

*The Acute Political Crisis
of Porto Rico.*

MANIFESTO

of

Mr. Antonio R. Barceló

*Before the Meeting of Senators and
Representatives together with the Central
Board in full, held on the night of
Friday Nov. 4th.*



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Leader of the Unionist Party makes known how
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1921,

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SAN JUAN, PORTO RICO.

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LEADER OF THE UNIONIST PARTY MAKES
KNOWN HOW THE RELATIONS OF THE
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TIP.

"LA DEMOCRACIA"

SAN JUAN, P. R.

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To the Central Board and the
Senators and Representatives:—

I appear before you now, my dear
comrades, as a man who before think-
ing of himself must think of the res-
ponsibilities imposed on him by duty.

Many times have I been alone
concentrating my thoughts, appre-
hensive, constraining my ideas, trying
to prevent their flight on the wings of
imagination and of illusion over the
positive reality of the life of anguish
of this small and suffered people.

I shall not speak to you, however,
of the terrible struggles of my spirit,
nor of the great hankerings of my
soul in view of the situation we are
facing.

Our sense of duty and our patrio-
tism have been submitted to a test,
and they must emerge intact from

the abnormal situation created by the
blindness of a rash Governor who
persists in maintaining such situation
against the will of our peaceful and
quiet country, or we must succumb,
not as cowards and serfs who place
a price on their dignity, but as men
of honor whose honor grows accord-
ing to the intensity of their struggle
in adversity.

When I spoke to you the last time
to bid you farewell as I left on my
trip to the United States, there still
lived with many the hope of a pos-
sible remedy to the situation. I did
not hesitate to encourage that hope.

Fully realizing the reason against
my trying to establish the desir-
able understanding with the executive
power in the work of the government,
and to facilitate the realization of one

of the party's resolutions that I myself suggested, I thought it advisable for me to abstain for some time from any intervention in any line of conduct which you thought convenient to adopt in reaching the desired ends, without rectifying, of course, the fair protest raised against the unbearable attitude of Governor Relly.

In the United States, I learned of all your sufferings and sacrifices on behalf of your just purposes. I received reports of the cooperation you offered the Governor, which he translated and published according to his own whim, as a rectification of our acts and as a victory gained by him over our party. I felt, however, that your discreet silence was justified as against the Governor's indiscreet boast, and that you had left to me the work of explaining, specially in Washington, the true meaning of the cablegram reporting the incident, which was published by the Associated Press.

During my twenty-four hours' stay in Havana I was called upon to explain what the daily press of that city eagerly desired to know, since the cable dispatches relative to the inaugural address of Governor Relly and to the correspondence exchanged between him and me, had already reached our sister island. I could not evade the interviews lest my silence be interpreted as a confirmation of the reports that disfiguring the truth had been sent broadcast from Porto Rico. I believe that any of you in my place would have done likewise in defense of his own acts, which meant nothing but the defense of the rights of the country.

All of you know the result of my interview in Washington with President Harding, the Secretary of War, and the Chief of the Bureau of Insular

Affairs, in company with our Resident Commissioner, Mr. Félix Córdova Dávila. I am fully convinced that I conveyed to the minds of President Harding, the Secretary of War, and General McIntyre, the exact truth. They are well aware of the outrage committed against our people by the Governor, and of his indiscretion, lack of ability and lack of intelligence to lead a people of the culture and civilization of ours.

There were and still are but two means of putting an end to this situation in a manner decorous for the country:

1.—To forget things that are past in making an implicit rectification of what has been done, thus producing the necessary harmony between the different branches created by our Organic Act for the government of the island.

2.—The resignation or substitution of the Governor.

To attain the first object I have done all that it was in my power to do. I returned to Porto Rico on account of a letter handed me by the Secretary of War suggesting "the advantage of cordial cooperation between the Governor and the President of the Senate and of the majority party for the well-being of Porto Rico." I must confess that desiring to show Washington my decided purpose of so cooperating, I had in mind that when I reached Porto Rico I would immediately call on the Governor and hand him the letter; but you all know how I was received. The Unionist papers, and better still, the Republican papers, give faith of the statements made by the Governor against our party and against me while I was on my way to Porto Rico, of his statements on the plaza at San Juan on the very day of my

arrival, and of the compensation of two promotions at once given to a district chief of police who, abusing his power, directed a number of policemen under him to dissolve a peaceful demonstration made by citizens who on that afternoon were marching towards my home to offer me their greetings. Some of these citizens who in the use of their rights refused to retire, were arrested, and up to the present time we do not know of any charges having been made against them. This proves that not only did they commit no crime, but on the contrary, that they were expressly and wickedly wronged, no consideration having been given to the most sacred constitutional rights.

