

Mss.

A Cordova-Davila, Felix.

Y13 Correspondence, 16 April 1918-

21 27 January 1921.

The Filson Historical Society

House of Representatives U. S.  
Washington, D. C.

April 16, 1918

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor,  
San Juan, P. R.

My dear Governor:

Some days ago in a letter addressed to President Wilson, I made the following statements:

"When last I took occasion to bring to your attention certain differences which had arisen between the people of Porto Rico, acting through their elected representatives in the Island Legislature, and the Governor, your reply to that communication manifested such sympathy and friendship, that it served, if such were possible, to further strengthen the feelings of loyalty and attachment which have always bound our people to you and your administration.

"Those differences proved susceptible of adjustment, through the practice of a conciliatory course upon both sides, just as your letter predicted, and since the adjustment of that controversy, I am happy to say that there has been no friction between the people of Porto Rico and Governor Yager.

"On the contrary, as indicated in my letter of December 10th, our people are only too glad to testify to the spirit of fairness and justice that has marked the course of his administration, and I believe I voice the sentiment of the population when I say that it would be difficult to find another who would discharge the duties of the high office with more credit to himself and advantage to the people of our Island.

But the report has become current in Porto Rico that a change is contemplated with respect to the Governorship and although we do not give much credit to this rumor, I think it will not be useless to express you our feelings with regard to this important matter."

To this letter President Wilson replied as follows:

"The White House, Washington. April 12, 1918.

My dear Mr. Davila: I have your letter of April tenth and it is most gratifying to me. I thank you sincerely. I feel the same confidence that the people of Porto Rico feel in the present Governor, whom I have known during the greater part of my lifetime, and I am glad to say that I have no thought of making any change in the Governorship there. I am sure that this will be welcome information to you. With much regard,  
Cordially and sincerely yours, (sgd) Woodrow Wilson. --Hon. Felix Cordova Davila, House of Representatives.

[16 APRIL 18]

-2-

I am entirely satisfied with President Wilson's letter and as I think you will be interested in reading what the President says about you I have taken the pleasure of quoting his reply.

Very respectfully yours,

*Fely Cordova Dorila*

The Filson Historical Society

May 4, 1918.

My dear Judge Córdova:

I received your letter of April 16 in which you copy a letter addressed by you to President Wilson and also the President's reply.

I appreciate very much your kindness in initiating this correspondence and especially your thoughtfulness in sending it to me. Coming at this moment when Mr. Iglesias is in Washington attempting to create trouble between myself and the Washington Government, it is extremely opportune and gratifying to receive this expression of confidence both from yourself and President Wilson.

We are just winding up to-day our campaign in Porto Rico for the Third Liberty Loan. The Porto Rican people have made as usual a patriotic and heroic response to this appeal of their country. We feel assured that the total will run over \$2,000,000 and will exceed therefore even the splendid showing made in the campaign for the Second. Considering the difficult conditions that now exist in the Island because of shipping difficulties and a prolonged drought, I feel well satisfied with this result, altho we did not reach the quota that had been assigned to us by those who were unfamiliar with conditions. Everything is progressing well. The new Porto Rican army will be mobilized and brought into the cantonment next month.

Thanking you for your letter and with best wishes for you always, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Hon. Félix Córdova Dávila,  
Resident Commissioner,  
Washington, D. C.

86 x 11

House of Representatives U. S.

Washington, D. C.

May 10, 1918.

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor,  
San Juan, P. R.

My dear Governor Yager:-

I am sending you herewith a copy  
of the letter I have just sent to President Wilson in  
connection with the request filed by Mr. Gompers, for your  
removal.

Very truly yours,

*J. C. Lusk*

May 10th, 1918.

To the Honorable Woodrow Wilson,  
President of the United States,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

Mr. President:-

I see by the public press of this morning that President Compers of the American Federation of Labor has requested the removal of Governor Yager of Porto Rico on the ground that he is incompetent and inimical to the best interests of the laboring element on the island.

I am extremely anxious to avoid the appearance of partisanship in a matter affecting labor and I especially recognize the consideration that is due a communication from such high authority.

At the same time I am sure that this accusation will be received with great surprise by the people of Porto Rico including a large proportion of the labor element. While not wishing to appear as rushing to the defense of Governor Yager, as I realize that he is fully capable of meeting such charges, yet, inasmuch as the matter has been given publicity and the charges against the Governor are vested with a public character, may I ask, if entirely consistent and agreeable, that I be furnished with a copy of the same. And should you desire any <sup>further</sup> information regarding labor conditions in general upon the island, which have

[10-MAY-18]

-2-

culminated in these charges, may I have the honor of being permitted to call in person and explain the same.

Very respectfully yours,

FCD:VP

The Filson Historical Society

may 10 1918  
New York Evening Journal

# GOMPERS ASKS REMOVAL OF YAGER

He Asserts Governor of Porto Rico Disregards Adjustments of Labor Disputes.

By International News Service.

WASHINGTON, May 10.—Demand for the removal of Arthur Yager, Governor of Porto Rico, has been made to President Wilson by Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor.

Charges made by Santiago Iglesias, president of the Free Federation of Workers of Porto Rico and a member of the Porto Rican Senate, that Yager has "wilfully and knowingly given aid and comfort to the enemy" through his refusal to compose labor differences on the island are inclosed by Mr. Gompers in a letter to the President.

Other accusations are:

That Governor Yager disregarded instructions of the President concerning adjustments of labor disputes during the war.

That he refused to aid Red Cross work in Porto Rico and to give adequate support to the first and second Liberty Loans.

That he refused organized labor on the island the right of peaceful assemblage.

That he had made misleading statements in official utterances.

In his letter to President Wilson, Mr. Gompers says:

"Conditions in Porto Rico have in years past been presented to you personally and to various governmental agencies, especially to the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations. It is my purpose at this time not only to make charges against Governor Yager, but to suggest that a commission be sent to the island to make an investigation and a report with recommendations.

"The evil that exists there is, in the main, economic. For years the workers of Porto Rico have been underfed, practically starving. Something practical ought to be done to better such a condition among workers in an island rich in many valuable products. A practical effort ought to be made to give these people of Porto Rico the real opportunity which democracy implies, and with which I know you have the most sincere and practical sympathy."

86 x 11



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

13 May, 1918.

My dear Mr. Davila:

Your letter of May tenth gratifies me very much. My long acquaintance with Governor Yager convinces me that you are right in believing that the charges made against him are without sufficient foundation. Those charges are now in the hands of the Secretary of War, to whom I sent them immediately upon receiving them and I have no doubt that the Secretary would be perfectly willing to let you see them and would welcome your advice in the matter.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) Woodrow Wilson.

Hon. Felix Cordova Davila,  
House of Representatives.

# House of Representatives U. S.

Washington, D. C.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

Washington, D. C., May 6 1918.

Sir:-

I feel it my unescapable duty to present to you certain facts in regard to conditions in Porto Rico in the form of charges against Arthur Yager Governor of Porto Rico. These charges, signed and specified by Santiago Iglesias, President of the Free Federation of Workers of Porto Rico show that Governor Yager has been derelict in cooperating with National War Policies, that he has not performed his duties as an apt administrator with impartiality and equity to all; that he has knowingly or unknowingly used the high power of his office to interfere with constructive efforts of Porto Rico's workers to better their conditions of life and work, and that his policies and acts have been at complete variance with those high ideals and standards of human welfare and value that are essential to the democratic institutions. A statement has been made out to accompany these charges describing conditions in Porto Rico, and embodying documentary evidence proving the charges.

The agricultural workers who are now on strike in the sugar plantations of Porto Rico have been denied political, legal, and industrial justice. The United States Government, which is now in a war against the principles of autocracy and denial of human right, can no longer remain responsible for a condition in territory over which it has jurisdiction, which is totally at variance with the ideals and institutions for which our government and Nation has declared.

