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## The Future Political Status of Puerto Rico

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**THE FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS OF  
PUERTO RICO**

**Senior Honors Thesis  
The Honors Program  
Saint John's University**

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Distinction "All College Honors"  
and the Degree Bachelor of Arts  
in the  
Department of Government**

**By  
Sean Murray  
April, 1993**



**PROJECT TITLE: THE FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS  
OF PUERTO RICO**

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I would like to dedicate this  
paper to my family,  
especially my parents.

This is what \$50,000  
buys these days!



## INTRODUCTION

### Puerto Rico's future political status

Puerto Rico, a Caribbean island located 1,000 miles southeast of Florida, is currently presented with an important opportunity to make a decision regarding its permanent political status. Puerto Rico has endured almost 500 years of colonial domination, under Spain for 400 years and now under the United States for 95 years. Currently, the 3.6 million Puerto Ricans living on the island and the 2.5 million Puerto Ricans living in the mainland United States have been presented with the first serious attempt by the U.S. Congress to provide for a referendum asking the Puerto Rican people to choose between enhanced Commonwealth, statehood or independence. This may allow the people of Puerto Rico to finally decide their own permanent political status.

This paper is an analysis of current events regarding the future political status of Puerto Rico. I will examine the various actors in Puerto Rico and in the United States Congress, as well as international and United Nations positions. Ultimately, this paper will assess the possibility of determining the permanent political status of Puerto Rico in the next 10 years. Due to the partisan positions within Puerto Rico and the indecision on the part of the United States Congress, my conclusion is I do not think a permanent decision regarding the political status of Puerto Rico is likely before the end of the 20th century.

The three main political parties in Puerto Rico have united to present their case before Congress and the international community to bring a larger concern for the people of Puerto Rico. Despite disagreements between the Senate and House of Representatives, two bills before the U.S.

Congress outline ways in which Puerto Rico can hold a referendum to decide its political status. Puerto Ricans remain dissatisfied with having an undetermined political status; the current status of Puerto Rico as a Commonwealth, or "Estado Libre Asociado" (Associated Free State), is unsatisfactory to all Puerto Ricans because Puerto Rico remains under United States authority, and thus is considered the last vestige of American colonialism.

This paper examines the political aspect of the Puerto Rican situation. An important economical factor in determining the future political status of Puerto Rico involves the tax benefits for businesses which have been present in Puerto Rico for the past 40 years. Businesses from the United States are given a tax benefit, called tax credit 936, which enables businesses to make products at a substantially lower price than in the mainland United States. Essentially, U.S. companies invest in Puerto Rico and bring the profits back to the United States without having to pay taxes on profits earned in Puerto Rico. Combined with the significantly lower wages in Puerto Rico, this provided the opportunity for business to invest in Puerto Rico without having to invest in the people. The 936 tax credit will prove important later on when each political choice is discussed. Under the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) platform of enhanced commonwealth, 936 would remain; however, with the New Progressive Party (PNP) platform of statehood and the Puerto Rican Independence Party's (PIP) choice, 936 would eventually be eliminated. How the eliminating of 936 would affect the Puerto Rican economy is one of the major roadblocks in deciding the future political status of Puerto Rico.

The political questions regarding the status of Puerto Rico have again become a hot political debate in the international community and in the

United States. Over the past four years leaders of these three Puerto Rican political parties have appeared before Congress asking for the right to self-determination. This issue has also received international attention, ranging from the 1971 United Nations Decolonization Committee urging the U.S. to transfer all sovereignty to Puerto Rico to the 1978 appearance before the Decolonization Committee by the leaders of the three main Puerto Rican parties.

The reason the political status has again become a prominent issue can be seen by forces within Puerto Rico and the United States:

Discontent with the present commonwealth status, dissatisfaction on the part of advocates of statehood or independence, and President Bush's expression of support for Puerto Rican statehood have led to new legislation for a plebiscite on the island's political relationship to the United States. Congressional consideration of this issue is continuing in the 102nd Congress.

(Garrine P. Laney, May 4, 1992, p. 2)

After having an almost 100-year relationship with an economic and military superpower, Puerto Ricans on the island and the mainland want to permanently decide for themselves their future political status. The two main Congressional committees, although they have sharp disagreements with each other, have provided Puerto Ricans some hope that a decision on their political status will be decided before the turn of this century.

This is the context in which this paper is to be considered. By looking at the various actors within Puerto Rico, the mainland United States and the international community, what is the likelihood of there being a political solution regarding the status of Puerto Rico in the near future? What forces in Puerto Rico and the United States favor maintaining the status quo? What are the economic consequences involved in changing or

maintaining the status quo? Finally, what role has the United Nations played in maintaining and/or changing the status quo in Puerto Rico?

In order to better understand why and how each individual party maintains its position, it is essential to gain a brief historical understanding of each party and its current position.



## Overview of the political parties in Puerto Rico

The three main parties in Puerto Rico and the two main parties in the United States agree on one issue: finding a solution to the political status of Puerto Rico has become a 95 year old head ache with no easy answers. The political status issue has historically always been an important issue regarding self-determination for Puerto Ricans and a thorn in the side for U.S. politicians.

The main issue in this debate on political status, in which all three political parties in Puerto Rico agree, is this: Puerto Rico is still a colony and therefore must be given the opportunity to determine its own political status. The Popular Democratic Party (PPD) wants to remain associated with the United States yet maintain Puerto Rico's unique culture through an "enhanced Commonwealth status." The New Progressive Party (PNP) believes Puerto Rico can only shed its position as a colony and attain equal status among the Union by becoming the fifty-first state of the United States. The Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) maintains that Puerto Rico can only achieve equality and economic stability by becoming a sovereign nation in its own right and becoming a member of the international community.

In the past 15 years all three parties have participated in discussions at the United Nations and, in the past four years, in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. All of these parties have coherent reasons on why they believe Congress should implement its preferred choice. In order to better understand why and how each individual party maintains its position, it is essential to gain a historical understanding of each party.

## History and Position of the Popular Democratic Party (PPD)

The Popular Democratic Party (PPD) of Puerto Rico favors "enhanced commonwealth" status for the island. The PPD was founded in 1938 with the slogan "pan, tierra y libertad" (bread, land and freedom), in response to a growing "restless with old-style, elitist party politics" (Heine and Garcia, November/ December 1983, p.16). Luis Munoz Marin, the son of a popular political leader, created this party because he was "deeply disappointed by Washington's unwillingness to concede a measure of self-government to Puerto Rico and incensed by the dismal living conditions" of his countrymen(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.16) The PPD won the 1944 elections because it was able to win the support of the peasants and landowners who had been displaced by the new sugar economy.

During the elections of 1940 and 1944, one of the PPD's themes was "Status is not an issue." Although Munoz Marin wanted independence as a final goal, he believed Puerto Rico first needed immense economic assistance from the United States. He knew the only way to receive this kind of attention was for Puerto Rico to remain in some legal association with the United States. By trying to help the people of Puerto Rico through increasing employment and building better living conditions, he was able to garner significant political support (Raymond Carr, 1984, p.115).

However, the end of World War II brought about an increased amount of attention regarding Puerto Rico's political status. Several bills introduced into the U.S. Congress between 1936 and 1945 ranging from allowing Puerto Rican independence to a plebiscite on three status alternatives were defeated. In 1946, frustrated with Congress' inability to choose between statehood and independence for Puerto Rico, Munoz Marin

proposed a compromise solution to the status dilemma, a "third way, entitled "Pueblo Asociado de Puerto Rico" (Associated People of Puerto Rico), in which Puerto Rico would have full internal autonomy but would remain under U.S. sovereignty.(Heine and Garcia, November/ December 1983, p.20) Although this third option was not Munoz Marin's invention, he was the first Puerto Rican leader to

"obtain an effective measure of self-government for the island from the United States, provide an ideological rationale for the emerging political formula, and to emphasize a new approach to economic and social development designed to maximize the economic advantages accruing to Puerto Ricans from the island's continued colonial condition.

(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.20)

Munoz Marin, who effectively dominated Puerto Rican politics for 24 years (1940-64), became Puerto Rico's first elected Puerto Rican governor in 1948. Under his leadership, Puerto Rico became a "veritable showcase of U.S.-sponsored economic progress and political development under "Operation Bootstrap," which was a program designed to revitalize the Puerto Rican economy.(Bill Boyes, April 1983, p.203) U.S. politicians took pride in showing foreigners that it was possible to have a democratic government in a region dominated by military juntas and political turbulence.

Since 1968, the PPD has been forced to alter its "status quo" position in light of the growing importance of the PNP, which won the 1968 gubernatorial elections. As of 1992, both the PPD and the PNP have each have each controlled the governor position for 12 years since 1968. Admittedly, the new position of the PPD is still very status quo; the PPD wants an "enhanced Commonwealth" status for Puerto Rico. Essentially, this would mean Puerto Rico would have full internal autonomy, while still

remaining under the overall authority of the U.S. Congress. Since an estimated 90% of Puerto Rico's industry has been financed by mainland U.S. firms, the PPD believes enhanced commonwealth is the safest course with the "least unknowns and risks"(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.9). But the PPD also wants to clarify and limit the areas of federal authority:

The PPD wants tariffs on selected foreign imports; bilateral air transportation agreements with foreign countries; a non-voting commissioner in the Senate; recovery of excess federal lands; block grant funding from federal agencies; Spanish-language testimony in U.S. courts if requested; and the power to enter international organizations and agreements.

(Congressional Record, Feb. 21, 1991, S. 2086)

The PPD points out that the benefits of its choice would include maintaining Section 936 tax credit, lack of federal taxes, and security of strong bonds with the United States while maintaining a degree of autonomy. The PPD also wants control over immigration of foreigners (non-U.S. citizens), and full control over labor relations and environmental regulations. With enhanced commonwealth, the Puerto Rican governor would be able still be able to ensure that laws are not contrary to local interests.

The PPD party held the Puerto Rican governorship from 1984-92. Raphael Hernandez Colon, who was the PPD governor during this time, stated on Jan. 2, 1992, that he would not seek reelection in November 1992.(Facts on File, 1992, p.26) He announced this because Puerto Ricans "rebuffed Hernandez Colon when they voted against a measure that would have barred a yes-or-no referendum on statehood for Puerto Rico"(Facts on File, 1992, p.26). In other words, Hernandez Colon wanted to prohibit any future direct yes or no vote in Puerto Rico regarding its political status. This was seen as a defeat for Hernandez Colon and also for the PPD. In the recent November 1992 elections, the PPD lost the Resident Commissioner

position, Puerto Rican governor position, and both houses of the Puerto Rican legislature to PNP candidates.

### **History and Position of the New Progressive Party (PNP)**

"Somos una colonia. Si nosotros queremos ser ciudadanos norteamericanos debemos serlo en igualdad de condiciones con Estados Unidos."

(Statement by Carlos Romero Barcelo, pro-statehood governor of Puerto Rico 1976-84, Resident Commissioner 1992-current. Quoted in Revista Mas, July/August 1991, p.56)

The sentiment of Carlos Romero Barcelo that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States is echoed throughout the two parties that want to permanently change the political status of Puerto Rico; however, they want to achieve equality by extremely different ways. The New Progressive Party wants to become the fifty-first state, while the Puerto Rican Independence Party wants complete sovereignty.

The New Progressive Party (PNP) was founded in 1967 in response to a growing desire among Puerto Rican statehood movement to end its second-class citizenship status as a commonwealth and achieve equal treatment as the fifty-first state of the Union. A serious division within the ranks of the PPD resulted in not only the formation of the PNP but also provided the impetus for the PNP to win the governorship of Puerto Rico in 1968. The PNP rejects the enhanced commonwealth position of the PPD as "concealing a quasi-colonial relationship"(Carr, 1984, p.4). PNP advocates say one benefit of Puerto Rico becoming the fifty-first state is that it would remove the "colonial designation attached to the United States by many nations in the United Nations"(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.9).

One of the major themes the PNP uses is the fact that since 1917, Puerto Ricans have been citizens of the U.S. and have served in every major U.S. military conflict, yet are unable to vote in presidential elections. PNP supporters want the U.S. government to fulfill their "implied promise" of statehood that is contained in the granting of American citizenship. PNP advocates point out that the only Puerto Rican representative in the U.S. Congress-the Resident Commissioner in the House of Representatives-has no voting rights on the floor of the House. As a state, Puerto Rico would have two senators and at least seven representatives, which would enable these elected officials to increase the allocation of Federal funds for the island to offset the loss of 936(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p. 24). Although the PPD was victorious in a 1967 referendum on the status issue, the PNP won the governorship elections of 1968, and ruled until it was defeated by the PPD in 1972. The PNP also won the governorship and the Resident Commissioner position in the November 1992 elections, after being in power from 1976-84.