Notwithstanding, I continued to observe an attitude of supreme calm, and even on the following day was decided to seek the way of holding an interview with the Governor, provided this could be done with propriety and decorum.

Just as I expected, the Governor also received a letter from Washington, together with which he was sent a copy of the one that had been addressed to me. It was natural and logical. But as the Governor, ever since his arrival in Porto Rico, has acted against everything that is natural and logical, since to him absurdity seems to be the only reasonable thing, I must confess sincerely that I was not much surprised when I read that same morning in "El Mundo" the statements made by the Governor to one of its reporters that he did not know who I was, and, therefore, did not know of my arrival. It is very difficult for a man educated in the school of refinement, dignity and courtesy, to overlook such contemptuous words. Notwithstanding, even then, I endeavored to avoid everything that might contribute to form an excuse for the Governor. The press

published the statements made by me upon my arrival and at my home that evening, which statements revealed positive discretion. For three days longer I maintained the most absolute reserve, because I was desirous of carrying out the suggestions made to me in Washington as feasible in coming to a satisfactory settlement.

At this stage my colleagues on the Central Board, Messrs. Santini and Torres, asked me to come out of my reserve and to make known my purposes as prompted by such impression as I received in Washington, in this manner to quiet the just impatience of the country. And according as I refused to comply with the request of my friends and kept silent, provocations did not cease to issue daily from the Executive Mansion, which were published and commented on by a part of the press, which took advantage of such provocations to injure our party and my personality. In view of the circumstances I finally explained the whole situation to said friends. I told them that I considered I had failed in the purpose that brought me from Washington, and that I intended to address a cablegram to the Secretary of War, informing him of events and declining any responsibility. They then asked me for a copy of the letter of the Secretary of War that they might take the same to the Governor, talk the matter to which the letter referred over with him, and thus endeavor to ascertain once for all his true attitude and in future prevent any misinterpretation of the conduct followed.

Convinced of their reasonable purpose, I gave my friends a copy of the letter of the Secretary of War that the interview. On Saturday afternoon when they returned from the Executive Mansion they told me the Governor would take the matter under consideration, and that he had promised

ed to advise them in writing of his decision. But the case is that as everybody knows, "El Mundo", having been misinformed at the Executive Mansion itself, on Monday morning, published in great big type that the Governor had refused to hold a conference which I had requested. And on Tuesday afternoon when Commissioner Córdova Dávila, who came in from Arecibo to see me on the same errand, and I, were about to cable to Washington in regard to the situation, I received the following letter from the Governor's Private Secretary, which letter gave rise to the correspondence transcribed below:

"San Juan, Porto Rico,
October 17, 1921.

Senator A. R. Barceló,
San Juan, P. R.

Dear Sir:—

I have been advised by Governor Reily that you have requested a conference with him, which message was delivered to him by Messrs. Torres and Santini, and if this is correct, will you please write me to that effect, and I will then arrange an engagement for you, when it is convenient for the Governor, and will notify you of the hour and date. The Governor's time is so constantly occupied, I have to make these engagements in advance in the regular way, in order not to conflict with his official duties.

Yours truly,
J. R. HULL,
Secretary to the Governor."

"San Juan, Porto Rico,
October 18th, 1921.

Mr. J. R. Hull,
Secretary to the Governor,
San Juan, P. R.

Dear Sir:—

I have just received your letter dated yesterday.