The situation in Porto Rico, which is inducing and leading the working people to the verge of a revolution, is being used to the discredit of our republic in spanish speaking countries. The story of injustice in Porto Rico has already being carried to the spanish speaking people of North and South America, and even to Europe. The people of those countries value the declarations of our government and our people by the results they are able to achieve.

I feel very keenly that a condition ought no longer to remain which I am sure you, and all other right thinking citizens, would not approve or sanction if the facts were known. I therefore, am bringing to your attention the following charges and supplementary information in order that steps may be taken to remedy a situation which is totally at variance with the desires

[6-MAY-18]

of our people and which is being used to discredit the high aims and desires of our Republic.

Conditions in Porto Rico have in years past being presented to you personally and to various governmental agencies, especially to the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations. It is my purpose at this time not only to make charges against Governor Yager, but to suggest that a commission ought to be sent to the Island to make an investigation and a report with recommendations. The evil that exists there is in the main economic. For years, the workers of Porto Rico have been underfed practically starving. Something practical ought to be done to better such a conditions among workers in an Island rich in amny valuable products. A practical effort ought to be made to give these people of Porto Rico the real opportunity which democracy implies, and with which I know you have the most sincere and practical sympathy.

Respectfully,

(Sgd.) Samuel Gompers,  
President,  
American Federation of Labor.

Honorable Woodrow Wilson,  
President of the United States,  
Washington, D. C.

The Filson Historical Society

San Juan, May 11, 1918.

My dear Judge Córdova: -

Your cable of May 10th received this morning. I am cabling you today brief reply. I have covered every phase of this matter of the labor strike in Porto Rico in my letters on the subject to General McIntyre.

I suggest that you take up the matter with him and consult with him fully and freely about the whole situation and request him to advise me by letter or cable as the circumstances may require what further steps, if any, I should take to meet the situation so as to defend myself and the Government of Porto Rico against the charges made by Mr. Compers to the President in his letter. I will add that the whole Island of Porto Rico is tranquil except the few agitators connected with the Free Federation of Labor, who are evidently under the direction of Mr. Iglesias, conducting a campaign of vilification and abuse against the Governor and the Insular Government in an effort to give some shadow of support to Mr. Iglesias' efforts in Washington. They are sending to Washington, to the President, cablegrams, utterly misrepresenting the situation and stating as facts things that are entirely false, and I am sure you know them to be false. All that is necessary is to see that the President may not be misled by this artificial campaign.

We have all been so busy with our Third Liberty Loan Campaign and with other important war works in Porto Rico that we have had no time to give any attention to Mr. Iglesias' campaign in Washington.

I Thank you for your cable and will leave

[11-MAY-18]

-2-

the rest to you and General McIntyre.

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Hon. Félix Córdova Dávila,  
Resident Commissioner from Porto Rico,  
Washington, D. C.

The Filson Historical Society

FELIX CORDOVA DAVILA  
RESIDENT COMMISSIONER  
PORTO RICO

House of Representatives U. S.  
Washington, D. C.

Mayo 21, 1918.

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor,  
San Juan, P. R.

My dear Governor:-

I am sending to you herewith, copies of the letters I wrote yesterday to the President and the Secretary of War in transmitting copies of the cablegram which announced the action taken by the Chamber of Commerce on the charges that had been filed with the President against you.

I have also been leaving with the War Department the Editorial comments of La Democracia and The Times with the request that these be filed with the other papers as part of the record.

The charges of Mr. Iglesias have apparently fallen flat and while I know that they must have caused some annoyance, yet it must be a source of satisfaction to you to know that they are not taken seriously. As stated in a previous letter I am keeping in close touch with the situation and will advise you by cable of any developments.

With kindest regards, believe me as ever,

your friend,

*Felix Cordova Davila*

FCD:VP

86 x 11

May 30th, 1918.

The President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:-

It gives me great pleasure to advise you that I am just in receipt of the following cablegram from the Insular Chamber of Commerce of San Juan, Porto Rico:-

"Resolution passed requesting this Chamber to convey President Wilson through you our expression absolute endorsement Governor Yager's administration and that he is entitled to highest esteem of all classes of people in Porto Rico."

As you informed me that you had transmitted the charges recently left with you to the Secretary of War, I have taken the liberty of also forwarding a copy of the cablegram to Secretary Baker.

Very respectfully yours,

Resident Commissioner  
Porto Rico.

FCD:VP

86x11

May 20th, 1918.

Hon. Newton C. Baker,  
Secretary of War,  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:-

I am just in receipt of the following  
cablegram which I have transmitted to the President as requested:

"Resolution passed requesting this  
Chamber to convey President Wilson through  
our expression absolute endorsement  
Governor Yager's administration and that he  
is entitled to highest esteem of all classes  
of people in Porto Rico."

I was much surprised to read in the Wash-  
ington newspapers some days ago of the charges that had been  
made reflecting upon Governor Yager, and at once wrote the  
President Wilson to say that not only would they prove a  
great surprise to the people of Porto Rico but that I felt  
the Governor enjoyed the confidence and support of the vast  
majority of our people. In the letter which I received from  
the President in reply, he took occasion to say that he had  
transmitted the charges and all other papers in the case to you.

I am therefore sending to you the enclosed  
copy of the cablegram I have just transmitted to the President  
with the request that it be made a part of the record.

Very respectfully yours,

Resident Commissioner

P

11x98



UNITED STATES SENATE,  
Committee on enrolled Bills.

14 May, 1918.

Hon. Felix Cordova Davila,  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Davila:-

I have your letter of May 13th urging that some action be taken to loan money to farmers in Porto Rico through the Federal Farm Loan System. I can readily believe that assistance of this sort would be of great benefit to Porto Rico, and I wish I might encourage you by some assurance of early action along those lines.

The difficulty is that the Farm Loan system has not got fairly started yet in continental United States. The loans closed up to the present time are about \$91,000,000, so that the earnings are not yet sufficient to place the banks on a paying basis. In order to make loans in Porto Rico it would be necessary to establish a Branch bank in Porto Rico with a full complement of officers and all the machinery necessary for careful appraisal, organization of local associations, examination of titles, etc. My own reputation and personal concern are so much wrapped up in the success of the system that I am not in favor of its extension to Porto Rico until it is placed upon a substantial paying basis in continental United States.

The question of including Porto Rico, Hawaii, and Alaska in the system was carefully considered during the preparation of the bill, and the feeling was unanimous that

86x11

(14 May 18)

-2-

the outlying districts ought not to be included until the system was soundly established in the United States proper.

I hope the time will soon come when we shall feel that Porto Rico should be included.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) Henry F. Hollis.

The Filson Historical Society

## DIDN'T ASK YAGER'S REMOVAL.

### Gompers' Charges Transferred by Wilson to the War Department.

Charges of official misconduct in dealing with labor recently filed against Arthur Yager, governor of Porto Rico, by Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, have been referred by President Wilson to the War Department.

It developed yesterday that Mr. Gompers did not ask for the removal of Gov. Yager, as previously reported, but suggested that a commission be sent

to the island to investigate and report recommendations. Friends of the governor claim that socialists are responsible for the complaints upon which Mr. Gompers acted.

### Republicans Retire Chairman.

Oklahoma City, Okla., May 15. Arthur H. Geissler will retire next August as chairman of the Republican State central committee of Oklahoma as the result of a vote today by the State convention of the party. The convention voted 573 to 235 to elect a new chairman following the primary election next August.

## PORTO RICO CHARGES STIR GOVERNOR'S FRIENDS

### Yager, It Is Claimed, Has Support of Many Classes and Leads in War Industry.

Cablegrams received from Porto Rico within the last few days indicate that the charges lodged with President Wilson a few days ago against Gov. Yager, have resulted in widespread interest being taken in the matter up on the island.

