

March 11, 1914.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

Since returning to Porto Rico I have given out a number of copies of the Porto Rico bill, and it has been translated and published in the local papers and of course variously received by the people of Porto Rico, as I expected. Upon the whole it has been well received, - quite as well as I expected, especially in view of the differences that have always prevailed as to citizenship. I am still confident, in fact more confident than when I was in Washington, that if the bill introduced by you is put through the Senate, substantially as it was drawn and introduced, that it will be gratefully accepted by the Porto Rican people in general and will result in accomplishing the purposes for which it was drawn.

A rather curious thing has resulted from the publication of the bill: The Unionist Party, which you know is the party whose platform opposes American citizenship, has unmistakably manifested a willingness to accept individual citizenship as provided for in the bill. This is true even of the leaders of the independence wing of the party. On the other hand, "The

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"Times", newspaper which is the organ of the Republican Party and has always clamored for American citizenship in any form, has shown a disposition to sulk and reject individual citizenship. While this is surprising it is not at all disturbing me. The main matter of importance is that the Unionists will accept it, and the so-called Republicans can not refuse to accept it without wrecking their party. So, I repeat, if the bill is passed with the citizenship proposition just as it is in your bill, it will, in my judgment, promptly solve the citizenship problem. I hope that the Senate Committee will consider and act favorably upon the bill at the earliest possible moment, and that you will put it through the Senate as soon as you can. Then, if the House bill is passed substantially as it now stands, which I hope will be done, the only difference between the two bills is the section as to the form of citizenship, and that can be easily adjusted in conference, for, as I have said, if we can't get citizenship in one form we will take it in the other.

I enclose two clippings from "The Times", one of them from the English section calling upon you for information as to the bill, and the other from the Spanish section of the same date, publishing a résumé of the bill itself. The paper seems to be in water-tight compartments like a ship, so that what is known in one de-

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partment is entirely unknown in the other. The fact is their whole attitude is absurd and entirely negligible.

Thanking you again for the many courtesies you extended to me while in Washington and hoping to hear from you soon, I am,

Sincerely your friend,

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

The Filson Historical Society

March 25, 1914.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

The statements of Mr. Fernández García before the Senate Committee, as to the United States District Court of Porto Rico, caused considerable sensation here among the friends of the court, but I have assured them that these remarks were not important and would not cut any figure in the final disposition of the Porto Rico bill. There is very general and more or less excited discussion everywhere here of the citizenship problem. The people of the Island are very much divided, and the Unionist Party is much perplexed and puzzled as to which form of citizenship will be best. The discussion is doing harm, but I fear it will continue until the matter is settled. I wish very much that it might be settled at this session of Congress and the bill passed with citizenship in either form which Congress may think best. If acceptance by your committee of the form of citizenship now in the Jones bill would facilitate the passage of the measure at this session, I wish you would accept that form and put the thing over. If the matter is not settled at this session of Congress, the discussion will go on in a most harmful way until the elections next November, so that I am more than desirous to have the matter settled

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[25-Mar-14]

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now. Moreover, if the bill should fail at this session and then be passed at the next session, as the President promised me would be done, it would be necessary to have another election here in Porto Rico which would be exceedingly disturbing and generally hurtful. My information is that the House will pass the bill certainly at this session, and I do hope that the Senate will also pass it and not put it off.

I would appreciate it if you would write me a letter giving me your views of the whole matter and especially of the prospects for getting it through.

Our legislature is just about to adjourn and has done, on the whole, some excellent work.

With kind regards to Mrs. Shafroth and best wishes for you, I am,

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

JOHN F. SHAFROTH, COLO., CHAIRMAN.  
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.      MILES POINDEXTER, WASH.  
JOHN W. KERN, IND.            MOSES E. CLAPP, MINN.  
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JAMES HAMILTON LEWIS, ILL.    JOHN I. TIERNEY, CLERK.

## United States Senate,

COMMITTEE ON  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PORTO RICO.

Washington, D.C. March 27, 1914.

Hon. Arthur Yager,  
San Juan, Porto Rico,  
My dear Governor:-

I am in receipt of your letter. Last week we had before the committee the Secretary of War and Gen. McIntyre and tried to go over the bill. We have had great difficulty in getting the presence of our committee. I have had numerous calls for meetings, sending out double notices, and telephoning to each just before the hearing, but have not been able to get a quorum of the committee of the Senate.

I had a talk with General McIntyre the other day and he said that he thought that the bill had better first go from the House and then be taken up by our committee when it comes over from the House. So the chances are that that will be the line of procedure. There are a number of measures of very great importance to the administration which are pending and it is difficult to get anything except a gigantic measure up for consideration.