I did not actually ask for a conference with the Governor, either through Messrs. Torres and Santini or through any other channel. To these friends I showed a letter the Secretary of War wrote me, a copy of which I enclose, in which this high official gave expression to the convenience and propriety of a harmonious cooperation between Mr. Reily, as Governor, and the undersigned, as President of the Senate and leader of the Majority Party, for the sake of the better development of the government of the island. Convinced as I am that such a suggestion from the Secretary of War was very correct, and further knowing that the Governor was to receive a letter worded in equal or like terms from a very high source, I talked the matter over with the said friends and we three reached the conclusion that the Governor, as well as myself, following the suggestion from Washington, should have a mutual interest in approaching each other to confer, in our respective capacities, for the benefit of the island for whose government we are responsible.

This opinion which I then evidenced to my two friends, not being sure at the time whether the Governor had received his letter, is now held the more strongly by me. In view of the letters alluded to, the Governor and myself, both complying with high official duties, should seek, setting aside past words and deeds, to approach each other and confer with the object in view of cooperating without friction, to the best government of the island, and for the benefit of the same.

Should the Governor think and feel in like manner, such conference would seem to me very desirable.

It will be a source of pleasure

should the Governor look upon it in the same light. If such is the case I await your advice so that we might mutually agree upon the date and hour for such conference.

Yours truly,

ANTONIO R. BARCELO,
President of the Senate."

"San Juan, Porto Rico,
October 20, 1921.

Senator A. R. Barceló,
San Juan, P. R.
Dear Senator Barceló:—

I have your letter of October 18th and was amazed when I read that Messrs. Torres and Santini had no authority whatever to speak for you when they called to see the Governor. They were most outspoken about this matter and exhibited a letter from the Secretary of War to you, which they said you had given them. The Governor has had much confidence in these two gentlemen since he has been here, and, naturally, believed them, that they were your emissaries, especially as they had the Week's letter addressed to you. I am astonished to know that they had no authority to represent you, after all they had to say.

This being the case, my letter to you, was not only uncalled for, but most inopportune, and I am exceedingly sorry I troubled you with my communication.

Yours very truly,

J. R. HULL,
Secretary to the Governor."

"San Juan, Porto Rico,
October 21, 1921.

Mr. J. R. Hull,
Secretary to the Governor,
San Juan, P. R.
Dear Mr. Hull:—

Judging from your letter of yes-

terday, there seems to be some misunderstanding in connection with my letter of October 18th.

I did not say in that letter that Messrs. Torres and Santini had no authority whatever to speak for me when they called to see the Governor. I simply said that I did not actually ask for a conference with the Governor either through Messrs. Torres and Santini or through any other channel.

Undoubtedly these two gentlemen and friends could speak in my name, —as they have informed me they spoke—in regard to all matters connected with the letter addressed me by Secretary Weeks, of which they took a copy to the Governor.

I now wish to repeat the same words, or words similar to those used in my previous letter, and which I ask that you repeat to the Governor: I have in my power a letter from the Secretary of War, the contents of which the Governor already knows, in which letter Mr. Weeks states the advisability and propriety of cooperation and cordial relations between Mr. Rely as Governor, and the undersigned as President of the Senate and leader of the Majority Party, for the well-being of Porto Rico. My political friends and myself, convinced that the idea of the Secretary of War is very reasonable, I understand that the Governor as well as myself, complying with our high official duties, following the suggestions received from Washington, and setting aside previous words and acts, should have a mutual interest, in our respective capacities, in approaching each other and conferring for the well-being of Porto Rico, for whose good government we are responsible. In case the Governor feels and thinks likewise, such approachment and conference seem to me to be desirable.

It should be pleased, I repeat, should the Governor look upon this in the same light, and should such be the case, I look for your communication to that effect.

Yours truly,

ANTONIO R. BARCELO,

President of the Senate.

"San Juan, Porto Rico,

October 25, 1921.

Senator A. R. Barceló,

San Juan, P. R.

My dear Senator:—

I received your letter Friday night, but as I was out of the city Saturday, I did not have any chance to reply until to-day. I note in your last letter that you suggest it is desirable that cordial relations should exist between you, as President of the Senate, and Mr. Reily, as Governor, for the well-being of Porto Rico. However, I cannot understand, Senator, how "cordial" relations can possibly exist between you and the Governor while your paper continuously publishes attacks like the enclosed which was published on Saturday, knowing that nothing can appear in your paper without your sanction. The "Baltimore News" which you quote here, is an avowed enemy of President Harding, hence is against Governor Reily. You also continually copy editorials from the Kansas City Star, the bitterest and vilest enemy that President Harding has in all America. I know you must be aware that when you quote from these anti Harding papers you only strengthen the Governor's position with the administration.