The charges against the governor were transmitted through Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, but contrary to the report published at the time Mr. Gompers did not request the removal of the governor, Mr. Gompers stated that it was "his unescapable duty" to present the charges, which in a general way recited unfriendliness to the laboring classes, and suggested that a commission be sent to the island to investigate conditions and make recommendations. It was also intimated that Gov. Yager's attitude had interfered with work essential to winning the war.

Friends of Gov. Yager claim that not only has he the support of a large majority of all classes, excepting the avowed socialists, but that the public men, irrespective of party, have rallied to his support since the publication of the charges. It is also claimed that the island, far from being in a state of industrial ferment, with a threatened widespread strike is enjoying normal conditions, and that the socialists have signally failed in their efforts to stir up trouble between the laboring classes and their employers. Gov. Yager's friends in Congress and throughout the country express no fear as to his ability to meet the charges and successfully dispel them.

As to the intimation that the governor's attitude has interfered with the war work, all Porto Rican factions claim that the one idea on the island now is to help the United States win the war, and all but that faction of the labor party which is behind the charges agree that Gov. Yager has been indefatigable in leading this movement.

The Filson Historical Society  
Evening Star, Washington, D.C., May 17, 1918

## WANTS GOV. YAGER REMOVED.

### Gompers Writes Wilson That Porto Rico Executive Is Incompetent.

Removal of Arthur Yager as governor of Porto Rico was asked of President Wilson yesterday by Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Gompers charged the governor with incompetence in handling the labor situation in Porto Rico.

In a letter to the President Mr. Gompers declared the governor had failed to meet the situation and that he had refused to better living conditions of the working people.

Yager is a Democrat and was appointed from Kentucky by President Wilson in 1914 for a four-year term, but Congress extended the term until a successor is appointed.

*Washington Post  
First Article.*

The Filson Historical

# House of Representatives U. S.

Washington, D. C.

May 17 th 1918.

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor,  
San Juan, P. R.

My dear Governor:-

I am sending you herewith a copy of the article which I have had published in "The Evening Star" of this city in refutation of the article carried by the Associated Press at the time announcement was made of Mr. Gompers' letter to the President. The Washington headquarters of the Associated Press are located in the Star Building, and the articles appearing in the columns of that paper are distributed by the press association to the papers throughout the country. In order, however, to leave nothing undone to correct the wrong which I felt had been done you by the original publication, which, by the way, was as much of a surprise to me as to any one, I paid a personal call upon the Washington manager of the Associated Press. He gave me his assurance that this would be done and I think that the news associations will be very chary about any further publications along this line, as not only the press but a majority of the men here in public life have a better understanding of the Porto Rican situation.

I regret that I did not have an opportunity to write to you fully by the last mail regarding this matter, but the fact is that I only had time to send you copies of President

Wilson's letter to me, and the letter of Mr. Gompers to the President.

The charges filed with the President against you came just as I had concluded a protracted discussion with the Department of Labor as a result of unfair charges made against me by the same influences which were responsible for the charges made against you. Among other things it was claimed that I had espoused the cause of the Employers against the Laborers on the sugar estates. The Department of Labor was able to officially deny this charge, although I am sorry to say that this simple act of justice to me could only be secured after repeated insistence on my part that my course at the Department be frankly and fully stated without any evasion whatever. I was while following up this matter at both the War and Labor Departments that I was enabled to learn certain of the particulars connected with the charges that were finally formulated against you as Governor.

These must appear to anyone familiar with the facts, as ridiculous as they are untrue. For instance, I understand that Mr. Roberts forgetting the role of impartial investigator in which was sent to the Island, and assuming the character of a partisan, made unjust allegations against you on the statements of men known to be unfriendly to your Administration. Among others, I understand that he charges on the representation of Mr. Dooley that you had either been luke-warm or antagonistic to the work of the Red Cross. But I will not go further into

these details.

You may rest assured that I lost no time upon learning of Mr. Gompers' letter to see that you were placed in a proper attitude before the public. I wanted to make it especially clear that the bitter element of the Porto Rican people - including a large part of the right thinking laboring class - had no sympathy with these charges. And I was especially anxious that the President should be made aware of it.

At this time, when the greatest cataclysm in recorded history is bearing so heavily on his shoulders, and the allied governments of the earth are looking to him for guidance, I knew that these unjust charges against his lifelong friend must cause him anguish and felt that he would be glad to know that the people of Porto Rico did not countenance them. The letter that he sent in response, and which I lost no time in transmitting to you, shows how true this was and I know it will always be a source of satisfaction to you.

The War Department is thoroughly familiar with the character of the men who are instigating the trouble, and although they have requested that a commission be appointed to investigate the matter, it is my impression that no commission will be sent. At first I suggested to send an impartial man to Porto Rico to be a mediator and not an agitator and to get information for the Department of Labor, but now I am opposed to the sending of any commission or man with the purpose of making an investigation. I think that this matter must be finally disposed of. You will notice that in none of my letters nor press notices issued

from this office does the name of Mr. Iglesias appear. I thought it best not to vest him with that importance, but have referred to the authors of the charges as a branch of the labor element with socialistic tendencies.

I wish that you would send me a letter setting forth not only the desirability but the urgent necessity of extending the Rural Credit Legislation to Porto Rico. Our deceased friend Senator Broussard wrote me a letter last fall, offering to assist us in having the benefits of the existing law extended to our farmers, and when I returned here from Porto Rico several months ago, one of my first acts was to set the machinery in motion which I thought would result in accomplishing this. Unfortunately our good friend was not here to assist, and he never returned to the Capital, but I took his letter to the Treasury Department and went over the matter with the officials in charge of the Rural Credits Division. They strongly urged that I enlist the support of Senator Hollis, saying that he was practically the Father of this Legislation. I have gone over the matter fully with the Senator and while he expresses a friendly feeling towards our people and a desire to have the benefits of the act extended to our Island, yet, he says that he does not think this possible until the system has been put on a sound financial basis in the Continental United States and is operating without any assistance from the Treasury. This, he says, has not yet been accomplished and it will simply be adding to the liabilities of the system to extend it to the outlying possessions. I am hopeful, however, notwithstanding



the Senator's attitude of having the system extended to our people, if even in a small way, and feel that a letter from you will have much weight with Senator Hollis.

In conclusion I wish to assure you that I will keep in close touch with the situation here and advise you of any developments, and with very best wishes, believe me,

Sincerely your friend,

FCD:VP

*Felix Suidwa Dorda*

The Filson Historical Society

San Juan, May 29, 1918.

My dear Judge: -

I have just received your letter of the 17th instant, and also that of the 21st instant, both of which came by the last boat.

I also received your previous enclosure consisting of the letter of Mr. Compers, and that of President Wilson. I assure you that I appreciate all of this information very much as well as the active interest you have displayed in all of this annoying business.

I have felt all the time that these attacks and slanders were directed not only against me personally but also against the Insular Government of Porto Rico, and against the good name and dignity of the People of Porto Rico.

I am glad to have your judgment that the charges have apparently fallen flat and that they are not taken seriously, nevertheless, I feel sure that they ought at some time and in some way to be thoroughly answered in view of the wide publicity that have been given to them throughout the United States.

We will take up this matter later when an official copy of the letter and charges and all the attached documents have come to hand.

With best wishes for you, I am,  
Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Hon. F. Córdova Dávila,  
Resident Commissioner from Porto Rico,  
Washington, D. C.