With best wishes, I remain

Yours truly,

*John F. Shafrath*

April 4, 1914.

My dear Senator:

Your letter of March 27th has been duly received and I thank you for the information it contained and also for your personal efforts to secure consideration of the Porto Rico bill by your Committee.

I believe that you and General Mc Intyre are right as to the line of procedure. We will wait until the House has passed its bill which has already been favorably reported from the Committee and introduced into the House and which Mr. Jones thinks can be passed at an early day. When it reaches the Senate we can then take up the matter of securing consideration by the Senate Committee with greater hope of success. The more the matter is discussed here in Porto Rico the more evident it becomes that it is a matter of the greatest importance and urgency that the bill be passed at this session of Congress so that it can be put into effect at the next regular election in November. The political conditions will then settle themselves around the new Act and the people of Porto Rico will then have opportunity to address themselves to the economic and industrial difficulties which confront the Island and which are exceedingly perplexing. We will all have plenty to do in trying to solve these difficulties and restore normal conditions.

Thanking you again for your efforts to help us out and

[4-Apr-14]

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with kind regards to Mrs. Shafroth as well as yourself, I  
am,

Sincerely your friend,

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

The Filson Historical Society



April 27, 1914.

My dear Senator:

I am beginning to fear that the crowding into the foreground of the Mexican complications and other great subjects will prevent the consideration of the bill granting a new form of government for poor little Porto Rico. I notice also that Speaker Clark has made a speech at Atlantic City, N. J., in which he expresses himself as forever opposed to granting citizenship to the Porto Ricans and the Philippines. You notice that he puts them in the same class. Such speeches, coming from men in high position under our Government, are productive of great harm and difficulty and obstruct the work of those of us who are trying to harmonize the relations between the Government of our country and its outlying dependencies. Of course I know there is no help for it, but still I can only wish that it might be otherwise. I am writing simply to say that in case the bill can pass the House, I hope that you will not give the matter up without making another strenuous effort to have it considered by the Senate Committee. It is of very great importance that it be passed at this session; and don't for one moment be troubled or dismayed by the opposition to the bill that has arisen here in Porto Rico.

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If you will study the documents closely you will see that the two Parties have taken diametrically opposite positions on the question of citizenship and that they are both simply playing for some local advantage in their political contest this year. The elections take place in November and political parties you know are all alike everywhere "only more so" in some places than others. In my judgment Congress should not bother about them at all, but pass the law according to its own judgment, and I will guarantee that Porto Ricans of all parties will accept the result as a settlement of the whole controversy for the next 15 or 20 years. But if Congress postpones the matter and does nothing at all, as it has done so frequently in the past, it will make everything much more difficult.

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Hon. John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

JOHN F. SHAFROTH, COLO., CHAIRMAN.  
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.      MILES POINDEXTER, WASH.  
JOHN W. KERN, IND.              MOSES E. CLAPP, MINN.  
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OLLIE M. JAMES, KY.            NATHAN GOFF, W. VA.  
JAMES HAMILTON LEWIS, ILL.      JOHN I. TIERNEY, CLERK.

## United States Senate,

COMMITTEE ON  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PORTO RICO.

Washington, D.C. May 1, 1914.

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

My dear Governor:-

I received your package of coffee the other day and thank you very much indeed for the same. I tasted some Porto Rican coffee before I went down to the Islands and I thought it was very delicious and I have no doubt this will prove the same.

The bill establishing civil government in the Islands has been reported favorably by the Committee on Insular Affairs of the House and is on the House calendar. I saw Representative Jones, Chairman of the Committee, and he stated to me that he expected as soon as he could get recognition to call it up for consideration. At this time general appropriation bills seem to be absorbing the attention of the House, but I have no doubt he is watching every opportunity to get consideration.

As soon as it passes the House I am quite sure I can get the requisite quorum of the Senate committee to take it up and give it constant attention until we report it to the Senate.

With best wishes and many thanks for your kindness, I remain

Yours truly,

*John F. Shafroth*

26 X 11

May 11, 1914.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

Permit me to introduce to your kind attention the bearer, Mr. Jorge V. Dominguez, a representative young Porto Rican lawyer.

Mr. Dominguez is on a brief visit to the United States where he was educated, and will probably call upon you during his stay in Washington. He can give you trustworthy information about his native Island and I think will desire to attend a session of the United States Senate.

Any courtesy that you may show him will be worthily bestowed and appreciated both by Mr. Dominguez and myself.