I will suggest that if you cease these attacks on the Governor in your paper, I will do my utmost to bring about "cordial relations for the well-being of Porto Rico."

It is only fair for me to say for the Governor that he deeply regrets that a number of papers on the island, friendly to him, have criticized you. But your paper is most vicious as to the Governor. He is smart enough to know that newspaper criticism usually helps the man who is criticized, and injures any man who instigates criticism.

You have mentioned in both of your letters, "forgetting past deeds and words", but you not only do not "forget", but continue these daily attacks.

I would suggest to you, Senator, in the most kindly spirit, that you begin to do your part in "forgetting" and I feel sure that the Governor will always do his.

The Governor is indifferent about this whole matter, but I feel, if you stop these daily outrages on him, he would see you, as he does any other member of the Legislature who cares to see him.

Let me reply that you cannot control the LA DEMOCRACIA while you are in full control, when you are also President and leader of your party and it is your party organ; I will not be able to bring about any interview. Besides, why hold any interview at all, if you will not, or cannot, control your own paper, your party organ? There is where all co-operation will have to begin.

I simply offer these suggestions as my own idea of the only possible way to bring about the interview as urged by Messrs. Santini and Torres.

Yours very truly,

J. R. HULL,

Secretary to the Governor."

(NOTE.—The clipping referred to in the preceding letter is an editorial entitled "Rare Spectacle", published

in the Baltimore "News" of Baltimore, Md., a translation of which was printed in LA DEMOCRACIA).

Of course when I received the last letter from the Governor's Secretary, I considered our correspondence at an end. It was clearly manifest that the interview was being evaded under improper pretexts, and that an endeavor was being made in connection therewith to make me appear subdued. It was preferable to consider the matter ended, and that is what I did. Had the Governor desired to hold the conference we would have held it from the very beginning; but when I had gotten around all his first evasive answers, when he had no other excuse to offer, then he tried to impose silence on our daily press as a condition SINE QUA NON, while in the meantime he did not cease to talk and to act against the party.

Had the conference been held it is clear that an agreement between the Governor and our party would have implied what he in part desired, since the attitude of our press would then have been or would have continued to be in consonance with the Governor's attitude, because our press is free and nobody can bind it in its own name to any line of conduct other than that which is proper of each situation or of each moment, and which agrees with public opinion, the source of its procedure.

There is no other way, my friends, than to continue the struggle and to fight against this untenable and shameful situation, until we obtain the only remedy left us: The Governor's removal, since he is not disposed to resign.

Let us recall the acts of said official. He ill-treated us in his inau-

gural address, thus answering the courtesy of our party which received him on his arrival by frankly offering the hand of friendship, by adopting the most improper and imprudent attitude. Those who know the inaugural message read by the Governor at the Municipal Theatre of San Juan on the day after his arrival, and those who saw the violence and the gestures marking the statements addressed exclusively against our party, can not do otherwise than agree that the attitude of the head of the party and the attitude of the Central Board could not have been nor should have been other than as adopted by them. Had we not done so we would now be justly reproached by public opinion and we would be charged with having allowed things to reach this stage by our weakness in not protesting at the proper time against said statements. From the Governor's own declarations recently published, it may be now seen that the policy he has developed and the wrongs he has committed against our party and which have finally culminated by spoliating us in the sphere of power, by abusively and violently taking from us what in fair battle had been granted us by the people, is the very same policy he announced in his inaugural address.

There is something in the last letter of the Governor's Secretary, that I must clarify. That is where the letter refers to the reproduction in LA DEMOCRACIA of articles taken from the American press. Our newspapers have always been very respectful and very discreet in referring to national politics. It is a poor alternative the Governor or his Secretary has adopted when he tries to make our press appear as opposing President Harding, when the truth is that

the policy which said press attacks is the policy of Governor Rely here, a policy which we legitimately think is far from being mistaken for the policy of President Harding, a figure who merits all our respect and consideration.