86X11

NATIONAL OFFICERS

WOODROW WILSON                      PRESIDENT  
 ROBERT W. DEFOREST      VICE-PRESIDENT  
 JOHN SKELTON WILLIAMS      TREASURER  
 JOHN W. DAVIS                      COUNSELLOR  
 STOCKTON AXSON                      SECRETARY

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT              CHAIRMAN  
 ELIOT WADSWORTH              VICE-CHAIRMAN  
 HARVEY D. GIBSON              GENERAL MANAGER

RED CROSS WAR COUNCIL

BY-APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
 HENRY P. DAVISON                      CHAIRMAN



THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

TERRITORIAL, INSULAR AND FOREIGN DIVISION

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS BUILDING, WASHINGTON, D. C.

OTIS H. CUTLER, MANAGER

DIVISION DIRECTORS

RANDOLPH ORTMAN	DEVELOPMENT
O. K. DAVIS	PUBLICITY
MISS SARA E. NIEMAN	WOMEN'S WORK
	NURSING SERVICE
MISS E. E. BALDWIN	
	ACTING CIVILIAN RELIEF
O. L. SORENSON	SUPPLIES
EDWARD P. KEECH, JR.	MILITARY RELIEF
	COUNSELLOR
F. E. MARSHALL	ACCOUNTING
MISS E. E. BALDWIN	JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP
HARRY J. COGSWELL	CHIEF CLERK

TELEPHONE MAIN 9400

June 18, 1918.

Honorable Arthur Yager,  
 Governor of Porto Rico,  
 Government House,  
 San Juan, Porto Rico.



My dear Governor Yager:-

Your valued letter of May 15th has been before us almost daily since its receipt, and we have been endeavoring to obtain precise and definite information regarding the policy to be followed in the several matters referred to. As a result, we now understand that the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service has detailed a very capable officer to make a survey of the conditions in San Juan and vicinity, and I have no doubt that before this letter reaches you he will have paid his respects to your Excellency and perhaps advised you concerning the scope and character of the work which he is undertaking to do, and, I hope, received your advice as to the practical steps to be taken in Puerta de Tierra and vicinity.

The sanitary department of the Red Cross, headed by Dr. T. Clark, has taken a very active interest in developing this <sup>here</sup> matter, and I am sure will supervise it in an intelligent and effective way, and from time to time we will advise you of progress.

Mr. Thompson left here almost immediately after his return from Porto Rico for a trip to and examination of Red Cross conditions in Cuba and the Canal Zone, and has not yet returned, but we expect him back shortly and are looking forward with much pleasure to the benefit of his advice and knowledge concerning Porto Rican affairs.

The recent sinking of the S.S. Carolina must have occasioned a great deal of anxiety in Porto Rico, but we are glad to assure you that the Red Cross took immediate steps to afford all necessary relief and succor to the survivors and that no unnecessary hardships were therefore experienced by them.

Assuring you of our deep appreciation of your kindly interest in the welfare of the Red Cross, as well as the inhabitants of the Province of Porto Rico, I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,

*Otis H. Cutler*

Manager.

11  
86 X 11

August 13, 1918.

My dear Judge:

Your recent letter recommending for appointment for some position in the judicial service Francisco Cervoni Galy was duly received and I have referred your recommendation to the Attorney General with whom I will take up the matter personally at the first opportunity. The information which I have received about Mr. Cervoni is most favorable and I hope that we shall soon have some vacancy to which we could appoint him.

I have recently received some letters from the Secretary of War and some copies of correspondence between the Secretary and the President with reference to the charges against the Governor and the matter of sending a commission to Porto Rico. From all these letters it seems clear, first that the charges against the Governor have been dismissed as having no foundation, and second that a commission will be sent to Porto Rico sometime in the near future to investigate general labor conditions. The important thing for us to do now is to secure a good competent and impartial commission and to select the time for their visit to the island which would be best suited to the prosecution of a complete investigation. Mr. Iglesias and Mr. Gompers are doing their best to influence the selection of the commission and to have them come down very soon. September seems to have been tentatively selected as the time for their visit. Personally I think this is a bad time, for the mills are all closed and September is perhaps the dullest month in the year from the point of view of business. December or January would be a much better date.

The Secretary of War has recommended to the President that the President himself select the commission without regard to the recommendations of Mr. Gompers or the War Labor Board, and that the commission be instructed to investigate general labor conditions only and make recommendations looking toward their improvement. I think this is entirely right, and if we could have them come down in the winter we could hope for good results from their visit.

I am writing you fully about it so that you may keep in touch with the whole matter and use your influence in the right direction if possible.

(13 Aug 18)

-2-

I have written under date of July 30 a long letter to President Wilson embodying my answer to the charges of Mr. Iglesias, and containing also a brief analysis of general labor conditions in Porto Rico. I sent a copy to the Secretary of War and I suppose you can find it in the Bureau of Insular Affairs if you care to read it.

Everything here seems to be about as usual. General Orismen has arrived and taken charge of the encampment.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Hon. Felix Córdova Dávila,  
Resident Commissioner,  
Washington, D.C.

Governor.

The Filson Historical Society

House of Representatives U. S.  
Washington, D. C.

P.F.

Agosto 29, 1916.

Mi querido Gobernador:

He leído con marcada satisfacción su carta de Ud., felicitandome por la aclaración que publique en el New York Times. He notado cierta tendencia por parte de la prensa aquí de atribuirle a la Comisión de Alimentos todo el éxito de la actitud de Puerto Rico con respecto a la guerra actual. En varios periodicos se ha publicado un artículo que se titula así: "Porto Rico Shows its Patriotism by the Conservation of Food."

Para evitar torcidas interpretaciones sobre este punto que puedan extraviar la opinión Americana, he hecho publicar en el Congressional Record un artículo que vio la luz en el New York Herald, suscrito por Mr. Henry A. Wise Wood. En este artículo se expone con imparcialidad la actitud de nuestra Isla y su lealtad al pueblo Americano en estos momentos de crisis nacional.

He visto en el Porto Rico Progress la petición que los obreros dirigen al Presidente Wilson, solicitando la destitución de Ud. y el nombramiento para Gobernador de Puerto Rico del Gobernador de Arizona. Esta conducta de los obreros, injusta a todas luces, ha producido en mi ánimo tanta tristeza como indignación. Le remito copia de la carta que he dirigido al Presidente Wilson. No se si el Presidente aceptará mis indicaciones, de hacer una declaración pública con respecto a Puerto Rico, que ponga coto a los desahogos

-2-

de Santiago Iglesias. Quizas el Presidente considere inoportuna cualquier declaracion de esta naturaleza en los momentos actuales. Yo creo que es necesario corregir el mal a tiempo para evitarnos mayores trastornos en el futuro.

Le remito un ejemplar de las manifestaciones que hice ante el Congreso. Es muy posible que Ud. no este de acuerdo con mis puntos de vista sobre el problema politico de nuestra Isla. Acaso piense Ud. que mis observaciones son algo prematuras. Yo entiendo que en la discusion de nuestros derechos no debemos permanecer ociosos ni un solo momento. La labor que realizamos hoy echara las bases de las victorias futuras. En mi discurso he dedicado un parrafo a Ud., haciendo justicia a sus meritos como gobernante.

Dña Trina Padilla de Sanz tiene un hijo en el tercer campamento para oficiales. Su nombre es Angel Sanz Padilla. Esta señora, que merece mi mayor respeto por sus condiciones morales y su alta capacidad, está muy interesada, como es natural, en que su hijo salga airoso en sus empeños. Tengo entendido que el joven Sanz se recomienda por su buena conducta y revelantes aptitudes. Si Ud. puede hacer algo por este joven, le estare sumamente agradecido.

Cordialmente suyo,

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor,  
San Juan, Porto Rico.

*Jesús Enrique Saez*



August 27, 1918.

