingly and I was well satisfied that they would perform well at election time. But just to be certain, Mr. Hellinger and I arranged with the army M.P.’s to have a force handy if they should be needed. We had them in reserve with planes for transportation to any trouble spot; but as things turned out they spent the day loafing; we had no use for their services.

By four in the afternoon I was able to report to Washington that, in spite of all the rumors and fears in the months just past,³ all was peaceable if not quiet. No one could say it was quiet, at least in San Juan; for all the populace was in the calles, jamming them from curb to curb. It was carnival. Trucks, busses and commandeered cars, shoving through the good-natured crowds, carried banners; the pava flew everywhere;⁴ everyone shouted greetings to everyone else. The people were out to take over the Government. They had been told how by Muñoz and now they were doing it in an access of emotion such as I had never before seen. During the morning I went out into the streets myself and stayed there for some time soaking in the good will of a democracy which knew its power and had the contempt of that power for its opposition: there was no need for contumely or contention.

That was why it was carnival instead of motín. And all day it was the same. During the morning every usable vehicle in Puerto Rico ran to and from the polling places; in the

²I have already referred to the exclusion of some 85,000 from these rolls, concurred in by the Supreme Court, for technical faults.
³These were so serious that a weekly news magazine sent a reporter and a photographer from the States to cover the anticipated “revolution.” They went away much disgusted. “It was,” they said, “like a damned fiesta”.
⁴This was the Popular insignia, the head of jíbaro in the turned-up, ragged-brimmed country hat, red on white, with the device “Pan, tierra, libertad.”
afternoon, as voters emerged one by one, they stayed outside to talk; and late into the evening they celebrated. But there were no brawls except good-natured ones and fewer police reports than on an ordinary Saturday. As a democratic election it was a success. . . .

Eight months later, in July of 1945, the true Southern Cross hung straight in the lower heavens and a full moon lighted an island green with early summer rains; the mangoes were ripe and the flamboyantes were in scarlet bloom. Muñoz had just left Washington, where he had persuaded Senator Tydings to introduce a new measure concerning Puerto Rican status. It followed generally the recommendation I had so long been making, that Puerto Ricans be given a genuine chance to choose whether they would stay with us as Americans or go their own way independently. It offered Independence, Statehood and something less than the one and more than the other which was called Dominion. It said that the Congress would accept whatever choice the Puerto Ricans made. Perhaps the measure would never get any further; but Muñoz was optimistic and was staying on in Washington from week to week lobbying for its acceptance.

The events of the six months just past seemed to me indicative of grave difficulties to be overcome both in the wider world and in Puerto Rico. During their course San Francisco had been a disappointment even to those who had not expected much. It had served mostly to underline the hostility of Britain and Russia as they made contact in the vacuum of the defeated Axis. And we had seemed an unusually innocent bystander, likely to suffer the traditional fate of men and nations in that position. Our losses on Okinawa were increasing and the cost of the second war was coming into view just when San Francisco’s disappointments were beginning to be felt. Mr. Churchill had made a speech praising free enterprise; this and his continuous differences with the Russians had brought about his resignation and the announcement of an early election. There was the prospect of new leadership in Britain as well as in the United States; but there was no intimation that it would be wiser or better than the old.

We had already made the change. It had been forced on us by death. In the years to come it will probably be written—it has indeed already been suggested—that the President was taken opportunely, his work as a strategist of world conflict finished and his nation safe for another generation. The war, it was said, would go on to its close, strictly according to the pattern he had created. Of course only the grand strategy, the great decisions, were proved good. In all the minor matters, even some which were crucial, there was confusion to the point of administrative madness. Washington was a battlefield in which Generals, Admirals, and businessmen, suddenly become bureaucrats, fought for profits and power. The great work was done; the tidying up, the cutting down; the reduction of extravaganza to the orderly ways of peace was work for another kind of man.
There was the peace too; perhaps even for that another method was needed. This would not be a new plan. The United Nations were going on into the immediate future and the world would be divided among them, not actually, but in effect. There was danger of conflict but that could not now be avoided and would doubtless be somehow compromised. There would, however, be genuinely difficult days. Inroads on absolute sovereignty would be essential, ours no less than others'. The great wartime leader had had the enemies inherent in a long Presidency and especially a bitterly hostile Congress which all his placation had not won over. Then there were always the America Firsters who had been waiting in ambush and who had hated him with an incredible persistence. The same policies from another proposer might be more acceptable. Altogether, it might be that he had gone at an appointed instant. Perhaps even domestically, the transition to peace might be easier for another leader. The industrial world would be changed and there would be many unhappy adjustments to be made. They might go better for a successor without an accumulation of commitments.