Besides receiving political representation in Congress and the right to vote for president, the PNP argues that statehood would

- 1) as a state, Puerto Rico would continue to receive approximately the same revenue as it does now, and would become fully eligible for a wide range of Federal grants and other benefits, for which it is not now automatically eligible; 2) statehood would give Puerto Rico a greater degree of political stability, a condition which would encourage investment by mainland corporations.

(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.8)

One of the two major obstacles the PNP continues to face pertain to tax liability and the loss of the 936 tax credit. Critics state that if Puerto Rico becomes a state, there would be some economic dislocation as a result of having U.S. income taxes imposed and the 936 tax credit phased out.



Furthermore, "the removal of the Federal tax exemption could deprive the local government of an estimated 60% of its current economy"(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.8).

"Together with Puerto Rico's own tax benefits, relatively low labor costs, and its location within U.S. tariff barriers, the Federal tax exemption was used as one of the primary means of attracting U.S. investment to Puerto Rico"(David L. Brumbaugh, July 1, 1992, p.3). With statehood, residents of Puerto Rico would have to pay Federal individual income taxes. However, PNP advocates maintain that as citizens of the United States, with full voting rights, paying taxes would be a small trade-off for being an equal partner of the United States.

A recent study done by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) considered the abolishment of 936 one of the major changes involved with statehood. According to the CBO study

the economic impact of statehood would be quite large, and one of the chief reasons would be the repeal of the possessions tax credits. By the year 200, CBO concluded, assets of firms currently using section 936 would decline by 37% to 47%. The decline in investment, in turn, would be instrumental in a decline in real gross national product (GNP) of between 10% and 15% from levels that would occur under Commonwealth status. At the same time, CBO estimated that unemployment would increase by between 4 and 7 percentage points, representing a total of from 50,000 to 100,000 additional unemployed persons.

(Brumbaugh, July 1, 1992, p.9)

However, although CBO's estimates are large, a study done by the PPD regarding the negative effects of statehood are higher: this study concluded that 80,000 to 145,000 private sector jobs would be lost under statehood; 31% to 72% of the assets of possessions corporations would leave Puerto Rico.(Brumbaugh, July 1, 1992, p.9)

PNP advocates fight back by saying that the number of jobs in Puerto Rico would not necessarily decline if 936 was eliminated. Then Governor of Puerto Rico and current Resident Commissioner Romero Barcelo stated in a Senate Hearing before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources that, if statehood is decided upon as Puerto Rico's future political status,

936 companies will not flee the island. They will stay because their current returns leave plenty of cushion against the loss of Section 936, because Puerto Rican unit costs are lower than on the mainland and because Congress has enacted disincentives to discourage their relocation to foreign countries to avoid U.S. taxes. The 936 companies are earning over \$8 billion per year and would have to pay about \$2.5 billion in taxes. They will still make over \$5.5 billion.

(Senate Committee Hearings held January 30, 1991, p.124)

They argue that even without the possessions tax credit, Puerto Rico would receive \$3 billion a year in increased welfare and transfer payments from the federal government, retain labor and other cost advantages over the mainland, and that Puerto Rican owned manufacturing firms would replace departing mainland-owned firms. (K. Michael Frazier, August 15, 1991, p.8) PNP proponents also say statehood would have a positive impact as a result of the increased confidence in Puerto Rico as an investment location and improved visibility for U.S. tourists.(John M. Kamensky, Fall 1990, p.47).

The second important issue the PNP has addressed is the issue of keeping Spanish as the main language in Puerto Rico. The importance of maintaining Spanish as the first language runs very deep; as one Puerto Rican vehemently maintains, "We have fought for more than 100 years to preserve Spanish, our maternal language"(Denisse Oller, July-August 1991,

p.55, translated from Spanish). Critics of the PNP point out that many Puerto Ricans value their distinct cultural heritage and want to maintain it; they see statehood as posing a threat to centuries of proud tradition.(Kamensky, Fall 1990, p.46)

To counter this concern, Romero Barcelo has said "There is no such thing as surrendering Spanish. Am I to tell a mother she cannot sing a lullaby to her child in Spanish? The nation doesn't need another state that speaks English-a state that speaks Spanish would help the nation"(Bill McAllister, "Puerto Rico Statehood Movement Gains", December 27, 1990, p.A12). Nevertheless, when the Spanish-only law was voted on in Congress, all the "no" votes were cast by members of the PNP.(Washington Times, March 6, 1991, p.A4)

It appears Romero Barcelo said this to maintain political legitimacy for the PNP; apparently, it has been successful. The recently elected PNP candidate as Puerto Rican governor, Pedro Rossello, has "promised to hold a plebiscite within a year on statehood"(The New York Times, "Statehood and Puerto Rico", Nov. 5, 1992, p.A12). At his swearing-in ceremonies, Rossello said "From now on, we'll go search for a star...a star we deserve"(Star Tribune, January 7, 1993, p.A6). Not only did the PNP win the gubernatorial race, but it also gained control of both chambers of the Puerto Rican legislature and the Resident Commissioner position in the U.S. House of Representatives (The New York Times, "Statehood and Puerto Rico", Nov. 5, 1992, B8:4). Rossello will serve as governor until 1996; PNP supporters hope they will have decided the political status of Puerto Rico by then. With the change of parties in the U.S. presidency, Romero Barcelo believes that a vote will occur in late 1993 or early 1994. The current PNP Resident Commissioner insists that President Clinton and

congressional Democrats will be more supportive than Republicans because "it is a civil rights issue"(McAllister, "3-Way Referendum on Puerto Rico's Future Seen Certain Next Year", Nov. 15, 1992, p.A11). Even though the Republican Party still has close ties with the PNP, "any state as dependent on federal aid as Puerto Rico is would not likely end up a Republican stronghold"(Coldwell, Feb. 5, 1990, p.19).

The PNP has gotten strong opposition from an obscure source. The Emergency Committee on Puerto Rican Statehood and the Status of English in the United States has submitted letters before the Senate Committee in order to convince members that statehood would be a grave disservice to the United States culturally and linguistically. This organization sent Congress a list of "Precedents for Requiring the use of English as a Precondition for Statehood" in where Congress made direct stipulations that English be the official language in the schools and in government offices. (Written statement submitted before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, letter dated 1-28-91, p.322). The Emergency Committee feels so strongly about the language difference that it submitted a letter stating

of these three options, it should be understood that statehood is the most radical. For the people of Puerto Rico, it is an irrevocable choice, and one that implies fairly rapid evolutionary and unavoidable cultural changes as the island becomes attractive to residents from the mainland who will move there in large numbers. But for the American people, it means the incorporation into its midst of a territory that has actively and successfully resisted America's language and customs for nearly 100 years, and has a history of violent opposition to the United States that includes assassination attempts on our president and on Members of Congress.  
(Letter dated 1-30-91, p.319)

It should be noted that the Emergency Committee is an ardently conservative pro-American group dedicated to what it believes are traditional "American" attributes. One particularly interesting point is this organization believes independence for Puerto Rico is primarily best for the United States, and any further integration of Puerto Rico into the United States would be a degradation of the American lifestyle. This is clearly not at all an endorsement of the Puerto Rican Independence Party because the Emergency Committee insists on focusing on radical independistas from 40 years ago. The Emergency Committee wants Puerto Rico to either remain a Commonwealth or to become an independent country. It wants this not because independence would necessarily be good for Puerto Rico, but because then the United States would not have such a large economic responsibility toward Puerto Rico.

### **History and Position of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP)**

...Puerto Rico since the beginning of the century has been a country, and it has been a people, and it has been a Latin American people, that have become through the processes of history a nation, a Latin American nation, that has not constituted itself into an independent nation.

(Dr. Manuel Rodriguez-Orellana, speaking before the House Subcommittee on Insular and International Affairs held in Washington, D.C, on January 30, 1990, p.43)

The Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) officially organized into its present form in the early 1940's as a minority party dedicated to making Puerto Rico an independent, sovereign nation. Members of the PPD became disillusioned with Munoz Marin, who despite a preference for independence

still called for some legal association with the United States. The PIP attributes Puerto Rico's social, political, and economic problems to the dependence and exploitation created by the interference of the United States. "The PIP argues that Puerto Rico's growth and development as a nation have been seriously impaired by U.S. colonial ties"(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.24). Therefore, the PIP calls on the United States to allow for Puerto Rican independence, and participates before Congress with the two larger parties (PPD and PNP) to present and argue for its position. The PIP has also gone before the Decolonization Committee of the United Nations calling for Puerto Rican independence.

Supporters of independence for Puerto Rico have made their intentions known ever since November 13, 1809, when the San German town council demanded a reform of

the despotic, arbitrary and tyrannical government that Spain maintained in Puerto Rico. In the event that Napoleon's troops overran Spain...San German would consider itself independent and free to choose the best method for the preservation and subsistence of its inhabitants in peace and the Christian religion.

(Harold J. Lidin, History of the Puerto Rican Independence Movement. 1981, p.1)

When U.S. troops overtook the island some 90 years later in 1898, the U.S. general in command stated "The first effect of this [U.S.] occupation will be the immediate release from your former political relations"(Lidin, History of the Puerto Rican Independence Movement. 1981, p.159). Puerto Rico, after obtaining a charter that outlined more independence from Spain, would now simply become a colony of the United States. In 1897, right before the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Spain granted Puerto Rico a Charter of Autonomy. Although this charter did not give Puerto



Rico complete independence, it contained more freedom than the United States currently allows. For example, the charter increased Puerto Rican voting representation in the Spanish Cortes. (Oversight Hearing before the Committee on Insular and International Affairs, January 30, 1990, p.15-16). When the U.S. took over Puerto Rico, the Charter of Autonomy was abolished, with Puerto Rican civil rights to be determined by the United States.

Although independence advocates only have about 7% to 10% support among the Puerto Rican population and remained in relative obscurity for the first part of the 20th century, it certainly has played the most interesting and volatile role of the three political choices. Although Puerto Rican nationalists carried out violent acts in Puerto Rico before, the one most publicized occurred on November 1, 1950. On this date two Puerto Ricans of the more radical Nationalist party raided Blair House in an attempt to kill President Truman; on March 1, 1954, four independistas brought a gun into the House of Representatives, wounding five congressmen. Although these independence members failed in their assassination attempts, they succeeded in garnering more attention from U.S. politicians for their political cause and portraying all independistas as violent radicals.

It must be clearly understood that the PIP is a completely distinct entity from other independence groups like the Boricua People's Army (EPB) and the and the Armed Revolutionary movement (MRA), who advocate guerrilla violence to free Puerto Rico from the United States. Because of the violence perpetrated by these and other radical independence groups, the PIP is seen in the same light by the FBI and the Puerto Rican police force. Therefore, one of the main reasons for low support for the

PIP is because over the past 40 years the Puerto Rican law enforcement and the United States Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) has harassed and persecuted many independence supporters. Due to this repression, "many Puerto Ricans who agreed with the Nationalists on the independence issue saw their actions as desperate, ill-timed, and unwise"(James D. Cockcroft, 1989, p.286).

After the anti-war demonstrations and the violence of late 1960's protesting the Vietnam War in general and the subordinate position of Puerto Ricans in particular, police activity in Puerto Rico intensified and several leaders of the independence movement were imprisoned.(Boyes, April 1983, p.206) A former U.S. Attorney General openly acknowledged that the FBI had improperly interfered on many occasions with independence groups in Puerto Rico, and the Puerto Rico Civil Rights Commission reached the same conclusion regarding the Puerto Rican police force.(Ruben Berrios Martinez, April 1977, p.582) Independence activists have in effect been forced to migrate to the mainland because they are seen as the violent subversives of the 1950's. The ironic result is that support for independence is higher among Puerto Ricans residing in the United States than among islanders.(Coldwell, Feb.5, 1990, p.20).

Furthermore, democratic rights have been denied. Some 125,000 Puerto Rican people, whose names are on the so-called subversive lists of the FBI, have been watched and threatened by the U.S. government. There are still 18 Puerto Ricans in U.S. prisons for political reasons, 14 of them already imprisoned for more than 10 years.

(Qian Wenrong, Sep. 2-8, 1991, p.13)

Nevertheless, it appears this reign of fear among independistas is subsiding; on June 18, 1989, when Congressional hearings were held in San Juan regarding the political status of Puerto Rico were held, 80,000 marched in

support of independence. The demonstrators openly burned an American flag and chanted "Yes to the republic! No to the colony!" (The New York Times. "Thousands Rally in San Juan in Support of Independence." June 19, 1989, p.A13). Although the PIP only maintains about 5-10% support in Puerto Rico, it has been able to achieve surface legitimacy among members of Congress. Congressional members see the PIP as the least violent and radical, therefore enhancing the chances of strong Puerto Rican-United States relations if independence is the choice of the Puerto Rican people.