To the President,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

Mr. President:

It is with extreme reluctance that I again write you regarding the Gubernatorial situation in Porto Rico, but private advices that I have received from there, together with numerous statements appearing in the public press indicate that the island is in ferment as a result of the campaign of detraction which has been waged against Governor Yager by Santiago Iglesias and certain other socialists and agitators.

By means of letters from the United States to his own newspaper in Porto Rico in which Iglesias has misrepresented the attitude of official Washington towards the Governor he has succeeded in deceiving some of the more ignorant people as to the true situation here.

While these letters were being sent to Porto Rico from the United States, a series of letters have been sent from that island to the newspapers throughout the United States which were mainly notable for their distortion of the truth. These letters have attempted to make the American people believe that a million Porto Ricans have been petitioning for the removal of Governor Yager because he is unfit, and for the appointment of Governor Hunt of Arizona, as a successor, who would be acceptable to labor.

As I stated in a previous communication and took occasion to repeat recently on the floor of the House, Dr. Yager has proven more acceptable to the people of Porto Rico than would be possible for any Executive saving only a native of the island.

The charges that are being industriously circulated in the United States and on the Island in the hope that they will result in his recall can hardly have failed to have caused the Governor, his family, friends and people of Porto Rico certain anguish if not anxiety as to the future.

Knowing the malice behind them, and how utterly groundless the charges against the Governor are, I feel very keenly over the injustice done him by means of this campaign of publicity, which is calculated to bring discredit and humiliation upon the insular administration.

I think it could be brought to an end, and likewise a



[27 Aug -18]

-2-

stop put to the insidious work of undermining his influence as Governor, if I could announce with some assurance to the people that this campaign against the Governor had failed of its purpose.

Very respectfully yours,  
(Sgd) Felix Cordova Davila

I am enclosing a clipping from the last issue of the Porto Rico Progress to reach the United States. It will illustrate the character of the campaign that is being conducted against the Governor.

The Filson Historical Society

MEMORANDUM

Governor:

These are from  
your private file.

2 letters to Judge  
Cordova

1 to Genl. McIntyre.

---

86X11

September 18<sup>th</sup> 1918.

My dear Judge:

Your letter of September 3, referring to the "rumor" in the Correspondencia, has just been received.

I desire to assure you that I never pay the slightest attention to this "rumor" column of "La Correspondencia," especially when it appears to attack the sincerity of a friend in whom I have as much confidence as I have in yourself. Nevertheless, I was glad to get your letter and appreciate your expressions of confidence and esteem which I know to be sincere.

I am enclosing copy of a letter which I have just received from the Bureau of Insular Affairs and which refers to the matter of the application of the rural credit law to Porto Rico. While this letter is not distinctly encouraging it is also I think not discouraging. I believe that it might be possible for you to take this matter up with the congressional committee and, using the material which you already have as to the conditions in the Island, you might persuade the committee to recommend the extension of the law to Porto Rico. Of course the operation of the law in Porto Rico would in any event have to be developed gradually, and while the problems referred to by Senator Norris are being worked out on the continent we could make a beginning here in Porto Rico toward working out the similar problems which would come up in this island. I think this course would be perfectly safe and at the same time helpful and encouraging to the farmers of this island. I

I am also enclosing a copy of a letter received by me from President Wilson under date of July 30 advising me of the final disposition of the charges made by Mr. Iglesias. I am sure that this letter will be of interest to you, and as you have been kind enough to send me a copy of his letter to you, I will send you a copy of his to me. You will note the President's reference to the Commission to investigate labor conditions which will probably come down sometime in the near future. I have just received to-day a batch of correspondence with reference to this commission consisting chiefly of letters and recommendations to the President both by the Secretary of War and Mr. Gompers. The recommendations are quite different and conflicting, but I sincerely hope that the President will disregard the recommendations of Mr. Gompers and follow those of the Secretary of

11729

[18 Sept -18]

-2-

War. I see that Mr. Gompers has recommended Domingo Collazo "as a trustworthy interpreter for the Commission." You will no doubt agree that this man would be particularly objectionable and unsatisfactory, because he is regarded here generally as quite untrustworthy. I think I shall write in a day or two to General Mc Intyre suggesting some names of men to be appointed on the commission, as, for example Mr. Robert Szold and Mr. Walcott Pitkin both of whom were formerly in the Attorney General's Office and therefore know something of Porto Rico and of the Spanish language. They also have wide sympathies in regard to all social questions and are at the same time fair and just as well as progressive in their ideas. I hope you will some time soon have a conference with General Walcott and General Mc Intyre upon this matter. I have already recommended that the time selected for the coming of the commission be late in the fall or early in the winter when the mills are running and that they stay long enough in the island to make their investigation thorough and complete.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Governor.

Hon. Felix Cordova Davila,  
Resident Commissioner from Porto Rico,  
Washington, D. C.

(COPY)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Washington

August 20, 1918.

My dear Governor:

I have your letter of July 30th reviewing the recent agitation in Porto Rico, which resulted in the charges already disposed of.

I am sending your letter to the War Department in order that it will be of record. You have, however, already been assured that we were entirely satisfied with the manner in which you have done your duty in these matters.

The commission which is to be sent to Porto Rico will, it is hoped, serve to clear up matters and make suggestions looking to the betterment of the economic situation.

I am,

Very sincerely,

(Signed) WOODROW WILSON

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor of Porto Rico,  
San Juan.

House of Representatives U. S.  
Washington, D. C.

September 3, 1918.

Hon. Arthur Yager, Governor,  
San Juan, Porto Rico.

Mi querido Gobernador:

Acabo de leer en La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico el siguiente suelto:

"RUMORASE: que ciertos politicos convencionales defienden a las autoridades insulares aqui en Puerto Rico, mientras ordenan al Comisionado Residente principie un ataque contra las mismas ante las autoridades en la capital de la Nacion."

Aunque se trata simplemente de un rumor, como esta noticia tiene indudablemente la intencion de poner en evidencia a nuestros hombres con la Administracion, yo deseo manifestarle, Gobernador, que tanto en el Bureau de Asuntos Insulares como en la Secretaria de la Guerra y en la casa Blanca, he defendido con verdadera lealtad al Gobernador Yager de los ataques de que viene siendo victima. Nuestros hombres en Puerto Rico vienen siguiendo la misma linea de conducta. Cuando Iglesias presento sus ataques contra Ud., recibí una carta privada de Barcelo que entregue al General McIntyre para que la tradujera, porque constituia un alegato en favor de nuestro querido Gobernador. Pienso obtener una copia de dicha carta en el Bureau de Asuntos

[3-Sept-18]

-2-

Insulares.

En todos los actos de mi vida he procurado ser sincero, y no seria yo capaz de presentarme ante el Gobernador de Puerto Rico, ofreciendole mi amistad, para despues atacarlo traidoramente ante las autoridades aqui. Mis actuaciones son publicas y completamente claras. Cuando ataco, acostumbro a dar el frente; cuando tiendo mi mano de amigo, acostumbro a poner en ella toda la lealtad de mi corazon.

Cordialmente suyo,

*José Cardona Lora*

The Filson Historical Society

June 17, 1918.

My dear Judge Córdova:

I wrote you a letter on May 29 which I am sure was lost on the "Carolina"; but inasmuch as it contained matters of no permanent importance I will not try to reproduce it.

Of course you know what a trying experience the sinking of the this ship was for the people of Porto Rico and how busy we have all been since the occurrence in taking care of the critical situation produced by so striking a disaster.

I note that in one of your recent letters you have asked me to write you a letter that might aid you in your efforts to procure the extension of the rural credits law to Porto Rico. I have already at various times sent up to the Bureau several important reports on this subject including one from the Commissioner of Agriculture, the Treasurer of Porto Rico, and resolutions and petitions from various associations and organizations of farmers all having this end in view. You can get copies of these, I am sure, from the files of the Bureau.