Sincerely yours,

Governor.

Hon. John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

11X11

May 27, 1914.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

This is to introduce to you the bearer,  
Mr. Wenceslao Borda, who is going to Washington for  
a brief visit.

Mr. Borda is a prominent and influential  
citizen of Porto Rico and can give you a great deal  
of accurate information about the Island.

I should appreciate any courtesies that you  
may find it possible to extend to him during his stay  
in Washington.

Yours sincerely,

Governor.

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

11 x 28

January 4, 1915.

My dear Senator:

I am writing just a line to let you know that I arrived at San Juan safe and well after a pleasant voyage. Congressman Knowland and his wife came down on the boat with us on a visit to Porto Rico.

I want to thank you again for the many acts of kindness which I enjoyed at your hands while in Washington, especially for the very delightful luncheon in the Senate restaurant with your family and distinguished Colorado friends, which I had the pleasure of attending on the last day of my stay in the city.

I found the Island entirely quiet and peaceful and looking forward hopefully to the passage of the new organic act either at this session or early in the next Congress. Upon leaving Washington I felt confident that Chairman Jones, with the aid of the President, would secure a special rule and put the bill through the House most likely in the month of January, and that your Committee would then take it up and pass it through the Committee and place it on the calendar of the Senate. Then, I know, of course,

[4-Jan-15]

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that "it is on the knees of the Gods," as the Greeks would say. But there might possibly by some accident come a chance to get it before the Senate before March 4, and if there should be such an opportunity I know that you will promptly avail yourself of it and let the Senate have a chance to see the bill. I believe that the Senate would pass it very promptly if they could once get to it. I saw Senator Lodge and he promised me that he would support the bill, collective citizenship and all, if it ever came up. I could not see Senator Root, but I was led to believe by his personal friends in New York that he would not oppose it even if he did not see his way to support it.

Remember me most cordially to Mrs. Shafroth and your boys, and say to Mrs. Shafroth that I delivered to my son who is at Baltimore her very kind invitation to make your family a visit sometime, and he was greatly gratified to receive it.

With my very best wishes and high regard, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

January 20, 1915.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

On information that I have received from the Department of the Attorney General, it seems that some hitch has come in the appointment of Mr. Szold as District Attorney of the United States District Court for Porto Rico and that they are now thinking of Mr. Crosas, a very popular young Porto Rican attorney.

I have written to Mr. Gregory a confidential letter with reference to it, giving very frankly my reasons for recommending Mr. Szold. I think it a matter of very great importance for this Court itself that there should be appointed an American lawyer of legal ability and character and force so that he may do what is possible to elevate the standing of the Court here in the Island.

I wish you would, if convenient, speak to Senator James Hamilton Lewis, of Illinois, and both of you sometime call upon Mr. Gregory and see what reasons may exist that make the appointment of Mr. Szold impos-

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[20 Jan-15]

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sible and how they might perhaps be removed. It would perhaps be best not to refer to the confidential letter that I have written to Mr. Gregory but simply to say that I adhered to my previous recommendation of Mr. Szold in view of all of the circumstances that surround the situation here in Porto Rico.

As you know, the United States Court in Porto Rico has had lots of trouble, and if we are to keep it out of further trouble and perhaps worse trouble, the greatest care must be exercised in the appointment of its highest officials.

Mr. Szold you know is a young Illinois democrat who has not been in the Island very long, but he is thoroughly conversant with the conditions here, is a man of extraordinary legal ability and, in spite of his youth, has abundant force of character to understand and measure up to the full standard of a United States District Attorney, and I believe his work would result of benefit to the Court.

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

Governor.

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

March 19, 1915.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

Yours of the 11th instant, requesting that I send copies of my last message and report to Senator Saulsbury, was duly received and the documents sent as requested.

I hope you are now having a good rest after your strenuous labors for the past two years.

Remember me most cordially to Mrs. Shafroth and the boys.

Sincerely your friend,

Honorable John B. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

11 X 28

JOHN F. SHAFROTH, COLO., CHAIRMAN.  
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.      MILES POINDEXTER, WASH.  
JOHN W. KERN, IND.              MOSES E. CLAPP, MINN.  
WILLARD SAULSBURY, DEL.      ALBERT B. FALL, N. MEX.  
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JAMES HAMILTON LEWIS, ILL.

## United States Senate,

COMMITTEE ON  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PORTO RICO.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 11, 1915.

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

My dear Gov. Yager:

If you have the same available, I would be greatly obliged if you will send to Hon. Willard Saulsbury, United States Senate, Washington, D. C., two copies of your last Message and Report.