Our party is neither Republican nor Democratic as the national parties are thought of. There are sympathizers with both parties among us, but we always maintain that because of the nature of our essentially sectional politics, and of the fact that we are not entitled to contribute with our votes to changes in the national parties, we should abstain from any intervention in such politics so that the right of Porto Ricans to their own government may be acknowledged and proclaimed by all. And according to this invariable policy our Resident Commissioner attended the last Republican and Democratic conventions, as a delegate of our party, not to intervene in the nomination of candidates, but to influence such declaration in their platforms as might relate to us.

We further believe the intervention which the Porto Rican Republican Party claims to have in the National Republican Party is ridiculous, for it is well known that not only National Republicans, but Democrats as well, belong to the Porto Rican Republican Party, and that its only object is thus to seek the support of official centers at Washington in all such purposes as they can not obtain here from popular vote. That policy is fundamentally known here ever since in the year 1912, when insular republicanism had to face the Democratic victory in the United States; it resolved at its Ponce convention to break loose from the National Republican Party, thinking that it would thus be in better position to continue in their pretension of mono-

polizing certain public offices.

Fortunately the story is clear and brief and can be reconstructed at any time from the records we have in our power of all such public acts done in Porto Rico, which are well known to all.

What we have before us, then, my dear friends, is simply a Machiavellian policy of intrigue and revenge, which does as much harm to the United States as it does to Porto Rico, and which it is our duty to denounce in the States as well as here, in demand of the cooperation of all just souls and all noble hearts in defense of this small country which has committed no crime other than to aspire to the life of liberty and rights to which it is entitled.

The foregoing statements would be sufficient to establish the ineptitude and bad faith of a Governor who on reaching our island takes up this pernicious policy and turns his back on the sacred institutions of the great people he promised to defend and uphold when he took his oath of office.

I believe the representative men of our party and representative at the same time of public opinion, should at this time formulate the most energetic protest against the abuse of power and intolerable tyranny of the acts of the Governor, who as it seems, is unconscious of his duty and great responsibility. The charges, which are numerous and apparently will increase in number every day, must be concrete and reasoned, one by one, specifically, that they may be submitted to the Washington authorities through a commission to be sent there to demand due reparation of our rights.

In regard to politics, I must confess that the work of our enemies, the UNCONDITIONALS of Porto Rico,

has had effect on the spirit of those who in Washington may decide our lot at a given moment. The nature and finality of our platform have been subverted so as to make us appear hostile and disloyal to the United States and to their flag; that in our campaigns we have insulted the nation and their glorious banner; that our only finality is absolutely to break every tie and all connections with the American Union.

I have offered to clarify this point and to prove the contrary, not for our sake since we feel at ease and satisfied over duty done and ready at any moment to show our devotion for the Great Republic, but for the benefit of those minds who cannot understand this because they have been tortured and deceived by our enemies who take advantage of evil plots to injure us.

It is our duty, therefore, though we may not deem it necessary, to show that such hostility does not exist and that we have never thought of a separation implying the breaking of the ties binding us to the illustrious nation under whose protection our political and economic life develops.

And instead of repeating in other words what I have so often said in explaining the significance of our local politics, I prefer wholly to reproduce my statements to the Congressmen who visited us April 17, 1919, because what I said then is the clearest and briefest explanation I can make in the matter, and furthermore, by this means it will be seen that I am not explaining a new thought in an endeavor to adapt it to present circumstances, but that it is the same one that I have always maintained.

I then said to the Congressmen:

"You have come with a desire to learn of our life, to judge

our personality and to investigate conditions, for the purpose of bearing to Washington, upon your return, information of all our purposes and of all that we deserve and ask for, not only as men worthy of freedom the same as you, but also as citizens of the great people who conquered freedom for themselves and for the world.

We are going to ask but for one thing: JUSTICE. The justice which is based on the acknowledgment of the immanent right of every people to rule their own destinies and regulate their own lives. Ours is a simple problem. We are a people different from you in character, customs and language. Your idiosyncrasy and your manner of looking at the problems of life are different from ours. Between you and us there are things which by their own very nature can not be equal because of their origin and their tradition.

Twenty years of sovereignty over this island, twenty years of experimentation, and of adopting methods and systems acting upon the psychology of our people, have shown how impossible it is to change the order of things made by God and nature for a different finality.