So the reasoning might go sometime in the future. And perhaps it would be concluded that, as in the case of Lincoln and of Wilson, his going was an avoidance of anticlimax, that he went in the fullness of vindication, with the victory made and democracy saved. It might thus be concluded, sometime, by even the President's devoted followers. But who was there on an April day of 1945 to comfort the stricken with such poor consolation? The common men and women of the earth were only conscious of such sorrow as they had felt otherwise for none but their blood kin. A presence had gone out of every home—and not only in our land but in every land on earth. Men stood helpless and unashamed on the streets lost in grief; women had no self-consciousness about streaming eyes and tortured faces. It came upon all with cruel suddenness. So far as was known there had been no sickness, no intimation of disaster to prepare their hearts. There was a simple sentence out of the air which first struck them dumb, then opened the gates of sorrow.

As it was in Puerto Rico, we learned later, it was all over the world. Shopkeepers simply closed their doors and went home to sit in silence; workers laid down their tools and moved like persons in a dream down the streets and roads, not speaking, alone with their enormous sense of loss. Ordinary occupations of all sorts were simply laid aside. Presently people on their porches, or in their houses, spoke of him gently and reverently. No bad word was said by the poor; but the rich did not forget, either, and scarcely bothered to hide their elation. Seeing it the poor bothered less with resentment than would have been expected; it was trifling and irrelevant. Everywhere in Puerto Rico I was granted a new tolerance, a new affection, because I was known to have been his friend. No one allowed that my grief might be greater than his. It was not that. It was that I was connected and so entitled to a little of the emotion of that day. Many spoke of Mrs. Roosevelt and of how she
had shared his work. And they repeated the story, known to them all, of the Roosevelts idyllic love and their service to each other.

The news came to me just as it came to all others on our island. I was manipulating the dials of my radio to find the six-o'clock news. There was a pause and then a grave but ordinary voice which said—in Spanish—"Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States, died this afternoon." Of course, I thought at first that I had cut into some drama in bad taste; then I thought my Spanish had betrayed me. I sat and looked—as how many millions of others must have sat and looked—blankly at the radio while the terrible conviction grew in my mind that what I had heard was not a horrible joke, that it was true!

Somehow I got through the few succeeding days with an ordinary face. I received delegations, replied to condolences, reassured as well as I could those who were frightened as well as grieved. For there were many, among them those who had most loudly complained that Puerto Rico was unfairly treated, who saw all at once what a friend had been lost. To a Possession, under our Government, the national executive is of immense importance. From him Puerto Ricans are accustomed to whatever friendship they have in Washington. He stands between them and an unpredictable, often hostile, Congress. He represents the national interest in their welfare as against the private interests, served by Congressmen, who often find it convenient to sacrifice an area for which they feel no responsibility. This is the base on which the intense interest in the Chief Executive is built. If, as in the case of Roosevelt, he shows himself conscious of territorial needs throughout a considerable period, they come to look on him with that special trust and veneration which the helpless have for a dispenser of benefits. Puerto Ricans were instantly aware, however little they knew of public affairs, that an era had come to an end and that something new impended. And all of them suspected that the change would be for the worse. Expressions of discontent, emanating from the professional nacionalistas had not fooled anyone but themselves: everyone else knew that the twelve years of the Roosevelt New Deal had been on the whole good years for their island. They could hope that a new President would keep up the work which had been begun; but, in view of the past, they could hardly expect it.