The PIP maintains the reason for Puerto Rico's inability to solve its chronic unemployment problem is the lack of control over its own tariffs and monetary policy. Commonwealth status prevents Puerto Rico from developing economic policies suited to the island's needs and priorities because business is geared toward the U.S. mainland, with little or no concern for Puerto Ricans themselves. PIP supporters argue that Commonwealth status is "nothing but a spruced-up version of colonialism," which allows U.S. corporations to make huge tax-free profits by paying much lower wages than they would have to pay in the United States(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.24). With commonwealth status, at least, the political status is not permanent and can be changed.

Nevertheless, as Rodriguez-Orellana stated before the Subcommittee on Interior and Insular Affairs, "to continue the status quo, which is the problem, as the solution, is counter to any logic"(January 30, 1990, p. 44).

For the PIP, statehood would be the culmination of colonialism, an act that would put in danger the very existence of the Puerto Rican nation. Assimilation with the United States, forcing English (only 20% of Puerto Ricans speak English fluently) and the American culture on Puerto Ricans would simply destroy the long-standing ties it has with Spain and the rest of

Latin America. If Puerto Rico became independent, it would go from being the poorest state in the U.S. to one of the richest countries in Latin America. Plus, PIP members believe a strong economy, when combined with political independence, would attract returnees from the mainland, bringing back skills and resources beneficial to the economy. Moreover, Puerto Rico would be able to negotiate its own international trade pacts, adding to the financial improvement of the economy.

PIP proponents also point out that Puerto Rican independence would have benefits for the United States as well. The U.S. would gain financially if it no longer supported the Puerto Rican economy. Under S. 712, by the year 2000, federal aid and tax benefits to the island would be cut by \$1.5 billion. Eventually, all aid and tax benefits would be phased out completely.(Brumbaugh, July 1, 1992, p.6). The United States, although a major ally and most likely giving Puerto Rico monetary aid, would no longer have to be the principle financial overseer. This would save the United States an estimated \$6-\$9 billion per year.

PIP opponents do not believe independence is a viable option because traditionally only 7-10% of the Puerto Rican population favors independence; these critics then point out that 90% of the population wants to remain in some association with the United States. Critics of the independence option also point out that with independence, Puerto Rico would lose all Federal U.S. payments to Puerto Rico, which add up to billions of dollars per year. Furthermore, Puerto Rico would not only lose the 936 tax credit but would also come under the American tariff system, and would therefore be less profitable to American businesses. Critics also maintain that with independence Puerto Rico would be placed under the U.S. immigration quota system, thus limiting the current flow of unskilled

labor from the island into the mainland.(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.7). Critics do not believe the PIP assertion that independence would bring back highly trained mainland Puerto Ricans; rather, they think independence would bring back unskilled labor, which would only raise the current unemployment rate of 14.7%. Another major problem would be the future role of the U.S. military and its installations in an independent Puerto Rico.

Despite these criticisms, the PIP and other independistas will continue to remain as the real voice of change. PPD and PNP advocates want to remain under the responsibility of the United States so Puerto Rico will always receive large amounts of U.S. dollars. PIP advocates want to help rebuild Puerto Rico in a physical, cultural, social and economical manner by becoming an independent country free of domination by the United States.

Although the PDP, PNP and PIP have different choices as to the permanent political status of Puerto Rico, this analysis is too simplistic. An in-depth look at how these parties interact with each other is necessary in order to better understand each parties position.

### **Shades of Gray: a deeper appreciation of the PPD, PNP, and PIP**

The differences between the three main political parties in Puerto Rico are important to build a foundation of understanding on why and what each party wants as Puerto Rico's future permanent political status. However, the differences between these parties are not as clear as they might appear upon first glance. It is necessary to have a deeper appreciation

of these parties in order to fully understand why they maintain their positions.

The PPD and PNP involve themselves in nit-picky bickering because they simply do not like each other. It appears like differences over Puerto Rico's political status have become personal vendettas between the leaders of these two parties. Two examples of these petty arguments occurred during the Hearings before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held January 30th and February 7th, 1991. During discussion about when the referendum would be held in Puerto Rico would be held, Rafael Hernandez Colon (PPD) stated that if the referendum could not be held in 1991, then

“...we [the PPD, PNP and PIP] are all of an agreement that it cannot be in 1992.”

Governor Romero Barcelo: No, I am not. I am not in agreement.

Governor Hernandez: Well, so far you had been.

Governor Romero Barcelo: No, I have said it would be preferable to have it before 1992, but I do not see why we could not have it in February 1992.

(Senate Hearings, Jan. 30 and Feb. 7, 1991, p.166)

This instance of bickering only fueled the Chairman's (Senator Johnston) frustration regarding the depth of the differences that must be overcome to resolve this issue. This example also shows the difficulty of having the two major parties agree on crucial issues involved in determining the future political status of Puerto Rico.

The second example of the petty arguments involving the PPD and PNP occurred only a few minutes after the first. This argument regarded the PNP plan to have statehood implemented over a five year period. This was clearly to the dissatisfaction of the Senate Committee, and the PNP revised their plan and eliminated this idea. However, the PPD tried to give



the impression that the PNP still included this idea in their current plan. The miscommunication arose because the PPD only had the first draft and the PNP had not yet given the PPD the updated draft. Senator Wallop put the situation the most diplomatically correct when he said "...for outward intents and appearances, you appear to be friends with each other..." when it was obvious the leaders of the three parties clearly showed a personal dislike for each other. (Senate Hearings, January 30, 1991, p. 171)

Nevertheless, the PNP and PPD have two similarities that are worth mentioning. Both parties by law want to remain in association with the United States. They base their reasoning on the 95 year association Puerto Rico has had with the United States. The second similarity is both the PPD and PNP have members registered with the U.S. Democratic and Republican parties. These two Puerto Rican parties each sent delegates to the 1984, 1988, and 1992 Democratic and Republican National Conventions. Participation in the PPD or PNP does not preclude participation in either of the two major U.S. parties.

Another similarity between PNP and PPD is that both have systematically implemented policies that have tried to undermine the legitimacy of the independistas. The PNP and PPD have covered up their illegal actions to show the evil ways of independence advocates. For example, in 1978 the PNP, with the knowledge and cooperation of the FBI, covered up the killing of three independistas by Puerto Rican police officers by saying they acted in self-defense. This instance was eventually widely publicized on the island and became known as "Puerto Rico's Watergate"(Cockcroft, 1989, p.276). The PNP was voted out of office in 1984 for this scandal and overall corruption within the government, much like the PPD in 1976.

One way to differentiate the ideology of the three leaders in Puerto Rico is to look at which U.S. Ivy League schools they attended. Yale has historically been considered the university which advocated change for Puerto Rico, while Harvard has consistently been the voice of the status quo. Romero-Barcelo of the PNP and Berrios-Martinez of the PIP attended Yale and Hernandez Colon of the PPD attended Harvard. Attending certain Ivy League universities will simply reinforce pre-conceived ideas on the political status of Puerto Rico, or will change them drastically. During the 1930's, faculty members at Yale called for a change in Puerto Rico, while Harvard faculty insisted on maintaining the status quo. This difference in ideology has continued until the present time.

One similarity which may be self-evident but important is that the PIP and PPD want to maintain total or partial independence from the United States. This is ironic in the sense that independence is the considered the most radical departure from the current situation, while simply enhancing the Commonwealth status is the most conservative position.

The PIP and PNP maintain that the current (and any type of) Commonwealth relationship is a colonial anachronism. Romero-Barcelo of the PNP says "I would be ashamed if we voted to remain a colony" (Coldwell, Feb. 5, 1990, p.18). Rodriguez-Orellana of the PIP says the commonwealth status rests on "the immoral assumption of the colonizer's superiority over the colonized"(Coldwell, Feb. 5, 1990, p.18). The PNP wants to attain equality with the United States through statehood, while the PIP wants to attain equality with the international community through independence.

If Puerto Rico became the 51rst state, non-PIP policy would be reorganized, creating a new axis for politics in Puerto Rico. Two

possibilities for the way in which members of the PPD and PNP would be assimilated into the United States Congress. The first alternative would be the general division of members of the PNP into the U.S. Republican party, with members of the PPD joining the U.S. Democratic party. Although there would be some switching of party affiliation, this would be the basic outline. Since the PPD has a long relationship with the Democratic Party and the PNP has strong ties to the Republican Party, this appears to be the most likely outcome. The other possibility is the elimination of the PPD and PNP, with the U.S. Republican and Democratic parties vying for support among any and all Puerto Ricans. In order to increase its membership in future federal elections, both U.S. parties would have to build a strong network of support in a very short period of time. Either way, the Republican and Democratic parties would complete their takeover of political power, and the PIP and other independence groups would remain as the only real voice of dissent in Puerto Rico.

Despite most predictions of the Democratic Party dominating the Puerto Rican contingency in the U.S. Congress if Puerto Rico became the 51st State, some members of the PNP believe the Republican party would be able to hold its own. Dr. Miriam Ramirez de Ferrer, president of organization Puertorriquenos en Accion Ciudadana, cites the fact that the PNP currently holds the Resident Commissioner position in the U.S. House, the Puerto Rico governor position, and a majority in both chambers of the Puerto Rican legislature. Ramirez de Ferrer specifically doubted a Democratic delegation by saying "I know many statehood allies, including myself, who would have a strong chance of being elected to the United States Congress"(Telephone interview, Jan. 25, 1993). PNP leaders also give evidence that the Democratic party has endorsed statehood; Romero Barcelo

wrote that "the 1980 platforms of both the Democratic and Republican parties reaffirm[ed] support for the statehood option"(Romero Barcelo, Fall 1980, p.63). Nevertheless, despite the overwhelming victory for the PNP, this does not necessarily mean all these PNP members would join the U.S. Republican Party.

For all their differences, these three parties have provided a united front before the United Nations regarding Puerto Rico's current political status and before the U.S. Senate concerning support for a referendum in Puerto Rico. Since 1978, these parties have told the Decolonization Committee that they believe the current Commonwealth status is colonial and have demanded change in the situation. Also, since 1988 all three promised to support a referendum in which Puerto Ricans would determine their future political status. This was the impetus for Congress to begin proceedings to examine the consequences of change and maintaining the status quo.

Another similarity which all three parties share is that they do not want an immediate removal of tax code 936. The PPD, PNP and PIP all recognize, in varying degrees of confidence, that 936 is the foundation upon which the Puerto Rican economy is built. The two things which could change this status is the implementation of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Clinton Administration's promise to "halt the flight of jobs from the American mainland"(Larry Rohter, Jan.3, 1993, p.A14). Wages in Puerto Rico, by one estimate, are four times higher than in Mexico. This would result in the short-term loss of thousands of jobs, only partially offset by high-technology companies making Puerto Rico a base to sell their products in Latin America.

This is the context in which these parties act within Puerto Rico and the United States. The simple adherence to a certain position does not accurately portray the way in which these parties interact. Therefore, a deeper understanding of these parties shows more complex differences and/or similarities than just advocating statehood, independence, or enhanced Commonwealth. Now I turn my attention toward the positions of the members of the United States Congress and Republican and Democratic presidents.

## Historical Overview in Congress

The United States Congress and the Presidents of the United States, although they agree on keeping Puerto Rico a colony, have historically had significantly different methods of maintaining the status quo. While all presidents since Franklin D. Roosevelt have rhetorically advocated self-determination for Puerto Rico, Congress has refused or successfully blocked any serious attempt to decide the future political status of Puerto Rico. Although these positions appear to be similar, it is important to examine these positions separately.

In order to understand Congressional positions regarding which political status is best for Puerto Rico, one must first understand the aura of inactivity that has plagued members of Congress throughout the years. For the past 95 years, U.S. politicians from both parties have given Puerto Ricans the impression they are doing something about giving Puerto Rico a legitimate opportunity to decide which political status Puerto Ricans desire. This policy-of-no policy can be seen through the words and actions of military personnel and politicians throughout the history of U.S. domination of Puerto Rico.

Since the Treaty of Paris, many laws have been instituted and amended, ultimately creating the 1952 Puerto Rican Constitution, which calls Puerto Rico an "estado libre asociado", literally meaning associated free state yet translated into English as "Commonwealth." Although the United States Government recognizes Puerto Rico as being in free association with the U.S., in a 1987 ruling the U.S. Supreme Court appeared to view Puerto Rico as having the same degree of autonomy as a state (Bette A. Taylor, Oct. 17, 1988, p.4). Like a state, Puerto Rico is able to make its

own insular rules and distribute federal money with considerable freedom from the federal government. However, since Puerto Rico is not a state, it receives a lower percentage of federal funds than any of the 50 states. No Puerto Rican representative may vote in Congress regarding any policy decision. Nevertheless, no U.S. politician will call Puerto Rico a colony; doing so would be seen as bowing to international pressure to release Puerto Rico from the chains of colonial status.