Therefore, it is not possible to think, and it has been so averred on divers occasions by your statesmen, that we may some day be one of your companions in the federal system of your government.

Your thought and ours coincide on this essential point. Therefore, it is not just to make us submit to that system of government which you have adopted for such territories as will some day be admitted as states of your Union, because such system applied to peoples already formed and having their own civilization distinct

from that of the dominant people, is the most serious attack upon human dignity, and because such system if not leading some day to the elevation of our island to the category of a State of the Union will in process be the most absurd of all colonial systems.

There are, however, between the people of Porto Rico and the people of the United States, sentiments and interests in common which could and should be motives for the strongest union and solidarity between both peoples. We are, as you are, sons of free republican America. We have no race prejudice nor are we dragging along the sack of legendary misgivings founded upon the aristocracy of blood or of titles issuing from a feudal or monarchical system. We are, as you are, the emigrants from Europe who sought in America a country propitious for their expansion, and raised in its virgin valleys a new, free and democratic commonwealth.

But you have grown stronger and more powerful than us. Our race, idealist and genial, less preoccupied with practical problems leading to a predominance of the world through the might of force, neither represents the power nor possesses the elements that yours does for the great task of defending America and leading it over the road of its development and glory.

And we acknowledge that Porto Rico is for the great purposes of your policy on both continents of the Western Hemisphere a strategic point on the advance post of the Atlantic, right at the doors of the Caribbean Sea and the entrance to the Panama Canal, circumstances which impel us to feel that it is our duty graciously to accept the control of your authority or sovereignty in everything af-

fecting our international problem.

The American citizenship you have granted us solves in a dignified manner our position in the world, for it makes it incumbent upon you to defend and protect our interests, and likewise compels us to defend and protect yours, as evidenced by the recent European conflict during which our people volunteered to fight with you and for you in defense of the liberty of America and of the world.

Upon these bases we have but to say that the only possible solution between the United States and Porto Rico for the conciliation of the interests and dignity of both peoples, is for you to strive in your Senate and in your House of Representatives for the granting to Porto Rico of a complete system of self-government, permitting Porto Rico to legislate on its local affairs without restriction, and to appoint or elect in the island its executive officers just as if we were a State of your federal Union. Under such system, Porto Rico could adapt itself as far as possible to your institutions, each time making stronger and firmer the bonds uniting it to your continent.

A SYSTEM SUCH AS WE NOW HAVE, EMBODYING THE DOUBLE AUTHORITY IN PORTO RICO OF A GOVERNMENT DESIGNATED IN WASHINGTON AND A GOVERNMENT ELECTED IN THE ISLAND, BRINGS ABOUT, HOWEVER AUTONOMOUS SUCH SYSTEM MAY PRETEND TO BE, SERIOUS CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS THAT WEAKEN THE SENTIMENTS OF THE COUNTRY TOWARDS A FRANK AND DECIDED UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THIS PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

Porto Rico governed by her own

sons, under the protection of your glorious flag, may become a model for other peoples which, like ours, decide to live with you in the high mission of making our America greater, and defending its liberty.

Our people, therefore, want their Independence. Give it to them under this formula as an experiment which conciliates their interests and yours, or give it to them as wholly as you gave it to Cuba. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY."

The word "Independence" is the word taken by our political enemies as a pretext to make us appear hostile to the United States and to their flag. They know that the word, in its proper and natural meaning, as it is used by us, can not be considered as a hostile or aggressive sentiment against anybody, much less against the United States, from which we must expect everything, and in whose hands our lot has been placed. They know that under any system of American Government, there can be no formula other than independence or self-determination in all such matters as affect each people as a state or nationality, and that under any of said forms granted us we shall not be anything else if we have here a truly republican form of government than a nationality that has surrendered part of its sovereignty for purposes of its foreign policy to another people with whom it needs to live and to whom it is bound by great and supreme interests.

Before these high and noble ideas of the frankest and most open sectional and American spirit which the United States themselves maintain and proclaim through their great statesmen, there is raised here the small and selfish spirit of the partisans of an ill-disguised colonial sys-

tem, under pretext that they desire and pursue for a remote, indefinite future, the solution of statehood for our Island which they know to be impossible, and of which they know that nobody in Porto Rico or outside of Porto Rico thinks seriously because of the great and insuperable obstacles opposed thereto, not only of an ethnical nature, but also of an economic nature.