It was a special mourning, therefore, in Puerto Rico. Everything seemed to stop while people asked themselves whether they should—or could—go on. Businessmen, farmers, educators, practitioners of the professions—everyone was reminded shockingly of mutability among the forces which bore on him, of the uncertain framework within which he must act. A dependency roots itself in the motherland, almost without knowing; a pull at the roots, or the severance of one of them, turns every instinct to a groping for the means of survival. The transpiring leaves and the fainting flowers wilt as they wait for what is to come.
As for myself, the shock was necessarily profound; it seemed to induce a kind of
teleminal apathy. The future was cloudy and obscure. There was only the past. I sat for
hours and thought of him who had gone, running over in detail the look of his face, the
sound of his voice, the way he moved, his habit of thought. I had a certain wealth of
recollection, though I knew it to be far less than that of others, especially in the recent
years, but such as I had I counted over item by item, separately and with care. But finally I
fell to thinking of what I am forced to call the "meaning" of his life. He had been a
statesman, one of our three or four greatest; he had been one of our most consummate
politicians too, so that he could bring his politics to the service of his statesmanship. Not all
leaders in American crises had possessed his instinctive finesse in the deals and the
maneuvers of the profession, not even those who had used politics most determinedly.
Washington, Jefferson and Wilson had tried in their various ways, and each had played
interests off against each other, holding to the principle that there is an essential integrity
of patriotism in all Americans: Tories, Whigs, Know-Nothings, Republicans, Democrats;
radicals, conservatives, moderates; progressives, reactionaries, liberals. All were
Americans. But none, except Lincoln, had played politics with such success. And Lincoln
had the great black stain on his record of having presided over a civil war. It was not of his
making. But he did not accomplish the impossible and keep it from happening. Roosevelt
had inherited what was very nearly a civil war too from the intransigent Mr. Hoover. And
through twelve years of crisis he had kept the nation going somehow as an integrated
whole. The determined antagonists had been kept apart. There had never been a moment
when radicals and reactionaries were not anxious to be at each other’s throats. He had
compromised, appeased, placated, been defeated again and again; he had punished friends,
rewarded enemies; he had never charted the course ahead but had rather improvised and
experimented to the enragement of friends and enemies alike. But in the time of our
greatest need, in the midst of a war which it was not always certain that we should win,
there had been more unity among Americans than there had been for two generations.
That was an enormous success.

His was not the only way to have proceeded; it was only his way. Perhaps it was not the
best. That is what I had always thought and that is why I had not been kept at his side. I had
given him the explanation he had needed of the crisis of 1928-32; and naturally, since he
had accepted the explanation, I had expected him to accept the logical resolution. The cure
lay in the cause. But that was not his way, whatever may have been his intention. It is not
true, as was suggested, that he did not want to resolve the crisis but only to keep it going so
that he could ride it perpetually as a ship rides a storm,5

5By Mr. Eliot Janeway in Life, Vol. 18, No. 18, pp. 84 if., 30 April 1945.
domestic crisis: he considered that his place in history would be determined by this test. But he could not bring himself to the doing of what was necessary to its resolution. This was partly because he never understood with the hard, clear perception of a Wilson, for instance, what the situation was and what all its related elements were. So that he was always wasting precious political reserves on irrelevancies—such, for instance, as the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934—antique reforms of antique abuses, instead of keeping to the main course and shaping all his decisions to it. He was a progressive of the nineteenth century in economic matters. And it was in economics that our troubles lay. For their solution his progressivism, his new deal, was pathetically insufficient, which is why in 1944 he wanted it to be forgot. I never thought he was as great a man as Wilson, for instance, and I am sure he did not think so either. But he had better instincts than Wilson and his weight came down constantly just a little on the side of humanity—a little left of center, he said, in a moment of perception—and this served to save the domestic situation. I think even now, so close to his going, that he will be put down as having failed in this realm of affairs.