I have had in mind to make clear to the committees of Congress (1) that there is a real and vital need here in Porto Rico for this law and its benefits to all classes of our farmers, especially to the numerous small landowners who cannot use their lands thoroughly without credit and can not secure credit in Porto Rico on the security of their lands except at exorbitant rates of interest; (2) that these farmers of various sorts thru their various organizations, such as sugar farmers, fruit growers, coffee growers, vegetable and tobacco growers' associations have all expressed their willingness and their intention to cooperate in the formation of loan associations so they can secure the benefits of this law if they are given the opportunity to do so.

I am personally confident that if Congress will extend the application of this law to Porto Rico that the farmers of this Island will cheerfully undertake to comply with all of its provisions so as to secure its benefits, and that the security which they can offer for the loans that may be granted to them will



be made just as safe as that in any of the States and Territories of the Union.

In case the question should come up of the revision of the Mortgage Law for Porto Rico so as to make it less expensive for a small landowner to mortgage his land for these loans, I should say that it will be easy to secure such changes as may be desirable after we have had some experience in making loans under the rural credits law. The farmers themselves will lend great aid in suggesting the changes that may be necessary and in urging upon the legislature their adoption. Meanwhile, as all of the expenses and delays will have to be borne by the borrowers themselves, this matter of making changes will concern them chiefly, inasmuch as the security and safety of the loans will in nowise be affected. The Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Ramón Gandía, has taken great interest in this subject, and in case the law is made applicable to Porto Rico, he has promised to organize and lead a general movement amongst the farmers to educate the public in the provisions of the law and the details of organizing farm-loan associations so as to secure its benefits. In short, I am confident that the Island is now prepared as never before for the application of this law and for the development under its provisions of a wide distribution of its benefits amongst all classes of farmers here. I sincerely hope you will be able to interest the committees of both houses in this most important matter.

Everything is quiet in Porto Rico except of course the preparations for all kinds of war work necessary for the winning of this great struggle. The Red Cross war-fund drive has been practically completed and contributions of more than \$100,000 have been secured. This I think under all the conditions is quite satisfactory for Porto Rico. The mobilization of the troops begins on the 20th, and the formation of the 3rd Training Camp has been ordered, and we are all much occupied with these important matters.

I desire to express to you my sincere personal thanks for the active interest that you have taken in the Gompers letter and the charges of Mr. Iglesias, etc. I have never yet received any official copy of that letter and those charges. I suppose sometime an opportunity will be given to me to make a complete answer to the

[17-June-18]

-3-

whole indictment, and if after that answer has been received it should be deemed necessary at Washington to have a Commission investigate labor conditions in Porto Rico, I should cheerfully welcome such an investigation by an impartial Commission appointed for the purpose.

With best wishes for you, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor

Honorable Felix Cordova Davila,  
Resident Commission,  
Washington, D. C.

The Filson Historical Society

Copy

San Juan, May 29, 1918.

My dear Judge:-

I have just received your letter of the 17th instant, and also that of the 21st instant, both of which came by the last boat.

I also received your previous enclosure consisting of the letter of Mr. Gompers, and that of President Wilson. I assure you that I appreciate all of this information very much as well as the active interest you have displayed in all of this annoying business.

I have felt all the time that these attacks and slanders were directed not only against me personally but also against the Insular Government of Porto Rico, and against the good name and dignity of the People of Porto Rico.

I am glad to have your judgment that the charges have apparently fallen flat and that they are not taken seriously, nevertheless, I feel sure that they ought at some time and in some way to be thoroughly answered in view of the wide publicity that have been given to them throughout the United States.

We will take up this matter later when an official copy of the letter and charges and all the attached documents have come to hand.

With best wishes for you, I am,  
Sincerely your friend,

(Sgd.) ARTHUR YAGER  
Governor,

Hon. F. Córdova Dávila,  
Resident Commissioner from Porto Rico.  
Washington, D. C.

N.B.

Original of this letter  
probably lost on "Carolina."

January 26, 1918.

My dear General:

I wrote you a short note from the Astor Hotel which I fear did not reach you for the reason that my request to have a cable sent advising Mr. Kern of my sailing seems to have been overlooked. However, no harm was done as to that, but I was a little anxious about your receipt of the letter as it contained an enclosure.

I find everything running about as usual here and about as I expected.

I was told by passengers on the boat that new and more stringent regulations as to travellers between the United States and Porto Rico had been adopted which would greatly hamper and perhaps destroy the tourist business to Porto Rico, as it would cut off all travel for pleasure.

I would like to learn officially just what these regulations are.

It will likely become a matter of some importance for us to get the exact situation as to the rural-credits law and its application to Porto Rico. You will remember that you told me that it was likely that this law would be made applicable to Porto Rico immediately. I wish you would advise me if this can be done and if possible bring about its speedy application to the Island. This I think would go far to relieve the interests of the coffee people and make unnecessary the passage of the coffee-bank bill which I fear the financial conditions at present make inadvisable.

I cabled you yesterday with reference to the cantonment here in San Juan and a plan laid out for the camp on a map which was sent to me at the boat. Col. Townshend is certain that when the officers come down and examine the ground they will find that it is eminently desirable to move the entire camp eastward nearer to the lagoon. He also has been advised that the Quartermaster General will ship down to him about 1000 mules and other animals for use in this cantonment; and he says that these animals are not needed at all, and that all transportation needs will be provided for by trucks and the railroad, and that these animals will cause immense expenditure for their transportation and maintenance and that he has no place to put them, and in short, he does not understand what the Quartermaster General is thinking about in connection with this matter.

We are all well and had a pleasant voyage. I shall have to close this letter now for the boat.

Sincerely your friend,  
Maj. Genl. Frank McIntyre,  
Chief, Bur. Ins. Affairs,  
War Dept., Washington, D.C.

Governor.

House of Representatives U. S.  
Washington, D. C.

October 2, 1918.

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor,  
San Juan, P. R.

Mi querido Gobernador:

Hace algunos dias tuve oportunidad de cambiar impresiones con el General Walcutt acerca del problema de nuestros trabajadores. El General me mostro un cable de Ud. para el, en que le decia que mil trabajadores mas acababan de salir de la Isla y que las familias de los primeros que emigraron solicitaban con urgencia alimentos. Como esta cuestion de la emigracion obrera de Puerto Rico es obra de Mr. Roberts, que tan funesto ha sido para nosotros, yo he creido conveniente procurar obtener toda la informacion posible a fin de adoptar las precauciones necesarias para la proteccion de nuestros obreros.

El General Walcutt me mostro ademas el telegrama dirigido a Ud. por el Administrador General de Alimentos. De acuerdo con este telegrama, la Comision de Alimentos proyecta retirar de nuestra Isla un numero de trabajadores que hasta la fecha no se ha podido limitar. Yo no se hasta que punto puede Puerto Rico desprenderse de estos hombres en las presentes circunstancias. Tenemos el deber de ayudar al pueblo

(2 Oct 18)

-2-

Americano en todos sus problemas, especialmente hoy que estamos envueltos en una guerra. Puerto Rico no debe regatear sacrificio alguno, por grande que sea, siempre que se trate de favorecer los intereses nacionales. La cuestion primordial estriba en los beneficios que el pueblo Americano ha de recibir de esta emigracion, teniendo tambien en cuenta los intereses de nuestra Isla. Si en nuestro pais hay exceso de trabajadores, nada se pierde y en cambio se gana mucho, enviando brazos a Cuba para segurar la cosecha de azucar en esta Isla. Si por el contrario, nuestra cosecha peligra, por falta de brazos, entonces, tenemos el deber de exponer la cuestion con toda claridad, porque en nada se beneficiaria la causa nacional asegurando la cosecha de Cuba para perder la de Puerto Rico. La labor de estos obreros en la Isla hermana tendria la misma importancia que si se realizara en Puerto Rico.