The U.S. Congress has consistently displayed a historical lack of understanding in the political savvy of Puerto Rican politicians. In 1900, with Congressional passage of the Foraker Act, Puerto Ricans could elect their own mayors and the members of the lower house of the Legislative Assembly. However, the real political power was held by the upper house and the Puerto Rican executive council, both appointed by the War Department and the White House. A civilian governor was also appointed by the governor. In 1917, an elected Senate replaced the executive council, but the president had veto power over legislation passed by the Puerto Rican Congress. The U.S. Congress also granted Puerto Ricans U.S. citizenship in time to make them eligible for the military draft of World War I. (Benjamin Keen, 1992, p.527) The sentiment among U.S. politicians was that Puerto Rico was still not ready for self-government, so until then they would learn by serving the U.S. government.

The most current actions in Congress regarding the political status of Puerto Rico were introduced in 1991. Senate Bill 244, written by Bennett Johnston (D-Louisiana), and House of Representatives Bill 316, written by Ron de Lugo (D-Virgin Islands), have created many hearings and much debate yet little action. S. 244 was debated and defeated by members of the

Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, while H.R. 316 passed a House voice vote but was not debated on the floor of the Senate.

Although both S. 244 and H.R. 316 would have authorized an islandwide referendum to give residents the choice of statehood, enhanced commonwealth or independence, differences between S.244 and H.R. 316 are significant because they emphasize opposite ways to implement the majority choice of the Puerto Rican people. S. 244 narrowly defines the three options and would automatically put the result of the plebiscite into effect. Therefore, the Senate would have to strictly define the meaning of each choice before a vote in Puerto Rico could occur. H.R. 316 broadly defined the three options, each of which would leave Congress to determine the specifics of the voted for option, particularly the economic consequences of the chosen option. The Senate bill was geared toward the implementation of a status while the House bill wanted to hold a referendum(Congressional Quarterly Almanac, 1991, p.184). S. 244 would make Congress "morally bound" to implement the majority choice while H.R. 316 would simply have the Puerto Rican population vote on the option they prefer, and then come to Congress to have this choice created through further legislation.

The vote defeating S.244 Energy and Natural Resources Committee was almost split along bipartisan lines, with the end vote being 10-10. Eight Democrats, including Paul Wellstone (Minnesota), Dale Bumpers (Arkansas), Bill Bradley (New Jersey), voted for the bill. The only Republicans who voted for S.244 were Pete Domenici (New Mexico) and Mark Hatfield (Oregon), with Domenici saying he voted for the bill with reservations. The three Democrats who voted against the bill were Richard Shelby (Alabama), Kent Conrad (North Dakota), and Wendell Ford



(Kentucky). The rest of the Republicans in the committee voted against the bill. (CQA, 1991, p.185)

The inability of the Senate and the House to resolve their differences, thereby failing to pass legislation that would have allowed a referendum on the political status issue in Puerto Rico, is important because the political leaders in Puerto Rico wanted to have this issue resolved by the end of 1991. They wanted to hold a status vote in 1991 in order to avoid disruption of the islandwide elections in 1992. "The political status issue is so emotional on the island that the parties feared that holding a plebiscite during a regular election would create a furor at the polls"(CQA, 1991, p.184). With the PNP now in power, and Congress unlikely to pass any legislation this year, it appears Puerto Ricans will endorse statehood before the year ends. Rossello, newly elected PNP governor, has told the Puerto Rican people that he will have a referendum before the end of 1993. Therefore, 1994 looks like the earliest time Congress will begin discussing this issue again.

Now, armed with a basic understanding of recent activity in Congress regarding Puerto Rico's political status, it is appropriate to define the complex and variable positions of the members of Congress regarding recent developments of creating legislation in order to hold a referendum on the political status of Puerto Rico.

### Positions of Members of Congress

The official position of the United States Congress is very clear. Since 1953, the United States has maintained that the Puerto Rican people chose Commonwealth status by democratic processes and that Puerto Rico is free to change that status by the same processes. However, this position is a statement of intent on which Congress will not be required to act because Congress will not act as long as there is no clear indication of the status Puerto Ricans want. As for the 1993, Stayman said that nothing will happen regarding passing legislation to allow a referendum in Puerto Rico for this session of Congress. (Telephone interview with Allen Stayman, Legal Advisor for the Minority, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources).

The fundamental political weakness of Puerto Rico is that it does not have an elected voice in Washington. Without neither someone to defend Puerto Rican interests in Congress and a clear choice among Puerto Ricans, the easiest policy for Congress to follow is to do nothing. By not taking sincere action on this issue, Congress achieves its continued goal: maintain political and economic domination over Puerto Rico. This has been the policy of Congress for a long time; during the Roosevelt Administration, members of Congress were indifferent to the concerns of an island inhabited by "foreigners for whom we are always being asked to do something without any return" (Carr, 1984, p.60).

Congress avoids serious debate by opposing different choices put forth by the political parties of Puerto Rico. Members of both parties in Congress have many varied reasons why they do not want statehood for Puerto Rico. Although these reasons are not the only reasons, some of the reason are the following: language and cultural differences, ignorance on this issue, the high costs of statehood, concern over the differences between

the House and Senate bills, and doubts about the statehood and independence options. One reason exclusive to Republicans would be increasing the Democratic majority in both chambers of Congress, although this is also debatable.

In hearings before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held Jan. 30 and Feb. 7, 1991, Republican Senator Don Nickles said in his opening remarks:

I will be very open in stating I have some reservations concerning the statehood option. I am sure that many people in the United States have seriously considered whether having Puerto Rico join the Union as a State is something that we want to do.

(Senate Hearings, p.105)

Nickles's reservations about the statehood option regarded the "significant differences" between the United States and Puerto Rico, including "economic differences, cultural differences, geographical differences...language differences"(McAllister, "Puerto Rico's Political Leaders Urge Referendum", Jan. 31, 1991, p.A16). Nickles and other GOP opponents cited the island's high poverty rate and the likelihood that current capped federal welfare payments would soar under statehood. Even Johnston, author of S.244, said that "Congress does not want to enact statehood if it will cost a huge amount of money"(Martin Tolchin, Feb. 8, 1991, p. A18).

Wendell Ford, (D-Kentucky), expressed concern over S.244 regarding Puerto Rico's lingual and cultural differences, and the lack of an overwhelming majority of island residents who supported any one option.(COA, 1991, p.184) Kent Conrad (D-ND) said the statehood option was a "cruel hoax" and said Puerto Rico's cultural and language differences were critical: "I fear that we may create a Quebec, if we bring Puerto Rico

in as a state"(McAllister, "Puerto Rico Referendum Killed", Feb. 28, 1991, p.A6).

Senator Dale Bumpers (D-Arkansas) angered PIP supporters by stating that "voting for independence is not very smart"(Masters, July 14, 1991, p.A19). In response to this comment, PIP leader Berrios Martinez said "I didn't know there was so much ignorance left in Arkansas"(Masters, July 14, 1991, p.A19).

Before the same committee, Senator Domenici had perhaps the most peculiar statement regarding Congresses' responsibility toward the people of Puerto Rico:

My last comment is that it is rather exciting and-I do not mean that in any way but a positive mode-it is fun for this committee to have this kind of issue. We do not get this kind of issue very often.  
(Senate Hearings held January 7, 1991, p.108)

Determining the political status of 3.6 million people is a difficult responsibility; many volumes of information must be examined and much discussion has to be done before this committee can itself create a satisfactory referendum. This is a serious responsibility which must be dealt with in a serious manner.

House aides said it would be difficult in 1991 to reconcile the House and Senate bills because they focused on different ways to implement a definitive political status, and there was not enough time to reconcile these differences. This sentiment was echoed by the House Speaker of the Puerto Rican Legislature, Jose Jarabo of the PPD, who said the plebiscite process was being slowed by "drastic differences of vision, of opinion, of philosophy between the Senate and House in Washington"(Lidin, San Juan

Star article written 1-27-91 submitted into the record of the Senate Hearings, January 30 and February 7, 1991, p.305).

Senator Wallop did not support S.244 because he had problems with the process.

"Puerto Rico will have either Statehood or Independence when Puerto Rico wants it, not when Congress forces the process. I have a very fundamental concern with Congress mandating a referendum in Puerto Rico."

(Statement by Senator Wallop before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Jan. 7, 1991, p.103).

Wallop would apparently support any majority vote of Puerto Ricans. He has no preference among the choices-he considers them to be equally valid. However, he fails to recognize that unless Congress spells out what each option would mean, and any vote by Puerto Ricans would not be binding on Congress. In the 1967 referendum held in Puerto Rico on the status issue, the PPD option won an overwhelming majority, but since it was not mandated by Congress it did not have any implementary power. Wallop wants Puerto Ricans to first tell Congress what they want, and then come to Congress. He does not Congress to influence the vote by favoring one choice over any of the others.(Personal letter, January 28, 1993) George Mitchell (D-Maine), Senate Majority Leader, maintains a similar position. Mitchell states that

...I have not come to a final conclusion as to the merits of the status options. I do believe, however, this issue is best decided by the people of Puerto Rico directly, for they are the ones who have the most knowledge of their circumstances and the most at stake in the final analysis.

(Personal letter, March 5, 1993)

Both Wallop and Mitchell fail to see that Puerto Ricans can not tell Congress what they want unless Puerto Ricans first know what Congress is willing to give them.

Another reason why some senators oppose statehood is because Puerto Rico, based on its population, would receive at least six representatives in the U.S. House in addition to the two senators. With a population of 3.6 million, Puerto Rico would be the most populous state ever admitted into the union, and would rank 27th in population, between Colorado and Oklahoma. (Christopher Coldwell, Feb. 5, 1990, p.18) Although all states would lose some political power, regardless of party affiliation, smaller states fear that they would lose the most if Puerto Rico became the 51st state. Bob Dole (R-Kansas), Senate Minority Leader, says that Puerto Rico receiving six members in the House of Representatives would "dilute to some extent the influence of representatives from other states. Members of Congress from smaller states are understandably concerned about the effects this may have on their states"(Personal letter, March 8, 1993). Clearly, self-interest in not allowing Puerto Rico become a state plays a role in delaying any permanent decision.

Senator Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina) is strongly opposed to statehood because it would not be good for the United States. Helms, on the floor of the Senate, submitted an article by Patrick Buchanan for the reasons for his position (Personal letter, January 28, 1993). In the article, Buchanan says the violent independistas might flare up if Puerto Rico became a state, creating a "Northern Ireland in the Caribbean" (Congressional Record, March 22, 1990, S. 3052-3053). Helms does not want statehood because it would not be good for the United States; as long as Puerto Rico does not have any voice in Congress, then the situation need

not be addressed. Furthermore, mainland citizens would not have any say in preventing Puerto Rico from becoming our only dominantly Spanish-speaking state. Yet Buchanan (and, by association, Helms), neglects to acknowledge that the elected representatives in Congress have prevented Puerto Ricans from permanently deciding their future political status. Buchanan also states that "there is no overwhelming clamor for statehood on the island; nothing is wrong with today's commonwealth status that cries out for repair"(ibid). Buchanan must have forgotten that everyone wants to change the current status; even the PPD wants to slightly change the current status. Helms' position is identical to the position held by the Emergency Committee, which is precisely the position which has prevented Puerto Rico from deciding its political status for 95 years.

Helms is apparently not the only member of Congress who holds these beliefs. Juan Garcia Passalacqua, a lawyer and well-known television and newspaper journalist from Puerto Rico, recounted a conversation with a member of Congress. "As a friend in Congress once said to me, 'The mulatto, Spanish-speaking poor cannot aspire to statehood. Mulatto, Spanish-speaking and poor is three strikes. Three strikes and your out.'" Garcia says there is a "racist faction in Congress" and predicts that Helms and other Senate conservatives will move to block statehood for Puerto Rico. (Coldwell, Feb.5, 1990, p.19)

Senator Paul Simon (D-Illinois), agrees with Reagan and Bush and is in favor of letting Puerto Ricans decide for themselves their future political status, with a preference for statehood. Simon bases his position on Puerto Ricans being American citizens, yet are treated like second-class citizens. Simon cites the wars in which Puerto Ricans have fought and died in, yet had no voice in deciding to go to war. Regarding economic plans, Simon

cites Congress's willingness to cut food stamp and mental health programs for Puerto Rico, while continuing to prevent Puerto Ricans to be eligible for supplemental security programs (SSI) and lower AFDC payments. Congress wants to do all this even when Puerto Rico's average income of \$5,157 is about half of Mississippi's average income (the lowest in the nation) of \$8,098. Ultimately, Simon states that "Colonialism is a relic of the past. Puerto Ricans ought to be able to vote for President, ought to have members in the House and Senate. Or we should give them independence, if they want that"(Simon March 5-11, 1989. Information also taken from P.S./Washington: Simon June 16-22, 1985.)