There cannot, however, have been many greater strategists on the grand scale than he. In all the great sweep of his conception I could think of only one or two elements which I had been unable to believe right and useful. One was unconditional surrender. To accept this it had to be believed that all Germans were Nazi devils who could not be brought to support us and even in the heat of war I did not believe that and not many of my countrymen did. And then there were the unaccountable dealings with European reactionaries. But aside from these, what a magnificent war it had been! Who else would have thought that we could be brought to fight on all those fronts at once; in China, India, Persia, Africa, in the South Pacific, the North Pacific and in the Atlantic? And even if we were brought to it, who would have thought that we could possibly win? What energies had been released; and what perfection of timing there had been! There were many moments of crisis when our weight of men or material was only just barely sufficient for that initiative which, once gained, soon grows into the momentum of victory. This was true in Russia, where our Persian Gulf Command and lend-lease goods brought support at the moment of necessity; it was true in Africa when Rommel seemed about to take Suez and go on into the East; it was true in the Pacific when for months we had so few ships that we must have lost any battle pressed home by the enemy but where, just in time, the new fleets raced into action; and it was true in the Battle of Europe when the secret weapons of the Germans were almost—but not quite—ready as we struck. No doubt many moments of acute crisis will be revealed when the archives of the war are opened. For we were behind to begin with; and we were always behind until the last permissible instant when our industrial weight could be brought to bear. And we were inexperienced, which meant that our material might not be right for the need, or our men trained for exactly what they would have to meet. That we
came through as we did must now and always, I think, be attributed almost wholly to the genius and the determination of Roosevelt.

That he was one of the nation’s greatest men lent the weight of grandeur to the grief I felt, perhaps, but of that I am not certain. It was not because he was a great man, nor because he was always right, that I loved him. I perhaps more than others had always been critical of his methods and even his results and apt to weigh with skepticism the unrolling of his policy. Like other men, looked at critically, he was not infallible; and to me he had not even been kind or understanding. I had always given him what I had to give and had not asked anything except—and this I did not ask—to be of service. What good was there in probing the anatomy of loyalty? I had never been able to before; and I had no greater luck now. It was a kind of numbness I felt beneath the protective surface of ordinariness which seemed as precious as a cloak in a storm. I clung to it, wrapped it about me, and dreaded the leaderless future. . . .

I should have felt better about the last few years if I had been able to accomplish more in Puerto Rico. It was true that we had made a start on industrialization, that sugar, coffee and tobacco farmers were sharing in wartime prosperity, and that our income had been sufficient to provide at least a minimum of relief for the needy. But what was favorable in the record was largely temporary and there was reason to distrust the future. The industries we had begun would at least be endangered in the postwar competition. Some active defense would be required against mainland giants; and where that defense might come from, it was not easy to see. The Bell Committee was hostile—whatever that might mean—and it could easily be foreseen that when the Puerto Rican market was really needed by the American manufacturers there would be a new campaign, participated in by all the enemies and with all the old familiar outcries, charges and misrepresentations. And if Ickes should go from Interior, where would there be a friend in Washington? Or even one who would understand the economic structure we had planned and were building?

The basis for a hostile campaign might be found in the Bell Committee report which was issued in the late spring of 1945. The reader who has been faithful to the point of recalling the chart, found so useful by Messrs. Malcolm and Fitzsimmons, which purported to show how all economic life in Puerto Rico was to be controlled by me through the Planning Board, will be interested to know that it furnished the central thesis for the report of the Bell Committee. This report was the object of controversy within the Committee and its final form was considerably different from that previously displayed to newspapermen. It leaned heavily on an account of the beginnings of Fascist Italy prepared by the legislative reference service of the Library of Congress and implied an analogy with Puerto Rico; it referred to Muñoz’ bohemian life; it said that what was going on was to be understood by reading my public papers; it cautiously raised the race issue; and it came out roundly for private enterprise. But it did not live up to its advance notices so far as violence went or
recommendations for urgent action. And as to the cure for Puerto Rico’s complex ills the Committee found it in emigration. This suggestion was vague but it was definite; and there were no others.

There was appended a minority report which objected strenuously to the unfairness of comparing the Popular program with fascism. It dwelt on the difficulty of the economic situation and indicated that the Populares had come into power and had since been overwhelmingly approved precisely because private business had failed to solve any of the problems which it now claimed arose because of government interference. But the minority report was signed only by Mr. J. T. Piñero, the Puerto Rican Resident Commissioner.

There would be another basis also, which had already been laid, for future attacks. In the hearings before a House Committee of which Mr. Clinton Anderson, now Secretary of Agriculture, had been Chairman, Mr. Everett Wilson, lobbyist for the Puerto Rican Trade Council, had accused Charles Taussig and myself of being responsible for the current sugar shortage in the States. If it had not been for our futile and foolish attempt to persuade sugar planters to grow food in 1942-43, there would have been more sugar, he said. There was completely omitted any reference to the shipping shortage, the submarine blockade, the lack of fertilizers or the great drought of 1943-44. Charles Taussig and I could comfort ourselves that the world sugar supply would again be in surplus in a year or two, but just now the sugar producers were making the most of the situation. We had been moved by enmity to constituted business and we were now proved to have been wrong. . . .