La actitud de Ud. en este asunto ha sido tan correcta y altiva, que yo he creido cumplir un deber, sosteniendo en Washington los mismos puntos de vista de Ud. Con este fin he dirigido dos cables a Puerto Rico, uno a la Comision de Alimentos y otro al Sr. Barcele. Dadas las circunstancias especiales en que Ud. se encuentra, despues de haber sido atacado por Mr. Roberts, los enemigos de Ud. podrian poner reparo a sus observaciones, tachandolas de interesadas. Yo he creido conveniente contribuir con mi actitud a destruir cualquier ataque de esta naturaleza. Si la Comision de Alimentos, y la opinion en Puerto

Rico se unen a Ud., endosando su actitud, nuestra posicion tiene que ser mucho mas fuerte. La Comision de Alimentos, responde a mi telegrama, evadiendo considerar la cuestion. Yo opino que en asuntos de esta naturaleza, cuando se ponen a discusion problemas verdaderamente vitales, todos los hombres tenemos el deber de dar el frente, sin rehuir responsabilidades. En asuntos en que estan vivamente interesade el bienestar del pais y los intereses nacionales, no debemos dejar solo al Gobernador. El telegrama dirigido a Barcelo y a la Comision de Alimentos dice asi:

"I have been informed that a considerable number of laborers are being taken from Porto Rico, and that Government contemplates to take some thousands to Cuba. I want full information about this matter, taking into consideration the welfare of the people of Porto Rico, and their duties to the United States. See Governor Yager."

Este telegrama fue redactado por mi en el Bureau de Asuntos Insulares y endosado por el General Walcutt. No quise remitirlo desde alli, porque no me parecia prudente.

La contestacion de la Comision de Alimentos dice asi:

"Referring to your telegram about labor, matter has been referred to the Governor."

Barcelo aun no ha enviado su contestacion.

Inmediatamente recibí su carta, enviandome copia de la que Mr. Geo. W. Norris, dirigiera al General McIntyre, fui a ver al Senador Saulsbury, con el fin de obtener su apoyo para



-4-

llevar adelante nuestros deseos. El Senador Saulsbury me ofreció presentar una enmienda en el Senado para extender a Puerto Rico los efectos de la ley de préstamos agrícolas. El Senador me dijo que redactara yo la enmienda, que él estudiaría el asunto y haría todo cuanto estuviese a su alcance para asegurarnos el triunfo. También me dijo que procuraría hablar con el Senador Owen, Chairman del Comité of Banking and Currency, para recomendarle el asunto. Yo opino que si el Senador Saulsbury nos ofrece decididamente su apoyo y se empeña en la aprobación de la enmienda, el resultado no será dudoso.

Ya tenía noticias de la recomendación de Mr. Gompers a favor de Domingo Collazo, para formar parte de la Comisión que ha de dirigirse a Puerto Rico. Domingo Collazo estuvo en mi oficina, explorando mi opinión sobre el asunto y le manifesté que yo estaba decididamente al lado suyo. Collazo es enemigo personal de Ud. y no puede formar parte de la Comisión. Su recomendación a favor de Mr. Robert Szold está de acuerdo con la mía. He recomendado a este funcionario, cuya capacidad conozco, porque sé que su informe habría de ajustarse a la verdad y a la justicia. De acuerdo con sus indicaciones pienso recomendar también a Mr. Pitkin.

Le doy las gracias más expresivas por la copia que me envía de la carta del Presidente. En mi concepto Ud. debe estar completamente satisfecho. Las circunstancias actuales nos obligan a ciertas contemporizaciones. La política de los



(2 Oct 18)

-5-

pueblos se regula y mantiene en equilibrio por una serie de transacciones que no siempre se ajustan a los fines de la justicia. La guerra actual ha hecho surgir muchos problemas de los cuales sacan provecho la osadía de algunos y la ignorancia de unos cuantos. La situación peligrosa en que se encuentra la Nación nos obliga a realizar ciertos sacrificios. Cuando pase el peligro y podamos afrontar la situación sin embarazo alguno, tendremos el deber de hablar claro, para que nos oiga el pueblo Americano y Mr. Gompers se convenza, si no esta convencido ya, de la clase de leaders que representan su causa en Puerto Rico.

Con los mejores deseos soy suyo afmo.,

*Felipe Luciano Saviola*

WAR DEPARTMENT  
BUREAU OF INSULAR AFFAIRS.

Memo. for Gov. Yager:

In looking over our "Influenza" records, I find that the attached letter was never sent to Porto Rico. It was the basis of the Bureau's cable to Porto Rico, Dec. 16, 1918, to which you replied December 21.

I am slipping it in your envelope, to be attached to your files.

*S. M. Pool.*

Memorandum:

86 x 11

The Filson Historical Society

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, D.C.

December 16, 1918.

Hon. Felix Cordova Davila,  
Resident Commissioner from Porto Rico,  
Washington, D.C.

My dear Sir:

Touching your interest and activity in the situation in Porto Rico relative to the influenza epidemic and your request that the Congress vote moneys for the relief of that situation, I beg to say that upon receipt of letter from the Department with a similar request, I took the matter up with the Red Cross and found from Mr. Davidson, the head of the Red Cross, that they were actively at work in connection with the epidemic there and believed that they were able to do all that was necessary or desirable, and was willing to do so . I communicated this information to the War Department and I have no doubt that the War Department, through the good offices of the Red Cross , have been able to deal with the situation.

I write you this letter owing to your interest and the activity that you have shown in behalf of the people whom you represent.

I beg to remain,

Most sincerely,

SWAGAR SHERLEY.

Copy of 848  
187

86x11

July 29, 1919.

My dear Judge:

Mr. Siaca has just shown me the report of Mr. Miller stating that no available applicant has been found to take the examination for the vacancy at the West Point Military Academy, in representation of Porto Rico.

A few minutes after I read this report, Mr. Warren, Special Deputy Collector of Customs, here at San Juan, came to my office and asked if it would be possible for his son to secure the appointment to represent Porto Rico at the Military Academy.

Of course you know Mr. Warren, he has been a resident, if not a citizen of Porto Rico, for about three years, and is likely to continue here for a number of years. His son after having studied for a year or two in the highschool here went to East Orange, New Jersey, and finished his highschool course there last June. The boy graduated with great credit and will be very glad to go to West Point. His father thinks he could pass the examinations without difficulty. He is now working in the ship yards at Newark, New Jersey, but his address is East Orange. His name is: William Joseph Warren, 42 East Walnut Street, East Orange, New Jersey.

Now, it seems to me that it would be a reflection upon Porto Rico to announce Mr. Miller's report that there is no young man or boy in Porto Rico who is prepared for and willing to take the examinations to fill the vacancy at West Point, and that it would be far better for us to have a good representative there who is a resident of the Island though he is not a native Porto Rican than to have such an announcement as the above to be made to the world. Of course, there is no doubt about this boy being legally eligible for the vacancy because he and his family are residents of the Island; the matter of birth cuts no figure in the law.

I hope you will give this matter your careful consideration, and if you agree with the

11x73

(29 Jul 19)

-2-

view I have presented above, you can write to this young man at East Orange, and take up the matter with him.

I am stating simply the facts as to the boy which the father stated to me. The boy himself would probably run down to Washington to see you in case you desire to consider recommending him for the appointment.

Everything is quiet here in the Island, and we are all rejoicing in the announcement that the Brasos sailed from New York yesterday, and we now hope that communication will not be no longer interrupted.

Very sincerely yours,

Governor of Porto Rico.

Honorable Felix Córdova Dávila,  
Resident Commissioner for Porto Rico,  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, D. C.