Another way Senators prevent discussion and have taken a long time in trying to resolve the permanent political status of Puerto Rico is by claiming ignorance of the issue. Senator Conrad Burns (R-Montana) was the most honest in opening remarks when he stated "It was just the last couple of years that I have been acquainted with this issue"(Senate Hearings, 1991, p.108). Senator Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyoming), the Ranking Minority Member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said during the hearings that "Certainly if it had not been for your efforts I would not have become involved"(Senate Hearings, 1991, p.102). Ben Nighthorse Campbell, as a recently-elected Senator from Colorado appointed to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, wrote that "Frankly, I haven't thought a lot about the questions you raise, so I can't give you an informed answer" (Personal letter, February 5, 1993). At a 1982 Southern governors' meeting in Puerto Rico, governors were asked what their position was regarding the political status of Puerto Rico. Governor James Hunt of North Carolina confessed he had "not given the matter a lot of thought"(Carr, 1984, p.11). This is a clear indication that



many politicians have only recently become aware of the debate surrounding the political status of Puerto Rico, even though Puerto Ricans have been calling for definitive action since 1898.

The political status of Puerto Rico is clearly not played in partisan politics. The affiliation with one party of a member of Congress does not ensure one clear position; regarding the vote in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources which defeated S.244, "enough members of both parties in the Senate Committee felt Puerto Rico should pick a particular status and then come back to the Committee"(Telephone interview with Allen Stayman, Jan. 23, 1993). The reason for this being a non-partisan issue is because of the financial obligations involved on the part of the United States, especially for enhanced Commonwealth and statehood. Concern over U.S. military bases is also a major point of contention for members of Congress, who feel they have to balance the wishes of the armed forces when considering the different political status options for Puerto Rico. Ultimately, Congress will decide the definitions of each status option, no matter how the PPD, PNP or PIP defines its position before Congress.

## Historical Position of U.S. Republican Presidents

Although every U.S president since Franklin Delano Roosevelt has supported Puerto Rico's right to self-determination, "the truth is that, beyond the realm of rhetoric, that right has never been recognized for Puerto Rico"(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.59). Since Puerto Rico adopted a constitution in 1952 and 1975, no less than three bills supporting some type of referendum definitively deciding Puerto Rico's political status have been debated and defeated in Congress. Not only is it important to separate the positions of members of Congress and presidents, but the different positions of Republican and Democratic presidents must also be explained separately. I will begin with the position of Republican presidents.

The United States Republican Party has a long and varied position regarding the political status of Puerto Rico. Traditionally, Republicans are considered the party favoring statehood, depending on what position in Washington a particular Republican holds. Republican presidents have historically supported Puerto Rican self-determination, but also say they are in favor of statehood. However, the earliest Republican presidents were only concerned with maintaining order in Puerto Rico and ensuring its obedience to the United States.

Actions by U.S. presidents toward Puerto Rico showed American ignorance toward a different culture. In 1909, when the Puerto Rican lower chamber of the legislature refused to approve the governor's budget, Republican President William Taft amended the Foraker Act. Calling the refusal to approve a "lack of gratitude," Taft changed the Foraker Act so that in the future, whenever the legislature approved the budget, the

previous year's budget went into effect. Nevertheless, almost all Republican presidents since Dwight D. Eisenhower have maintained they are willing to accept any decision by the Puerto Rican people regarding their political status. Eisenhower even sent a message to the UN General Assembly, which was discussing whether Puerto Rico should be taken off the list of colonies compiled by the UN, saying that

if at any time the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico adopts a resolution in favor of more complete or even absolute independence, I will immediately therefore recommend to Congress that such independence be granted.

(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.58).

Although former presidents Ford, Reagan and Bush have issued similar statements upholding the decision of the Puerto Rican people regarding self-determination, they have all indicated a preference for statehood. According to Carlos Romero-Barcelo, governor of Puerto Rico from 1976-84, "President Gerald Ford broke the ice with his strong 1976 declaration in favor of Puerto Rico statehood"(Romero-Barcelo, Fall 1980, p.63). On Dec. 31, 1976, Ford proposed statehood for Puerto Rico and submitted to Congress the provisions of a proposed Puerto Rican Statehood Act. A month later a statehood bill was introduced in the House, but was not acted on.(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.3) In 1982 Reagan reaffirmed the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination, and indicated a preference for statehood. Bush, in his 1989 State of the Union speech, urged Congress to enact legislation that would allow the people of Puerto Rico the right to decide their political future in a referendum, yet also specifically mentioned that he favored statehood.

Why do Republican presidents agree with the right of Puerto Rican self-determination yet also indicate a preference for statehood? Although no answer can be completely adequate, perhaps it has something to do with the long-standing ties between the leadership of the PNP and the leadership of the Republican Party. Former President Bush is a close friend of Carlos-Romero Barcelo, the current PNP Resident Commissioner, and is also a good friend of Pedro Rossello, the current PNP Governor. Rhetorically, it sounds very patriotic to wrap oneself in the American flag and say that the United States should allow their Puerto Rican brothers and sisters to join in the Union. Republican presidents say this and sound good, yet realize this issue is not at the top of the agenda in Congress. A Republican president is aware that Republican members of Congress do not necessarily favor statehood, so therefore does not pressure them in any extensive way to act on this issue. Furthermore, it seems very naive if not stupid politics to support statehood when it is generally understood in Washington that Puerto Rico would send a Democratic majority to Congress, thus increasing the Democratic majority there. Nevertheless, although this may be a popular consensus among U.S. politicians, there is some doubt among PNP Republicans whether this is necessarily true.

### **Historical Position of U.S. Democratic Presidents**

Democratic presidents have traditionally had a less clear policy on the political status of Puerto Rico. Nevertheless, the strong personal relationship between Munoz Marin and Roosevelt during the New Deal helped to create a friendly relationship between the PPD and the Democratic

party. "During the Depression, when the United States was suffering, the people of Puerto Rico were starving, and the Democratic party sent millions of dollars of aid to Puerto Rico to alleviate the hunger"(telephone interview Allen Stayman, Jan. 28, 1993). Of the Democratic presidents who have spoken on the issue, all have simply expressed the right of the Puerto Rican people to decide for themselves the type of political status they desire. It is important to note that this is not an endorsement of any one political status; unlike Republican presidents, Democratic presidents have stayed away from any particular status option.

The first time the Democrats had to deal with Puerto Rico was in 1912 when Woodrow Wilson was elected. While the Republicans were concerned with territoriality (Taft amending the Foraker Act to ensure U.S. dominance of the island), Democrats emphasized the rights of citizens. Wilson supported the earlier discussed Jones Act of 1917, which granted Puerto Ricans American citizenship and other political liberties.

In the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, President Truman in 1947 declared that "Puerto Ricans should be allowed to settle their own future"(Carr, 1984, p.72). This was the impetus which allowed the Puerto Ricans to elect their own governor in 1948 and create their own Constitution in 1952.

A change in the relationship between the U.S. Democratic party and the PPD can be seen in the Jimmy Carter Administration. Some members of the PNP, trying to gain support for their cause, took a gamble and supported Jimmy Carter at the 1976 Democratic National Convention as the Democratic candidate for president. The PPD, the traditional ally of Democrats, supported the losing candidate, Senator Henry Jackson. In

1978, Carter broke the historical alliance with the PPD and issued this statement:

Statehood, Commonwealth, and independence are all legitimate options if chosen by the Puerto Rican people. I will support and urge Congress to support whatever decision the people of Puerto Rico reach.

(Carr, 1984, p.98)

No longer does the Democratic party solely support the PPD choice of enhanced Commonwealth. The Democratic policy since then has supported the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination, with no overt preference for any position.

With the first Democratic president, Bill Clinton, in office since Carter made this statement, it is unclear which policy Clinton will follow. The most logical, and easiest, would be to echo Carter's sentiments and wait to see what happens in Congress. However, with Clinton's strong belief in helping the underprivileged, one hopes he will take a personal interest in the struggle for a permanent political status for 3.6 million fellow Americans and pressure the Democratic majority in Congress to act on this issue. In an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) after he was elected, Clinton responded to the question "Will the District of Columbia become our 51st State?" by saying "I would be in a state of permanent outrage if I thought that I represented people who could be sent to fight and die for this country who had no full citizenship"(CNN, The World Today, November 7, 1992). If this comment was applied to Puerto Rico, I believe statehood for Puerto Rico would be a reality before the end of this century. And, if Clinton stood by the Democratic position of self-determination, then he could pressure Congress to have substantial legislation on this issue by mid-1994.

## United Nations and International Positions

The United Nations has played an important role in the debate over the political status of Puerto Rico by refusing to allow the United States to simply let the issue die. For the better part of 30 years, the United Nations has prodded the United States to allow Puerto Ricans to decide for themselves their future political status. U.S. politicians are certainly influenced by the U.N.; on the floor of the Senate, U.S. Senators who are genuinely concerned with the future of Puerto Rico continually mention U.N. resolutions denouncing U.S. control of Puerto Rico. To understand the depth of this influence, one must first understand United Nations resolutions regarding the political status of Puerto Rico.

The United Nations, through the 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, has monitored the political evolution of non-self-governing (NSG's) territories. Article 73 of the UN Charter defined the proper conduct to be taken by colonial powers with respect to their occupied territories. Section E of Article 73 required the colonial power to account for its treatment of its colonies to the General Assembly. Between 1946 and 1952, the United States voluntarily put Puerto Rico within this category and reported information on the island's political developments annually to the General Assembly.

After Puerto Rico had established its commonwealth relationship with the United States in 1952, the United States was able to remove Puerto Rico from the UN list of NSG's through Resolution 748. This resolution affirmed that

in the framework of its [Puerto Rico] Constitution and of the compact agreed upon with the United States of America the people of

Puerto Rico have been invested with *attributes of political sovereignty*, which clearly identify the status of an autonomous political entity.

(Carr, 1984, p. 343)

Although the United Nations removed Puerto Rico from its list of NSG territories, the island's political status remains a recurring question.

At the time of the vote some countries, although satisfied with Puerto Rico's moving toward self-government, doubted that the Commonwealth established in 1952 fully complied with the UN definition of self-determination. The countries who had the most doubts were India, Guatemala, and Mexico. The Indian delegate stated:

...my delegation is not convinced that Puerto Rico, under its present association with the United States, has become a self-governing territory. In our opinion, there can be no free, just or valid compact, association or agreement between two countries or territories except on a basis of equality. We believe that independence should precede any voluntary association...

(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.51)

Nevertheless, the United States not only thought the passing of Resolution 748 as a victory, but also considered any future reconsideration of Puerto Rico's political status a domestic issue. The U.S. considers any U.N. actions regarding Puerto Rico an invasion into the sovereignty of the United States

The U.N. General Assembly Resolution 1514(XV) on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, created in 1960, states in part that

immediate steps shall be taken in Trust and Non-Self-Governing territories or all other territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the peoples of those territories, without any conditions or reservations to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom.



(United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,(1514[xv]), 1960)

In 1961, the General Assembly created "The Committee of Twenty-four," (C-24) also known as the Decolonization Committee. This committee was authorized to examine political, constitutional, economic, social, and educational conditions of territories where people had not yet attained self-government. In 1971, this committee began urging the United States to take all necessary measures to transfer total sovereignty to Puerto Rico.(Kamensky, 1990, p. 45)

In considering the island's status, this committee in 1972 adopted a resolution recognizing "the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence." Since then, discussions on Puerto Rico's political status in the General Assembly have been held annually by the Decolonization Committee. In the early 1980's, the debates culminated with a recommendation by the Decolonization Committee that the issue of Puerto Rico be brought before the General Assembly. But that resolution was never voted on by the General Assembly. However, in its latest resolutions, the Decolonization Committee decided to keep the question of Puerto Rico under continuing review. The United States maintains that the U.N. resolution recognizes that Puerto Rico had exercised its rights to self-determination, which leaves the United Nations with no jurisdiction in the matter. Recently, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for the decolonization of all territories by the year 2000. Puerto Rico was not mentioned specifically in the resolution. The United States voted against this resolution.(Kamensky, 1990, p.46)

During the Special Committee on Decolonization session in 1986 (4-15 August, 10 September), Puerto Rico was discussed in relation to the list

of Territories to which the Declaration applies. The Special Committee reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence, and expressed hope that the people of Puerto Rico might exercise without hindrance its right to self-determination, with the "express recognition of the people's sovereignty and full political equality." (UN Chronicle, Nov. 1986, p.51).