With best wishes, I remain,

Yours truly,

*John F. Shafroth*  
*Per H*

The Filson Historical Society

11 X 98

JOHN F. SHAFROTH, COLO., CHAIRMAN.  
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.      MILES POINDEXTER, WASH.  
JOHN W. KERN, IND.              MOSES E. CLAPP, MINN.  
WILLARD SAULSBURY, DEL.       ALBERT B. FALL, N. MEX.  
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OLLIE M. JAMES, KY.             NATHAN GOFF, W. VA.  
JAMES HAMILTON LEWIS, ILL.

## United States Senate,

COMMITTEE ON  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PORTO RICO,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

February 20, 1915.

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

My dear Governor:

I am in receipt of copy of your Message to the  
Eighth Legislative Assembly of Porto Rico for which I am  
greatly obliged.

With best wishes, I remain,

Yours truly,

*John F. Shafroth*

The Filson Technical Society

November 30, 1915.

My dear Senator Shafroth:

As you have perhaps already learned from General Mc Intyre, we are planning to introduce our Porto Rican bill again into this Congress at the beginning of the session and see if we can not secure its passage this year. General Mc Intyre and I have prepared the bill for introduction, making only a few changes in it as compared with the one which your committee considered and seemed to approve. We have several reasons for believing that we ought to succeed in passing it this year without great difficulty. First, the President has assured me in a personal conference and also by letter, that he "sees no reason why we should not pass it this winter," and that he will "take a deep interest in it and do everything he possibly can to promote its passage." In the second place, there seem to be serious differences and difficulties ahead of the Philippine bill which will probably delay consideration of that measure; and while you are pondering that question and formulating your plans with reference to it, it seems to me it would be a wise policy for the committees in both houses to take up and push the Porto Rico bill about

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which there is little controversy and difference of opinion, and both committees might finish entirely their work on the Porto Rico bill and report it favorably to both houses before they would be in a position seriously to take up the Philippine matter. Moreover, the condition of public opinion here in Porto Rico is more united in favor of the details of the Porto Rican legislation and more eager and anxious for its passage than ever before. I think, from this point of view, the present is a great opportunity for Congress to settle at one stroke the Porto Rican situation and bring all elements into practically complete harmony with our American government in the island. I think it important that we should not let this opportunity pass unimproved.

I am planning to come to Washington almost immediately after the Christmas holidays and take up with you and Mr. Jones, the chairman of the house committee, the discussion before the committees of the details of the bill which we have prepared. Inasmuch as these two committees are familiar with all the main features and have discussed them over and over again, I think that we have no need of any public hearings whatever; and I have the hope that we may get the bill through both com-

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mittees and on the calendar before the end of January. Do you think that the membership of these committees will be greatly changed from last year? I trust that you will be willing to introduce the Porto Rican measure into the senate at the earliest opportunity after the meeting of Congress, and when I get to Washington that I can help secure a meeting of the committee of the senate for its consideration. I would appreciate very much a letter from you giving me your views on the whole situation. I would especially appreciate your aid in the matter of getting the Porto Rico bill in front of the Philippine tangle so it will not be in danger of being blocked entirely by a discussion of a controverted question that might last all winter.

Remember me most cordially to Mrs. Shafroth and the rest of your family. I hope you had an enjoyable and pleasant trip to the Philippines and a restful vacation generally.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Honorable John R. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

February 16, 1916.

My dear Senator;

I have not had an opportunity before of writing to you since I left Washington. I have been uncommonly busy since my arrival in Porto Rico and I was not well enough to do anything on the boat. I intended to inform you that upon my last day in Washington I had an interview with Mr. Mc Adoo and he agreed cheerfully and heartily to the amendment concerning the cigar tax. He thought Porto Rico ought to have that and would not only not object but would personally favor it. Mr. Mc Adoo, however, opposed the change with reference to the appointment of collectors of customs for San Juan, and I agreed to recommend that that part of the bill be stricken out, and if you strike that out I suggest that you strike out also a similar provision relating to the Immigration Service. That would result in striking out the whole of Sec. 40 of H. R. 9533 except the proviso referring to the repeal of the law exempting aliens arriving in Porto Rico from the payment of the head tax.