In their endeavor to bring about the dislike and antipathy of certain Americans here and in the United States, our stubborn enemies subvert the sense of our political platform, and where we have written the word "independence" they have crossed it out and inserted the word "secession" in place thereof. This word recalls to mind the bloody Civil War between the North and the South with all its hatred and antagonism which were once incident thereto but which have now disappeared from the American mind ever since the glorious day they were buried in oblivion and the indissoluble union of the states was FOREVER consecrated.

The bad faith of our enemies has pretended and still pretends to associate this case with ours under the sophism that being incorporated we pretend to disincorporate and carry out secessionist propaganda or, in other words, propaganda of rebellion and hostility.

We have already shown by abundant arguments and by citing well known American authorities, that incorporation does not exist unless a people or a territory is admitted by the other States into the federation. If this is not the case, territories are merely dependencies that may sooner or later be admitted to statehood if they acquire the necessary conditions, but prior to this, they may be sold, exchanged or declared independent by the sovereign will of Congress.

What our political enemies practically pursue is to confuse the noble spirit of the Unionist Party of Porto Rico and to discard its benevolent influence, in order to create in Porto Rico an absolutely undefined colonial system of government where abuses of an imposed power may be feasible for their benefit.

The words I have purposely capitalized in reproducing my statements to the Congressmen in 1919 are now brought into prominence and relief as if they were the words of a prophecy unfortunately fulfilled.

Our party knows that the only remedy for this evil, for the present and the future, is to bring about as soon as possible a reform of our system according to our platform. The most radical, together with the most conservative, support the first solution which establishes for the present the first term of the dilemma offered in my exposition to the Congressmen and I am certain that if they come to realize and understand that the happiness of their country will be thus secured, they will store in their souls all other more radical solutions, since before and above everything they are Porto Ricans and can sacrifice such part of their patriotism as may be necessary, in the full conviction that no matter what form of independence we think of, our destiny, our lot, our interests and our safety are intimately bound to the United States of America, and that it is our duty to accept whatever may be imposed upon us by the force of circumstances and our necessary affinity with the great people representing true democracy and true liberty.

To take any other stand when it is not in our power to adopt any solution, is unconsciously to play into our enemies' hands and to labor against our own ideals.

The truth of our sentiments is perfectly clear. Because we declare

our desires and frankly express without reserve what we are willing to accept nobly and honestly, who will be bold enough to say that we pursue a hypocritical, fallacious and disloyal policy? No. Our policy is frank; our sentiments are the same as those of all other men in their legitimate aspirations for liberty, though we fail not to fix a limit to our rights, in view of our need of living with others.

The best exponent of the psychological situation, which makes us think of the highest things and then restrain our impetuosity under the weight of serious considerations, will be found by recalling the words of our unforgettable fellow-countryman and republican leader, Dr. José Celso Barbosa, the most eminent champion of his party, the most American man Porto Rico ever had as judged by his own friends in rendering him their last homage: "IF PORTO RICO WERE LIKE THE PHILIPPINES IT WOULD NOT BE THAT SIDE OF THE HOUSE (referring to the Unionist majority in the Senate) THAT WOULD GIVE ME LESSONS IN INDEPENDENTISM."

There should be towards us, as towards all small peoples, a great spirit of generosity and justice, that our souls may feel quiet and satisfied and also disposed towards generosity and justice.

The work cannot be ours alone. It must be shared by the North also and it is from the North that acts of justice must come which shall make our confidence and affection lasting.

On our part, we need not show the sincerity of our attitude on the basis of loyalty and affection, because we have already done so and if it were necessary we would do so again.

I want all those interested in the happiness of Porto Rico to hear me without mental reservation.

Let my words enter honest hearts and pure souls. Let them reach the mind of the United States and of the world, and let the people who hold firmly in their hands the sacred banner of their ideals and traditions, without ceasing for this reason to

render the homage of their faith and the tribute of their admiration to the immortal banner which is the source of other flags and the great standard of the liberty of the world, be judged by and in virtue of them.