During debate, the Committee heard statements by representatives of 28 Puerto Rican organizations, United States non-governmental organizations (NGO's), and other interested organized bodies. These groups generally expressed criticism of United States policy regarding Puerto Rico and of economic and social conditions on the island. (UN Chronicle, Nov. 1986, p.51)

The United States, in a letter dated August 23, 1985, informed the Special Committee that it did not consider "the issue of Puerto Rico a proper subject for examination at the United Nations." The United States based this on the fact that Puerto Rico had been removed from the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories by resolution 748 (VIII) in 1953 by a vote of the General Assembly. By that resolution, the Assembly had recognized that the people of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico "have been vested with attributes of political sovereignty which clearly identify the status of self-government attained by the Puerto Rican people as that of an autonomous political entity." (UN Chronicle, Nov. 1986, p.51)

Since 1960, Cuba has taken a keen interest in the political status of Puerto Rico. Cuba cites Resolution 1514 as the basis for advocating independence for Puerto Rico. (Pastor, 1984, p.579) Cuba maintains it has an historical kinship with Puerto Rico because they were the last two Spanish colonies in the Americas. Jose Marti, the founder of the Cuban

nation, shared his dream of independence with Puerto Rican separatists. After coming to power, Fidel Castro and independence leaders of Puerto Rico have continually pressed this issue on the Committee on Decolonization.

In 1971, Cuba approached the General Assembly directly to consider the "colonial issue of Puerto Rico". Although the issue was rejected through a vote by the General Assembly, Cuba had made an international statement that was and continues to be politically embarrassing to the United States. The United States and Great Britain, "weary of the endless anti-imperialistic propaganda, withdrew from the C-24 in 1971."(Pastor, 1984, p.581) Cuba was thus able to make its case and build support within the Decolonization Committee.

The Committee of 24, in 1972, passed a resolution by a vote of 12 to 0 with 10 abstentions, which "explicitly linked Puerto Rico to Resolution 1514 for the first time."(Pastor, 1984, p.581) Recognizing "the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence," the resolution also instructed a sub-committee to "submit a report in 1973 describing the procedure by which 1514 would be implemented for Puerto Rico." The C-24 has addressed the issue every year since.

Nevertheless, the United States was successful in keeping the Puerto Rican issue out of the General Assembly until the early 1980's. In 1981, the Committee of 24 "reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence in accordance" with Resolution 1514, and "recommended that the General Assembly examine the questions as a separate item" in the 1982 session.(U.N.Chronicle, Sept.-Oct., 1981, p.34) In the 1982 session Cuba requested that the General Assembly debate the issue. After an "intense global lobbying campaign unprecedented since

the battles over Chinese representation in the early 1970's, the assembly rejected the Cuban proposal to inscribe the Puerto Rican issue on the agenda by a vote of 70 to 30 with 43 abstentions"(Pastor, 1984, p.585). This all-encompassing diplomatic lobbying campaign by the United States left nations sympathetic to Puerto Rico with "bruised feelings and some resentment"(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.47). "They truly pulled out all the stops," noted one African Ambassador, who said that Secretary of State George Shultz had personally phoned his president, who then phoned him with instructions to vote with the United States." One United States representative told delegations that a vote against the U.S. position "would be unfavorably met in bilateral relations on Capitol Hill." This resentment was also heard in speeches before the General Assembly. Mexican President Jose Lopez Portillo told the General Assembly: "We see with concern that pressures are being exerted on the members of the U.N. to change their votes. The favorable results thus obtained exhibit only the vulnerability of some countries." Panamanian Vice President Jorge Illueca stated that

"Independence for Puerto Rico is one of the deferred tasks of the liberating revolution of Latin American nations...The fact that it was not included in this year's agenda is not a solution nor is it evidence that the problem does not exist. It would be naive to think that votes cast here for reasons of state are sanctioned by Latin American public opinion."

(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.55)

Although the United States may have succeeded in preventing this issue to be discussed in the General Assembly, it paid a high diplomatic cost.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), not surprisingly, continually sponsors resolutions denouncing U.S. control over Puerto Rico. However, some U.S. allies have made the point to show their disagreement with U.S.

policy. At the April 1983 Albufeira, Portugal, conference of the Socialist International, at which the political parties [then] ruling France, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Greece, the Dominican Republic and other countries were represented, the final declaration stated: "The Socialist International supports the independence of Puerto Rico a Latin American nation"(Heine and Garcia, November/December 1983, p.49-50). U.S. allegations that the internationalization of the Puerto Rican political status is solely the work of Cuba simply is not true. As is shown by the above quote, some of the strongest U.S. allies have also denounced U.S. control of Puerto Rico.

Although international positions are vitally important in discussing the issues surrounding the political status of Puerto Rico, it is essential to examine appearances by leaders of the three leading parties in Puerto Rico before international organizations. With Washington unresponsive, for the first time representatives of the PNP and PPD parties joined the PIP in 1977 to testify before the UN Committee of 24 about U.S. colonialism. In 1978 Governor Romero of the PNP testified before the Committee of 24 and noted the vestiges of colonialism on the island. Oreste Ramos, a pro-American conservative senator and one of the leaders of the PNP, told the committee that "the political inferiority inherent in Puerto Rico's present status is an insult to the national decorum of the United States and the dignity of the people of Puerto Rico." Maurice Ferre, the Puerto Rican-born former mayor of Miami, testified that Puerto Rico "has not achieved a full measure of self-government." Ferre encouraged the committee to return Puerto Rico to the list of NSG territories for a very explicit purpose: "By your act, public opinion will be aroused in the U.S., and thus, will the Congress of the U.S. and the people of Puerto Rico be awakened to the reality of Puerto Rico."(Pastor, 1984, p.584) This and other trips to the

United Nations by a group of Puerto Rico's most prominent leaders, representing the complete political spectrum, in effect "legitimized" the issue of colonialism in Puerto Rico. (Garcia, Puerto Rico: Equality and Freedom at Issue in the Caribbean, 1984, p.130)

Qian Wenrong, a Chinese political analyst, writes that although the United States always proclaims itself as an "apologist for human rights", it has ignored the rightful demands of the Puerto Rican people and has continually defied UN resolutions pertaining to Puerto Rico. Wenrong points out that Puerto Rico can not enter into any treaties with foreign countries nor seek UN membership. Wenrong connects the poor economic condition of the island (according to him, brought about by U.S. imperialism in Puerto Rico) with the increasing emigration of Puerto Ricans into the United States. He says, "There are 3.5 million Puerto Ricans living on the island and 2.5 million in the United States." The dissatisfaction runs deep; Ms. Zaida Hernandez, a representative of the PNP, stated "Our citizenship, unlike that of American citizens, is partial, incomplete and second-class"(Wenrong, Sept. 2-8, 1991, p.13).

Recent activity in the Decolonization Committee has urged the United States to "establish as soon as possible a legal framework so as to enable the Puerto Rican people "to exercise their right to self-determination."(Wenrong, Sep.2-8, 1991, p.13) In August 1991, a Decolonization Special Committee "deplored the fact that the U.S. Congress has not yet adopted the legal framework to enable Puerto Ricans to exercise their right to self-determination and urged Congress to do so"(Laney, May 4, 1992, p.4).

In 1988, the United Nations General Assembly declared the years 1990-99 the "Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism" (UN Chronicle,

March 1990, p.76). Unfortunately, Puerto Rico was not mentioned, as it was taken off the list of colonies 35 years ago. Nevertheless, through its own initiative, Puerto Rico may still be able to decide its own political status, after almost 100 years.

The United Nations is limited in the enforcement of these passed resolutions because it has little power to ensure these resolutions are implemented. Countries guard their national sovereignty very closely; therefore, the United Nations has extremely limited power (without using a military campaign) to force the United States to follow through on these resolutions. Since only the Security Council can enact the use of military force and the United States would block any attempt at passing such a resolution, military power would not be used. The only power the United Nations can use is the influence of international opinion denouncing the United States for continuing to hold Puerto Ricans in a colonial status.

This is the context in which this paper must be considered; the various actors involved in the debate over this issue certainly do not agree on many issues and have different reasons for their positions. What does all this mean? Is there hope for a permanent political status for Puerto Rico before the end of the twentieth century?

## Conclusion

### **No real change likely before turn of the century**

The historical reluctance in the United States Congress to initiate any legislation on this issue and the more recent debate among the three parties in Puerto Rico have prevented any earth-shattering conclusions, despite continual pressure from the United Nations. Nevertheless, this insight into the politics involved in deciding Puerto Rico's future status has shown several interesting points.

The PPD, PNP, and PIP, although certainly not as polarized upon first appearance, definitely have maintained their separate positions which are defined by their self-interest. The PPD and PNP are content to battle each other for the majority, while simultaneously subordinating and silencing the positions of the PIP. Interestingly enough, however, if Puerto Rico became a state then the PPD and PNP would be assimilated into the mainland Republican and Democratic parties, leaving the PIP the sole voice of dissent. If statehood is implemented, then the party of Munoz Marin would become meaningless.

The United States Congress, during the 95 year U.S. occupation of Puerto Rico, has continually prevented any substantive action regarding the resolution of Puerto Rico's future permanent political status. Congress has done this in order to maintain the status quo; change would bring about a different relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, and this change would probably not favor the United States. Statehood is considered too expensive for the federal treasury, while independence would eliminate tax benefits for U.S. companies. Therefore, keeping the status quo is the safest route, even though all the major Puerto Rican political parties in



Puerto Rico want to have at least some alterations in the present situation. Congress can blame the lack of a majority position in Puerto Rico for not acting on this dilemma. In reality, Congress has no fundamental self-interest to change the status quo. Without a vote in Congress, Puerto Ricans will continue to be unable to change the situation by themselves.

United States presidents have rhetorically favored Puerto Rican self-determination, confident with the fact that their positions will continue to have no affect on the actions of Congress. Although Republican and Democratic presidents differ in their approach to the Puerto Rican situation, both groups favor "self-determination for Puerto Rico" in order to give the impression to Puerto Ricans and the international community that they are sincerely concerned with this issue. If they were sincerely interested in this issue, then they would not have avoided serious discussion for 95 years. While Democrats simply advocate self-determination for Puerto Rico, Republicans go one step further and also favor statehood. If Puerto Rico became a state, then the United States would be able to flaunt this in front of the international community by saying the situation has been resolved, yet remain defiant because it was not resolved in a manner that satisfied the will of the international community.

In relation to the discussion of the future political status of Puerto Rico, the United Nations has become the conscious of the United States legislators. The United Nations Decolonization Committee has, since 1972, almost yearly passed resolutions condemning U.S. control of this island. This has resulted in angry denunciations by the U.S. Government, essentially telling the United Nations to mind its own business. Nevertheless, this pressure has resulted in U.S. Senators, on the floor of the

Senate, remind members of Congress that the international community is carefully watching to see what happens, and then judge accordingly.

It is clearly evident that the United States Congress will never allow Puerto Rico to become an independent country. Munoz Marin, in his desire to maintain some autonomy for Puerto Rico while receiving aid and investment from the U.S. government and companies, has permanently tied Puerto Rico into association with the United States. Although some studies show independence may be the least expensive in the long run, Congress fears, for racial and administrative reasons, the complete relinquishment of power to Puerto Ricans.

The current situation, with the PNP controlling the positions of Puerto Rican governor and Resident Commissioner, provides for an opportune time to move toward statehood for Puerto Rico. It is my opinion that a PNP-dominated referendum will be held in Puerto Rico either by the end of 1993 or the middle of 1994 which will propose statehood for Puerto Rico. However, this referendum will be rendered meaningless if the U.S. Congress does not mandate it. Congress has implied that a "supermajority" vote of more than 70% is needed for one of the choices to change Puerto Rico's political status. No party in Puerto Rico has ever received this amount of support in a vote on the status issue. Even in the unlikely scenario that the PIP receives a supermajority vote, Congress could still void the results by refusing to acknowledge the outcome. Nevertheless, the political factors in Puerto Rico point toward the eventual implementation of statehood. Of course, given the historical unsteady control of political parties in Puerto Rico, any conclusion on this issue must be tempered with doubt of whether the U.S. Congress will allow any change.

Ultimately, this means Puerto Rico will never be allowed to determine its own self-determination. Even if a referendum is passed in Puerto Rico mandating statehood, the United States Congress will have the final say on what statehood means for Puerto Ricans. The PNP wants to maintain its Hispanic culture and some aspect of 936; as was shown in the section on Congress, this would simply be impossible.