In the spring of 1945, we had made some real gains for efficient government. The Planning Board had presented an intelligible six-year plan, worked out in considerable detail, for the use of the existing surplus and for prospective revenues, and the legislature had adopted it without severe mutilation. Police reform had again been refused; but the civil service had been improved, and a reclassification of the whole government service carried out. Provisions were made also for study by outside experts of all our governmental processes, so that in another year we might go further. Auditing was, under the direction of Mr. Cordero, being modernized. Government accounting was being reformed and record-keeping simplified. All this was good.

The legislature, also, responded to my appeal and established the Agricultural Company which I had worked for so long. Mr. Thomas Fennell, who had been director of the Société Haitien-Américaine de Développement Agricole was made director and it was furnished with an ample beginning capital. I looked for great things from this company, but not, obviously, in the immediate future.\footnote{What I said in my message to the legislature, in pleading for the establishment of this company was:’} Meanwhile the capital structure of the Development Bank was
greatly enlarged; and funds were provided for the Land Authority which ought to be almost sufficient for carrying through the whole alienation and reorganization process if the políticos would consent to the avoidance of the fractionalization which, for their purposes, was so attractive, but, for all others, so ruinous.

There is no doubt that these were real accomplishments. Why, then, with the war crisis past, with finances in order and with such institutions as the Planning Board, the Development Companies, the Bank and a reformed civil service and budget, should I be pessimistic about the future? I must confess that it was because I doubted whether Puerto Ricans would be permitted to keep the gains they were making with the administrative machinery we had set up. I recalled the Philippines and what had happened when Harding had become President. But then too there were certain inner difficulties. I could not quite be certain that economics could prevail where politics was so traditional. To that there is no objection when its practitioners have a clear view of the policy necessary to their country's welfare and will use their arts in the service of this policy. But when they tend to waver, to weaken under pressure, to appease the private interests which are always present, there is reason to doubt the success of a program which requires ruthless administration.

We were preparing clearly now to withdraw from the appointed governorship. I had come to see that all the rest of the Government had become adjusted to this institution. Puerto Ricans depended on the Governor to stand aloof, to check legislative lapses and to limit the bad results from political maneuvers. Even Muñoz was so accustomed to this system that

"I have the greatest hope that we can do much with new crops and perhaps even some startling things with old ones. Various possibilities have been explored over and over at the Experiment Stations and have succeeded at that level. What has been lacking has been actual trial. This can only be done by a concern with considerable capital which is willing to undertake enterprises which, even if promising, are also risky, and which can afford to wait a long time for returns. This is the specification of government. And I have come to believe that unless we set up such a company as I now propose, we shall go on talking about these things indefinitely but never doing anything about them. I should like to see actually tried, on the pilot plant scale, off-season citrus fruits and avocados, certain new vegetables, improved tropical fruits and nuts, especially grapes, which might be the basis for a wine industry, papayas, mangoes, guanábanas and similar fruits especially intended for processing, and numerous other similar possibilities such as edible and essential oils, starches and known high-vitamin and high-protein plants which might supply the great deficiency in the Puerto Rican diet. . . .

"Although the company would be authorized to conduct agricultural enterprises of all sorts, it would not compete with any which now exist. It would rather supplement them, improve their markets, advance their techniques and so on. It would break ground for new crops and perhaps whole industries. Properly managed, it ought not only to prosper itself but to make other farmers more prosperous. . . ."

"Such a characterization applies in Puerto Rico to no larger a percentage of politicians than in many of the States of our Union, or, at least, not much larger; but it is not hard to imagine what would happen even in them if they were suddenly given independence. Are there not bosses who, with their political machines, would, by simply using more force, become dictators of the kind which have tormented Latin America for the last decade? And the States have presumably had a long training in complete self-government which Puerto Rico has not had."