# COMPAGNIE FRANÇAISE DES CABLES TÉLÉGRAPHIQUES

(FRENCH TELEGRAPH CABLE CO.)

## Via HAYTI

Station de San Juan, P. R.



71/30 105 GAM WGTN 64 MR JOHN M WARREN SJN PRM

CANDIDATES FOR WESTPOINT ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE EXAMINATIONS ON THIR  
TUESDAY FEBY 1920 STOP THEY WILL NOT BE ADMITTED NOW ON CERTIFICATE  
FROM COLLEGE STOP CANDIDATES WILL BE ADMITTED TO THE ACADEMY 16 OF  
JUNE STOP SEE GOVERNOR AND DOCTOR MILLER AND WIRE NAMES OF TWO  
ATTORNEY ON ORDER TO MAKE NOMINATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

CORDOVA

DAVILA

*Virgil ~~Ross~~ Miller*

The Filson Historical Society

San Juan, Porto Rico.  
January 17, 1921.

The Honorable Felix Jordova Dávila,  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

I have been rather anticipating a letter from you giving me the results of your investigations as to the political situation at Washington, in so far as it is likely to affect Porto Rico. But as you have not written I imagine that it is because of a difficulty of securing any reliable data upon this subject. From all information that I can gather it seems unlikely that the President-elect will take up for serious consideration the question of appointments for Porto Rico until some time after his inauguration.

As you know the regular session of the Porto Rico Legislature will begin on February 14th and it is one of my most necessary duties as governor to prepare a message and take up in cooperation with the Legislature the necessary work of this session. The Legislature will probably remain in session until some time in June with most of its work incomplete until the end of the session. It would manifestly be most unfortunate to have a change in the Executive made during the session for it would greatly interrupt the progress and completion of the necessary legislation. Moreover, the fiscal year ends June 30th, and the preparation comes along in August and September for the

(17 Jan 21)

2. F.C.D.

annual report and it is most convenient to have this report prepared personally by the Governor under whose administration the work of the year covered by the report was carried out. I suppose that it was due to these facts of the situation that Governor Colton's term began on November 6, 1909 and that my administration began on the same date 1913.

No new light on the situation has come to hand here, though there is a plentiful crop of rumors and guesses, some of which are published in the newspapers. There is much speculation on the streets of San Juan as to the real object of Mr. Travieso's visit to Washington. Mr. W. R. Bennett, Marshall of the U.S. District Court, sailed on official business last week. You know that he is one of the best informed and also one of the fairest-minded of all of the Americans who have lived long on the island, and I am sure you may advise with him with perfect frankness and confidence when he calls to see you.

You will remember that you once requested me to recommend to you a possible appointment for the post of Judge of the U.S. District Court in case the present judge could not be re-appointed and in case a residence of the island, who was qualified for the post, might be considered. Upon investigating this subject, I was reliably informed by men in whom I have confidence that Mr. Daniel Kelly would make a competent and satisfactory judge of that court. You perhaps know him. He has long resided in Porto Rico, is married to a Porto Rican, and has always been



(17 Jan 21)

S.F.C.D.

a continental Republican, though he has not taken active part in local politics. I mention this matter to you only in the contingencies above-mentioned.

I suppose you will be quite busy this week with the hearings before the Tariff Revision Committee. I hope that you will be successful in securing for Porto Rico products a fair amount of protection.

Hoping to have a letter from you before long and assuring you of my best wishes I am,

Very sincerely yours,

AY/DLY.

P.S. I have just seen your cablegram to Mr. Georgetti with reference to your very satisfactory conference with Mr. Harding at Marian. I am sure that this conference will be very helpful in clarifying the situation. Please write me more fully about it.

FELIX CORDOVA DAVILA  
RESIDENT COMMISSIONER  
PORTO RICO

House of Representatives U. S.  
Washington, D. C.

January 27, 1921.

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
Governor of Porto Rico,  
San Juan, Porto Rico.

Dear Governor:

I received your favor by last mail and was very glad to hear from you. I presume by this time you have heard their impressions from all of the gentlemen who recently came here to attend the various tariff hearings and to submit their views with respect to the government of Porto Rico during the forthcoming administration. They saw various members of the Committees of the House and Senate having jurisdiction over Porto Rican affairs and also had conferences with Senator Harding, General McIntyre and others, in which the entire range of public questions that are now receiving the attention of our people were fully discussed.

Since our return from Marion, Ohio, there have been no developments regarding the Governorship. No doubt Mr. Travieso and Mr. Barcelo have acquainted you with the very kindly manner in which Senator Harding received us

Hon. Arthur Yager, Sheet No. 2.

and the interest which he expressed in the welfare of the Porto Rican people. There were no definite commitments in anything that Mr. Harding said, either with respect to the persons who might be nominated for the various offices nor the time at which these selections would be made and sent to the Senate. What you have to say regarding the appropriate time for making any changes especially with respect to the Governorship, would seem to be logical and no doubt will be considered by the President-elect in any course which he may pursue. My understanding is that Senator Harding does not think it advisable the appointment of a new man now, since we are satisfied with our present Governor and this is a matter which deserves most careful consideration.

I did not write you before because I thought that you had received full information from General McIntyre to which I could not add any details. You may be assured that your friends are acting actively in this matter not only with the purpose of rendering you a personal service but with the firm conviction that in doing so they are working for the interest of the people of Porto Rico. I enclose herewith a clipping of one of my speeches in Congress which I placed in the hands of Senator Harding.

Mr. Todd is now here. He has seen several members of Congress, including Judge Towner and I have considered it unnecessary to inquire about the nature of his statement. While the local republicans deny that there was an understanding

[27 JAN 21]

Hon. Arthur Yager, Sheet No. 3.

between them and the socialists, they are charging that the propaganda of Independence was the only issue of the unionist party in the last campaign and that the anti-american sentiment is rapidly growing in the Island. They are insisting in this propaganda to discredit the Unionist party with the purpose of weakening our influence and although I have given, to the best of my ability, an impartial statement of the situation, notwithstanding they have succeeded to a certain extent in their pernicious efforts for two reasons: first, because things acquire exaggerated proportions when they are seen at a distance, and second, because it is true, and it is useless to deny it, that there is some inconsistency in the policy of the Unionist party. It is my duty to defend my friends and God knows that I do that with pleasure, but as a man of honor I always confess the truth with the honest belief that it is preferable to offend men than to offend truth. The republicans backed by Hartzell and Sweet have indulged in this policy of falsehoods under the cloak of Americanism which I hardly understand and which instead of making friends is making enemies for the United States. They seem to ignore that a policy of love and affection will create a better understanding between our Island and the mainland, rather than a policy of slander and insults

Delegations of Porto Ricans have appeared before the Ways and Means Committee to urge increased proportion for their sugar and tobacco industries and I believe that in both

Hon. Arthur Yager. Sheet No. 4.

of these cases they made a favorable impression on the Committee. I have arranged to appear on the 11th of February to urge additional protection for the cocoanut industry and I also propose to appear in behalf of the Porto Rican coffee industry, which I really think is more deserving of consideration than almost any of our industries, and yet, is the one to which absolutely no Government assistance whatever has been rendered.

It may be of interest to you to know that Iglesias called upon the Ways and Means Committee a few days ago and asked permission on behalf of the laborers of Porto Rico to supplement the testimony that was given in regard to Porto Rican sugar. He charged that the views of labor had not been properly given. He made one of his customary attacks and I understand that the Committee held that it was not germane to the subject and it has not been printed in the record. Iglesias and some of his friends are very anxious to have it printed but the Committee still has it under advisement. I have thought it advisable to prepare a statement to be printed with his testimony showing how contradictory some of his assertions are, and I will request that this statement be also inserted in the record in the event his testimony is published.

Yours very truly,

*Felix Cusova Divila*