Another aspect of Puerto Rico receiving statehood is that the PIP and other independistas will likely increase in popularity because they will be the only real opposition party in Puerto Rico. However, Congress would never let Puerto Rico secede from the Union. An increase in any independista political or militaristic activity would result in an increase in repression by the Puerto Rican police force and FBI. But the independistas will never be eliminated; they would simply have to go underground to avoid prosecution for advocating the overthrow of the United States government.

Throughout this paper I have maintained the perspective that a decision into the permanent political status for Puerto Rico would satisfy Congress, not Puerto Ricans. With no voting rights in Congress, Puerto Ricans have no real power to legislatively change their current status. Therefore, unfortunately, it is my opinion that Congress will change the U.S. relationship with Puerto Rico as little as politically possible. Although this paper shows no real movement toward a final resolution of the future permanent political status of Puerto Rico, one light of consolation shines through. Through the persistent urging of the PPD, PNP, PIP and the United Nations Decolonization Committee and other organizations, the United States government will continue to be criticized until a real solution

is voted upon by Puerto Ricans, with or without the approval of the United States Congress.

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## APPENDIX

### I. Responses from Republican Senators and the 1992 Republican National Platform.

Appendix A: Malcolm Wallop

Appendix B: Bob Dole

Appendix C: Jesse Helms

Appendix D: Dave Durenberger

Appendix E: Statement from the 1992 Republican National Platform

### II. Responses from the Democratic Senators.

Appendix F: George Mitchell

Appendix G: Ben Nighthorse Campbell

Appendix H: Paul Simon

### III. United Nations General Assembly resolution made December 14, 1960.

Appendix I: Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (resolution 1514 [XV])

### IV. Puerto Rico Status Referendum Act (S. 244, predecessor to S.712)

Appendix J: Federal cost of each choice, 1992-2000

J. BENNETT JOHNSTON, LOUISIANA, CHAIRMAN

DALE BUMPERS, ARKANSAS  
WENDELL H. FORD, KENTUCKY  
BILL BRADLEY, NEW JERSEY  
JEFF BINGAMAN, NEW MEXICO  
TIMOTHY E. WIRTH, COLORADO  
KENT CONRAD, NORTH DAKOTA  
DANIEL K. AKAKA, HAWAII  
WYCHE FOWLER, JR., GEORGIA  
RICHARD C. SHELBY, ALABAMA  
PAUL WELLSTONE, MINNESOTA

MALCOLM WALLOP, WYOMING  
MARK O. HATFIELD, OREGON  
PETE V. DOMENICI, NEW MEXICO  
FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, ALASKA  
DON NICKLES, OKLAHOMA  
CONRAD BURNS, MONTANA  
LARRY E. CRAIG, IDAHO  
JOHN SEYMOUR, CALIFORNIA  
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GARY G. ELLSWORTH, CHIEF COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6150

January 28, 1993

Mr. Sean Murray  
Saint John's University Box 1197  
Collegeville, MN 56321

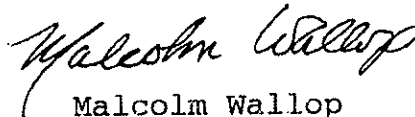
Dear Mr. Murray:

In response to your recent letters addressed to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee staff and myself, I have attached my written statement regarding the statehood of Puerto Rico along with the answers to your written questions.

I am pleased that you have a strong interest in this very important legislative issue and hope the information provided is helpful.

Best of luck in writing your senior honors thesis.

Sincerely,



Malcolm Wallop  
Ranking Republican Member

MW/jb:gbb

- ▶ *Why have Republican Presidents essentially been in favor of statehood?*

Presidents, in general, have been supportive of territories achieving whatever status they seek.

- ▶ *Why do Republican Senators generally oppose statehood for Puerto Rico?*

I do not believe this is an accurate statement. Several members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee had concerns with the particular legislation before the Committee because it forced the issue in Puerto Rico. Congress should not force statehood, instead, it needs to be sought in a traditional manner.

- ▶ *What is your position regarding the political status of Puerto Rico?*

Please see my attached statement from the Committee's business meeting on February 2, 1991.

- ▶ *From your point of view, which status option is the most economical for the United States?*

The answer to that depends on what your definition of economical is and what assumptions you want to make. Theoretically, independence might be the most economical in the long run, however, there are analyses claiming that statehood would be the most economical.

- ▶ *What is the most feasible timetable to hold a referendum in Puerto Rico regarding its political status?*

This is up to Puerto Rico to determine. Whatever time they desire to hold a referendum is reasonable.

- ▶ *Why did you oppose S. 244 in 1991?*

I am not opposed to the concept of Puerto Rico holding a referendum or status option. What I was opposed to was the text of the particular legislation that came before our Committee which, in my opinion, would have influenced the vote in Puerto Rico.

- ▶ *Why has there been such large disagreements between Republicans and Democrats on the Committee?*

Because of the importance and complexity of this issue, there are numerous opinions and ideas amongst the twenty members who have individual views.

- ▶ *Why has there been such a stalemate between the Senate and the House on this issue?*

In actuality, a stalemate does not exist. Neither body has resolved its own differences on the issue, thus there has not been an opportunity for the House and Senate to come together to work on the legislation. The Energy and Natural Resources Committee has not even passed a bill on statehood for Puerto Rico.

- ▶ *From your point of view, what are the legal ramifications of each status option?*

Please refer to the attached xeroxed pages.

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1601

Appendix B 69

March 8, 1993

Sean Murray  
Saint John's University  
Collegetown, Minnesota 56321

Dear Mr. Murray:

Thank you for your letter regarding the status of Puerto Rico. I appreciate hearing from you.

I agree that the political status of Puerto Rico is an issue that should be settled. Before Puerto Rico can be granted statehood, however, or for that matter, become independent, her people must be allowed to speak on this issue for themselves. As you may know, during the 100th Congress, I introduced a bill that would have provided federal funds for a referendum in Puerto Rico on her status. I have enclosed the text of this bill, as well as a statement I made on the Senate floor upon its introduction, which was provided by the LEGI-SLATE on-line computer service. Unfortunately, this bill did not pass. More recently, a bill introduced by Senator Johnston in the 102nd Congress to provide for a referendum failed to be reported out of committee.

You asked about the economics of the various status options. Should Puerto Rico become a state, the cap currently imposed on Nutrition Assistance and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits to the island would presumably be lifted, significantly increasing the costs of these programs. This would put a considerable strain on our already strapped federal budget. On the other hand, statehood would almost certainly mean the end of the special tax considerations currently given to businesses locating in Puerto Rico, and Puerto Ricans would have to begin paying federal income taxes. The economic aspects must be carefully weighed by both Congress and Puerto Ricans when considering changes in Puerto Rico's status.

One final issue to be considered is the fact that should Puerto Rico become a state, she would be entitled to six members in the House of Representatives. This would dilute to some extent the influence of representatives from other states. Members of Congress from smaller states are understandably concerned about the effects this may have on their states.

Mr. Murray  
March 9, 1993  
Page Two

For your reference, I have enclosed information on the status issue which was provided by the Congressional Research Service. You may particularly want to read the information on economic considerations contained in the U.S. General Accounting Office report. Finally, I have included an article which appeared in The Washington Post last December, which discusses the impact of the recent elections in Puerto Rico on the status question. This article was also provided by LEGI-SLATE.

I hope this information will prove helpful as you research your senior honor thesis. Thank you again for writing, and good luck with your studies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob Dole".

BOB DOLE  
United States Senate

BD/slb  
Enclosures



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 101<sup>st</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 136

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 1990

No. 32

## Senate

### PUERTO RICO—51ST STATE?

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, legislation is currently being considered by Congress to allow Puerto Rico to vote on whether it should become the 51st State. Before Congress approves such legislation, it is important that consideration be given to the ramifications of such a decision.

With his typical eloquence, Pat Buchanan has laid out some concerns about the proposal. I suggest that Senators carefully consider Mr. Buchanan's points, and I ask unanimous consent that the text of his column be printed in the RECORD at this point.

There being no objection, the column was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### PUERTO RICO AS OUR 51ST?

(By Patrick Buchanan)

From opposite directions on Pennsylvania Avenue, Oscar Collazo and Girsel Torresola made their way to the front door of Blair House. The plan: meet at the stairs, shoot their way inside and assassinate President Truman. They came close. Torresola was killed on the spot by dying police hero, Leslie Coffelt, Collazo wounded. But, to the tiny Puerto Rican party then seeking a break free of the United States, Torresola would become a martyr, Collazo a hero.

Four years later, Independistas smuggled weapons into the visitors' gallery of the House of Representatives and sprayed the floor, wounding five.

That was long, long ago. But, as last June's march of 80,000 through San Juan demonstrates, the desire for an independent Puerto Rico yet burns in the breasts of many on that island we seized as war booty from Spain in 1898. Though only a tiny

fraction of the 10 percent who seek independence endorse violence, that fraction yet finds bloody expression in Los Macheteros.

To the point, not enough hard thought is being given by Mr. Bush to the potential consequences of making Puerto Rico our 51st state. We may be about to create a Northern Ireland in the Caribbean.

Legislation is quietly moving through Congress for a summer 1991 vote, which would permit Puerto Rico's 3.5 million to choose statehood, commonwealth status or independence. The 248 million in the 50 states would have no say in the matter. If the island chose statehood, the grant of statehood would be automatic.

Again, we had best wake up to what is going down.

Already, 40 percent of the people on the island get federal benefits. If statehood is adopted, the cap on welfare spending comes off, and perhaps 60 percent would be eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, food stamps, Medicaid, etc. The present \$6 billion in U.S. budget outlays would explode.

Can we afford this—and not only in welfare payments?

Considering what the Great Society did to Washington, with the nation's highest per capita income, do we really want to convert Puerto Rico (per capita income \$4,500, not half that of Mississippi) into a Caribbean reservation mired in the same rage and resentment that those dependent on welfare exhibit everywhere else in America?

Why not leave well enough alone? Today, Puerto Rico is an enterprise zone. Under Section 936 of the Internal Revenue Code, U.S. factories there are exempt from corporate income taxes; islanders need not file 1040s on April 15. But if Puerto Rico votes statehood—and the proffered bribe of a cornucopia of federal goodies is tilting it that way—all tax privileges would have to go; and we would soon have a tax revolt from



Puerto Rico's middle and upper classes.

Have we considered the fundamental change in the character of our union, if Puerto Rico becomes the 51st state?

An English-speaking people, we Americans would become a bilingual nation. For the English language could not be forced upon this island of Spanish heritage, where 60 percent do not even understand it.

According to the Senate bill, all that is needed for this historic change is for just half the island to vote "yes" on statehood. While Puerto Rico is entitled to decide its own future, is 50.1 percent enough of a plurality to effect the permanent transfer of sovereignty, to make Puerto Rico a permanent part of the American Union?

Thirteen decades ago, we fought a bloody Civil War to prevent the Confederate states from breaking free. Are we prepared to send troops, if the people of Puerto Rico should later change their minds? Are we prepared to fight a guerrilla war, like the British in Belfast, if the Macheteros emulate the Irish Republican Army? Before entering a marriage, "till death do us part," ought not both the island and the mainland reflect longer upon how nasty a divorce would be?

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

There is no overwhelming clamor for statehood on the island; nothing is wrong with today's commonwealth status that cries out for repair. And, as in the 13 Colonies in 1775, there is a vocal minority for total independence whose views ought to be respected, if not heeded. The last thing America needs now is to clasp to her bosom, forever, 300,000 embittered Hispanics who yet dream of an independent country.

Before this island, with the size and population of a small nation, becomes a state, at least two-thirds of its people, better yet three-fourths, should request it. And, the 248 million who reside in the 50 states should be given time to reflect on their request to join the American family, forever.

From Serbia to Azerbaijan, from the West Bank to Soweto, from Scotland to Quebec, ethnic chauvinism is on the rise. Separatism is everywhere winning converts. People are demanding not what is in their economic interest but what they deem vital to preserving the race, the tribe, the religion, the culture. While we may bemoan the trend, we cannot deny it; nor are we Americans immune to it.

In such an environment, prudence dictates that we think twice, then think again, before annexing forever to the American Union an island people with a separate cultural nationality, who do not speak our language, and who are still deeply divided in their own desires.

United States Senate  
DAVE DURENBERGER

Appendix D 73

November 5, 1992

Sean Murray  
SJU  
Box 1197  
Collegetown, Minnesota 56321

Dear Sean:

Thank you for contacting me regarding information on the political status of Puerto Rico for your senior thesis. I am happy to help in any way I can.

President Reagan and President Bush have both supported the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination, and indicated a preference for statehood. Additionally, the 1992 Republican Party Platform indicates the Party's support for Puerto Rican statehood if the Puerto Rican people so determine. For your reference, I enclose a copy of the Platform language on Puerto Rico.