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he had proved unable to conceive the changes necessary to any other. President Roosevelt may have been right, I thought, when he had said to me that when we withdrew and established self-government there would ensue an awkward period of—at best—bad government. He saw no alternative to such an ordeal for a people who had to find their way to democracy. After three years of thinking about his remark, I was still wondering whether he was right in concluding that there was no alternative. Was there no other way? And were there not elements in the present situation which made the abandonment of Puerto Rico to such a future peculiarly irresponsible? In the first place it was a situation in which we as Americans were heavily involved, since the Organic Act, which was Puerto Rico's constitution, was an act of our Congress and the government under it one which we had established and permitted to be carried on. And in the second place there were now two millions of these people instead of the half million we had begun with in 1898. I had begun to think, it will be seen, that American liberals had a duty not to try to put Puerto Rico out of the Union by way of granting independence but rather to work for her taking in, thus fulfilling their obligations to her citizens. Cruelty can masquerade under one name as well as another; here it was hidden under all the familiar shibboleths of freedom. But abandonment is not friendliness; and starvation is at least a peculiar gift for a humane people to impose on a weaker one, even at the instance of mistaken liberals. . . .

It is not generally known, even by those whose knowledge of Puerto Rico is considerable, that Puerto Rico herself has "colonies." There are two islands off the east coast, and this side of the American Virgins, which think of themselves, in relation to the larger island, almost as Puerto Ricans think of themselves in relation to the continent. The satellite has satellites. The larger of these, Vieques, has a population of about the same size (twelve thousand) as the much better known St. Thomas; the smaller, Culebra, has only about one thousand. Both islands lie low to the trade winds and extract from them only a little moisture. For this reason life on them is normally precarious. To this usual difficulty there have been added since 1940 the tribulations of people involved in one center of our huge but uncertain preparations for conflict. For, as I have already said, Roosevelt Roads had been overcome by gradual paralysis as the Navy's war had moved into the Pacific: the locomotives and dump cars had stopped; the concourse of tugs, barges, patrol ships and cargo carriers had thinned down; the breakwaters had halted a few miles at sea and the scarred and tumbled earth had been abandoned to erosion and the slow healing of plants which struggle for life in subsoils.

But the Navy had also moved out of its obligations to the island people who had been upset without explanation or apology, say nothing of reparation. For which reason I went to Vieques early in June with various agricultural experts, examining the island from end to end: soil, rainfall, local adaptations of crops—we were being thorough.
On a day in June, then, I was far out on the thin tip of Vieques where its rocks, thrust into the Atlantic rollers, are continuously buried in heaving seas. The windward shores of the Caribbean islands are dry and rocky, conditions which are attractive to a certain kind of vegetation. Out there I found myself wading waist deep in orchids, flowering sage and frangipani; the combined perfumes were delicately aromatic; the burning sun was deceptively cooled by the freshet of air which flowed in from the sea.

There were, for once, no people; not even the limpet-like jíbaros had found it possible to exist there. And none would. It was the only place I had ever found in the Puerto Rican islands where one could escape from the sight or sound of other humans. It struck me that out there I might be able to re-create a plan and policy; for all had become confused and chaotic in my mind.

Perhaps I could see what lay ahead for Puerto Rico or what might lie ahead if all of us who were of good will conducted ourselves in accordance with wise prevision. But neither wind nor sea, sage nor orchid, solitude nor effort, yielded anything further. Before long, as most other men have done, I got hungry and came home.

The lack of Congressional interest in "the reinforcement of local government" for Puerto Rico seemed to me as stubborn as ever. Muñoz, coming home from Washington in time for a 4 July speech, was more optimistic. Perhaps there was reason in his analysis. He said that he had talked with many Senators and Representatives, and although they were not to be deeply stirred, still they were generally sympathetic. The point about this was that for once economic pressures seemed to be relieved. Representatives from the beet-sugar states were not apprehensive for the moment about surpluses, for instance, and the farm lobbyists in general were satiated and quiescent. Since Congressmen were not harried in this way they were free to consider political questions on their merits. Muñoz thought it might be possible to accomplish some real gain while the mood lasted.

I had just come back from a trip down the islands in another attempt at orientation. If I had failed to find any light in my Vieques journey, perhaps I needed a longer exposure to the Caribbean winds and waves. In the James F. Taylor, a requisitioned yacht of 160 tons, loaned to me by the Army, we bore down across the Anegada passage to the Dutch and British islands. We were gone for ten days. In the leisure of the sea, I read accumulated documents and in the evenings ashore I talked with the administrators and, in Antigua, with Sir Brian Freeston, the Governor.

The documents indicated what I could only call a new British colonial policy; the visits, during which I saw the first results of the Development and Welfare Fund in new health centers, schools and other public works, reinforced the feeling that the Empire was stirring. The British effort, just getting momentum, and hardly yet noticed even by the people who would benefit from it, compared distressingly with our own lethargy and indifference. Yet
our Commission was credited with a part in the British awakening and, now that San Francisco was over, perhaps we should resume our own progress. For San Francisco was a far better performance than the reporters there had seemed to think when it was going on. It was still not a world government. It clung to nationality. But anyone who could not see in it an improvement not only in international relations but in institutional structure was an incorrigible pessimist. Especially the Social and Economic Council, added to the bodies which had been hitherto foreshadowed, seemed to hold vast possibilities. It seemed indeed to be a more comprehensive embodiment of our own Caribbean Commission’s aims. There would be a place for such regional bodies in the world organization. I thought Charles Taussig, who was at San Francisco, might well feel satisfied with the years of selfless effort he had put into our Caribbean organization. He had begun, it will be remembered, as long ago as 1940, and neglecting all his private interests, had worked exclusively in the Commission’s interest ever since.

Just as I was reading about San Francisco, also, Sir Brian, in Antigua, gave me an advance copy of the Colonial Ministry’s communication to the West Indies governors about Federation. It was an unqualified endorsement of union among the colonies. It did point out by way of reminder that although "the ultimate aim of any federation . . . would be full internal self-government within the British Commonwealth" that "financial stability [which is of course very different from economic self-sufficiency] is an essential accompaniment of full self-government." But this was simply to point out that independence does not comport with dependence. Whether the West Indies could, within any foreseeable future, rise to full Commonwealth stature seemed doubtful, but the doubt was now economic rather than political.

Take this together with the announcement made at the end of June by the British and American governments that unofficial members were to be appointed to the Caribbean Commission and there was more than a swallow to indicate a coming summer. One who doubted could go further by sampling the tenor of the official pamphlet issued in May which was called Towards Self-Government in the British Colonies. There, with some pride, attention was called to the constitutional changes in the various colonies within the past year or two. It was not a negligible record. I thought there was some justification for its

8This communication was actually issued 14 March 1945. In its second paragraph it said: "It will, I think, be generally agreed that under modern conditions it has become more difficult for very small units, whatever their outward political form may be, to maintain full and complete independence in all aspects of government. Nor do existing tendencies make it appear any more likely that such independence would be easier for these small communities in the future. Indeed the trend of postwar developments, under the stimulus of greatly improved air communications, may well show a marked impulse towards a closer political and other association of those smaller territorial units which, through proximity or a common language, have mutual interests. I consider it important, therefore, that the more immediate purpose of developing self-governing institutions in the individual British Caribbean colonies should keep in view the larger project of their political federation, as being the end to which, in the view of the Royal Commission, policy should be directed."
concluding sentences: "Britain has evolved a sound and healthy system, infinite in its powers of expansion, positive in its scope of achievement. In the quiet and steady building up of democratic institutions lies its unity and strength." But I was very sure that no American could make such a claim.

Still, when the United Nations had become a functioning body and dependent areas had been organized, there might be the possibility of a more orderly and secure future even for a satellitic people. If the British islands were organized in a Federation with membership in a regional Commission, if the other colonial powers were similarly organized, if the independent nations joined, and if we held our membership, Puerto Rico might find an advantage in the common progress of the whole Caribbean which might be greater than any she could achieve alone. That was looking far ahead. And it did not excuse American neglect in the present; but it is always good to look for the future in the heavens as well as in the earth—in man's propensity to organize and to co-operate as well as in his weakness for exploitation.

As to this I thought that our work in Puerto Rico was on a far frontier. We were trying to find the reserves of generosity and decency we believed to exist in human nature. It might be socialism—what we were trying to do—but it was at least a practical attempt to meet a desperate situation. And look how politicians, administrators and all the others were finding expression in it. It was becoming a unique demonstration. Others might take a good look to their own benefit.

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