Several pieces of legislation regarding this matter have been introduced in the Congress over the past several years. However, none of these bills have been acted on by the full Senate. If such legislation does reach the Senate floor, I will give serious consideration to all sides of the issue.

Thanks again for contacting me with your inquiry. I also enclose for your reference some materials from the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. Best of luck as you prepare your thesis. It is a privilege to serve you in the United States Senate.

Sincerely,



Dave Durenberger  
United States Senator

DD/cdl  
Enclosure

**The 1992 Republican National Platform as it pertains to  
Puerto Rico  
pages 77-78**

A New Era for the Territories: We welcome greater participation in all aspects of the political process by Americans residing in Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana, and Puerto Rico. Because territorial America is far flung and divergent, we know that any single approach to the future will not necessarily meet the needs of all. Republicans therefore emphasize respect for the wishes of those who reside in the territories regarding their relationship to the rest of the Union.

We affirm the right of American citizens in the United States territories to seek the full extension of the Constitution with the accompanying rights and responsibilities, and we support all necessary legislation to permit them to do so.

The Republican Party supports the right of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to be admitted to the Union as a fully sovereign State after they freely so determine.

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1902

March 5, 1993

Mr. Sean Murray  
Box 1197  
St. John's University  
Collegeville, MN 56321

Dear Mr. Murray:

Thank you for writing to inquire about legislation affecting the political status for Puerto Rico. I appreciate hearing from you.

For myself, I have not come to a final conclusion as to the merits of the status options. I do believe however, this issue is best decided by the people of Puerto Rico directly, for they are the ones who have the most knowledge of their circumstances and the most at stake in the final analysis.

I cannot speak on President Clinton's views on the status question. Nor do I wish to characterize the views of other Members.

I expect that similar legislation will be introduced in the 103rd Congress. I will seriously consider the findings of the Committee before coming to any conclusion, should similar legislation come before the Senate in the 103rd Congress. For your review, I am enclosing a copy of a report from the Congressional Research Service on this issue.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



George J. Mitchell

Enclosure

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0605

February 5, 1993

Mr. Sean Murray  
Saint John's University Box 1197  
Collegeville, MN 56321

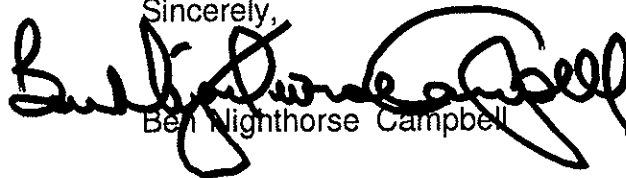
Dear Mr. Murray,

Thank you for your letter. Enclosed is an issue brief from the Congressional Research Service that I hope will help you with your senior thesis.

During my service in the House of Representatives, I was not on the committees that dealt with Puerto Rican issues, and bills concerning Puerto Rico never came up for a vote on the House floor. As a newly-elected Senator in the 103rd Congress, I am a member of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and so far we have not considered the question.

Frankly, I haven't thought a lot about the questions you raise, so I can't give you an informed answer. As for your inquiry about racist attitudes in Congress toward Puerto Ricans, my colleagues for the most part are sincere and accepting people willing to consider issues on their merits. However, I am always opposed to such ignorant beliefs, wherever they may surface, and you can be sure that I will work hard to keep racist attitudes out of any congressional debates.

Sincerely,



Ben Nighthorse Campbell

BNC/si

## P.S./WASHINGTON

a weekly column by  
U.S. Senator Paul Simon of Illinois



### STATEHOOD FOR PUERTO RICO?

In his first message to Congress, President George Bush had one surprise: He voiced his personal support to make Puerto Rico the nation's 51st state and called on Congress "to take the necessary steps to let the people decide in a referendum."

I agree completely.

An effort is underway in Puerto Rico and Congress to bring such a referendum to a vote.

**Puerto Ricans are Americans.** But they are Americans who do not have the rights of other Americans, primarily because they have no one representing them in the United States Senate, and only one non-voting member in the House of Representatives.

The result is that in too many programs, it becomes easy for Congress just to give second-class treatment to Puerto Ricans.

The state with the lowest average income is Mississippi, at \$10,292. But in Puerto Rico it is \$5,157, in large part because Puerto Rico is not included in many educational and other programs that the rest of us have.

Puerto Ricans have been American citizens for 72 years. They had more people serving in Vietnam and South Korea, as a percentage of population, than all but three states. And they had higher casualties than all but three states.

But when it comes to getting the benefits of being Americans, they too often get left out.

**George Munoz**, Chicago attorney and civic leader, recently wrote in the *Chicago Sun-Times*: "President Bush is right. Keeping Puerto Rico in limbo — neither a true state nor an independent country — won't be acceptable forever."

The present status, called commonwealth status, eventually will go. No people are going to accept second-class citizenship indefinitely. They will either become independent or become full citizens, with Puerto Rico as the 51st state.

The decision is up to the people of Puerto Rico. Unless and until a majority of citizens there vote for statehood, Congress will not and should not approve statehood.

But until that time comes, economic problems will continue to plague Puerto Rico.

**The minimum wage bill** before the Senate last year would have raised the minimum wage for the U.S. mainland but left Puerto Rico at the current level. I made an attempt to have Puerto Rico treated equally, but my amendment lost.

On this year's minimum wage bill, I hope to work out a compromise that would gradually give Puerto Ricans more equitable treatment. But if Puerto Rico were a state with two senators, no one would dare treat Puerto Rico that way.

Some American companies doing business in Puerto Rico gain tax advantages because Puerto Rico is not a state.

But the uncertainty of the future status of Puerto Rico discourages other businesses from locating on the island.

Puerto Ricans ought to be able to vote for President, ought to have members in the House and Senate. Or we should give them independence, if they want that.

**Colonialism is a relic** of the past.

And the sooner we recognize it, both the 50 states and Puerto Rico will be better off.





## P.S./WASHINGTON

*a weekly column from  
U.S. Senator Paul Simon of Illinois*

### TREATING PUERTO RICO EQUALLY

A good example of shortsightedness in legislation and policy is the way Congress and the Administration treat our fellow Americans of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico has 3.2 million people and no voting membership in Congress. There are more Americans living in Puerto Rico than in 25 states. Puerto Rico has one non-voting member of the House of Representatives.

And Puerto Rico has provided a significant number of heroes -- and deaths -- in the U.S. armed forces through the decades. In the Vietnam War, Puerto Ricans suffered more casualties as a percent of population than any of the 50 states.

However, whenever there is a squeeze for funds, it is common for Puerto Rico to get the short end of things. This happens despite the fact that the average income in Puerto Rico is \$3,981 compared to \$11,107 for the 50 states, or roughly 35 percent of the national average. Mississippi has our lowest state average income -- \$8,098 -- more than double the Puerto Rican average.

Now the Administration wants to significantly increase taxes for businesses in Puerto Rico, to cite one example of concern.

A new proposal has been made by a Senate subcommittee to cut back food stamps and related programs in the next three years, and guess who gets the short end of the stick once again!

The proposal is to cut a total of \$78 million nationwide in 1986, \$38 million of that from Puerto Rico; \$189 million in 1987, \$77 million of that from Puerto Rico; and \$234 million in 1988, \$115 million of that from Puerto Rico.

Why pick on the already-

impoverished Americans in Puerto Rico more than others? Because they have no votes in the House and Senate.

And food stamps are not an isolated instance.

The other day, a bill came up offering assistance for mental health, and Puerto Rico was going to be treated worse than any state despite having more population than half the states. I'm pleased that the chairman of the subcommittee, Sen. Lowell Weicker, a Republican from Connecticut, backed my request to treat Americans from Puerto Rico as our equals in this funding, and we won.

But in a host of areas, Puerto Ricans are not treated as equals. They are not eligible for SSI (supplemental security income) payments; they are not treated equally on AFDC payments; and the list goes on.

What's the answer?

The best answer, if the people of Puerto Rico want it, is for them to become a state. President Reagan backs this, if the people of the island vote for it, and I join the President in that position.

The present commonwealth status is second-class citizenship that eventually will have to change.

Some day Puerto Rico will either become independent or become a state. They have to make that choice.

It is in their interest, in the interest of the 50 states, and in the interest of stability in the Caribbean that statehood be the answer.

But in the meantime we should recognize that even though they have little power in Congress, they are American citizens who ought to be treated with dignity, respect and understanding.

## Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

*Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 14 December  
1960*

*(resolution 1514 (XV))*

The General Assembly,

*Mindful* of the determination proclaimed by the peoples of the world in the Charter of the United Nations to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

*Conscious* of the need for the creation of conditions of stability and well-being and peaceful and friendly relations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples, and of universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

*Recognizing* the passionate yearning for freedom in all dependent peoples and the decisive role of such peoples in the attainment of their independence,

*Aware* of the increasing conflicts resulting from the denial of or impediments in the way of the freedom of such peoples, which constitute a serious threat to world peace,

*Considering* the important role of the United Nations in assisting the movement for independence in trust and non-self-governing territories,

*Recognizing* that the peoples of the world ardently desire the end of colonialism in all its manifestations,

*Convinced* that the continued existence of colonialism prevents the development of international economic co-operation, impedes the social, cultural and economic development of dependent peoples and militates against the United Nations ideal of universal peace,

*Affirming* that peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law,

*Believing* that the process of liberation is irresistible and irreversible and that, in order to avoid serious crises, an end must be put to



colonialism and all practices of segregation and discrimination associated therewith,

*Welcoming* the emergence in recent years of a large number of dependent territories into freedom and independence, and recognizing the increasingly powerful trends towards freedom in such territories which have not yet attained independence,

*Convinced* that all peoples have an inalienable right to complete freedom, the exercise of their sovereignty and the integrity of their national territory,

*Solemnly proclaims* the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations;

And to this end

*Declares* that:

1. The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.

2. All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

3. Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence.

4. All armed action or repressive measures of all kinds directed against dependent peoples shall cease in order to enable them to exercise peacefully and freely their right to complete independence, and the integrity of their national territory shall be respected.

5. Immediate steps shall be taken, in trust and non-self-governing territories or all other territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the peoples of those territories, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire, without any distinction as to race, creed or color, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom.

6. Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

7. All States shall observe faithfully and strictly the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the present Declaration on the basis of equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of all States and respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples and their territorial integrity.

Puerto Rico Status Referendum Act											
Federal Revenues, Outlays and Tax Expenditures, 1992-2000											
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Cumulative
<b>STATEHOOD</b>											
Estimated Outlays****		5,400	5,693	6,627	7,520	7,644	7,868	8,103	8,350	8,610	92-2000
Total revenue		0	0	0	0	3,376	4,274	5,262	5,475	5,726	65,816
Individual Income Tax		0	0	0	0	948	995	1,045	1,108	1,185	24,112
Corporate Income Tax											5,282
Phaseout of Section 936		0	0	0	0	1,806	2,488	3,210	3,310	3,410	14,224
Tax on Puerto Rican firms		0	0	0	0	622	790	1,006	1,057	1,131	4,606
Other Taxes		**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Net Revenues		-5,400	-5,693	-6,627	-7,520	-4,267	-3,594	-2,842	-2,876	-2,884	-41,704
936 Tax expenditure		-2,510	2,610	-2,710	-2,910	-1,204	-622	0	0	0	-12,566
Net Revenue+Tax expenditure		-7,910	-8,303	-9,337	-10,430	-5,471	-4,216	-2,842	-2,876	-2,884	-52,470
<b>INDEPENDENCE</b>											
Estimated Outlays****		3,524	3,373	3,267	3,170	**	**	**	**	**	**
Total Revenue		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Net Revenue		3,524	3,373	3,267	3,170	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>ENHANCED COMMONWEALTH</b>											
Estimated Outlays***		3,724	3,873	4,067	4,270	4,484	4,708	4,943	5,190	5,450	40,710
Total Revenue											
Net Revenue		-3,724	-3,873	-4,067	-4,270	-4,484	-4,708	-4,946	-5,190	-5,450	-40,710
936 Tax Expenditure		-2,510	-2,610	-2,710	-2,910	-3,010	-3,110	-3,210	-3,310	-3,410	-36,790
Net Revenue+Tax expenditure		-6,234	-6,483	-6,777	-7,180	-7,494	-7,818	-8,153	-8,500	-8,860	-67,500

\* amount less than \$5 million.

\*\* Unknown.

\*\*\* Excludes Social Security (\$1,852 million), Veterans Payments (\$268 million), Federal retirement & Disability (\$145 million), Federal salaries & wages (\$490 million) and Procurement (\$383 million) Figures in parentheses are in 1988 outlays.

\*\*\*\*Statehood = Enhanced Commonwealth status + CBO incremental costs.

\*\*\*\*\* Independence = Enhanced Commonwealth status + CBO incremental costs.