I hope that the Senate Committee has long since finished the bill and reported it in the manner which seemed to be agreed upon at the time of my departure, and I certainly hope that they will not be influenced



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to make any changes by the commissions from Porto Rico that have been in Washington during the last two or three weeks. In my judgment it would not be wise to accept any suggestions from these gentlemen and incorporate them in the bill. Most of their objections are made chiefly for political effect down here. I have learned that Mr. Jones has succeeded in having the bill placed upon the privileged calendar in the House, and my hope is that he will succeed in having the bill passed thru the House speedily and that you will then substitute the house bill for the senate bill in the manner which you suggested to me and have it passed thru the Senate in that form. I would be very much pleased to learn your opinion of the prospects of the measure as it looks to you at this date.

Thanking you for all of your kindness to me and with best wishes for you personally, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Honorable John R. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

May 17, 1916.

My dear Senator;

This letter will be handed to you by my friend Mr. Ramón Siaca Pacheco who is making his first visit to Washington and the United States.

Mr. Siaca has been from the beginning of the American occupation a most loyal and efficient official of the Insular Government and is at present Assistant Secretary of Porto Rico.

Any assistance or courtesies that you or your secretaries may extend to him will be greatly appreciated by him and also by myself.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

May 31, 1916.

My dear Senator:

I am sure you already have begun work in your committee upon the Jones bill as it was recently passed by the House. I am writing now briefly to express again my entire approval of the bill in the main as it stands and to urge upon you and your committee the great importance of its passage by the Senate at this session. I want also to suggest that it be passed as promptly as is possible, for the reason that if it becomes law we shall be compelled to hold an election under its provisions next November <sup>and</sup> in order to do this we shall have to have an extraordinary session of the legislature to enact certain legislation in conformity with the new bill.

Porto Rico, in my judgment, was never before so well prepared politically and economically to receive and to utilize a bill of this sort as it is at present, and its failure to pass at this session would be a great calamity both to the island and to the present administration. I am confident that you realize this and will do everything you can to hasten its consideration by the Senate.

Upon the subject of amendments to the Jones bill, I have written General Mc Intyre suggesting the desirabil-

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ity of two or three minor amendments. Of these the most important, in my judgment, is the matter of salaries for the heads of departments. Since the Foraker Act was passed the cost of living in Porto Rico has increased at least 60 to 80 per cent, the increase in rents being even more than that. I think it is unquestionable that the salaries of the heads of the executive departments should be not less than \$6000 per year, and inasmuch as this bill carries with it a liberal increase of the revenues of the island through the provision as to cigar tax, there is absolutely no reason why Congress should not fix the salaries of these officials in this bill at the figure which it deems just and proper. I sincerely hope that the salaries of the Auditor and the heads of the departments shall be made uniform at \$6000 a year.

With reference to the other amendments that may be proposed by your committee, I desire to add a word to what I have already said upon two subjects: First the prohibition amendment that has been suggested. The more carefully I study and consider this question the more convinced I am that an amendment on this subject would be very inopportune at this time. I wish to emphasize again the point that I have already made, that the production and consumption of alcohol in Porto Rico has greatly decreased in the last three years under the oper-

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ation of the high tax imposed upon the traffic in 1913. To be accurate, this decrease is more than one half of the total amount. Porto Rico this year is actually producing and consuming less than one half the quantity of alcohol that was produced and consumed in 1912-13. This is an indisputable fact and proves conclusively that the habits of the people of Porto Rico with reference to drink are different from those of the people of the United States where increase in price seems to have little effect upon consumption. The decrease in consumption in Porto Rico seems to be still going on, and as we have no intention of reducing the tax, it is my judgment that we should not interfere with this process of elimination by the attachment of a prohibition rider to a bill proposing to grant a larger measure of self-government to this island. In the second place I am not unmindful of the strenuous arguments that have been made by various persons from Porto Rico and the United States in hearings before your committee against the restriction of the suffrage here in Porto Rico. Upon this subject I will of course abide the decision of the Congress, but nevertheless I am still of the opinion that the restriction of the suffrage contained in the Jones bill is wise and proper. All of the arguments against it that I have noticed have been founded either upon sentiment or upon the political considerations that are natural under the

[31 May 16]

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circumstances, especially arguments made by the leaders of the political parties here in Porto Rico. We cannot expect them to do otherwise, and the representations they have made at Washington are intended in the main for political use in Porto Rico. I appreciate fully the sentimental arguments, but my judgment is clear that it can never be of any real advantage to the poor peasants of Porto Rico to give them the suffrage when they are not prepared in any way to exercise it. The possession of this privilege exposes them to temptations and to degradations of character and it does them no real good whatever. I think the case is exactly parallel to that of granting the suffrage to the newly enfranchised black citizens of the Southern States. It was found from experience that this privilege did not in any way help the blacks and carried in its train great evils to the States affected. I think it has worked out that way in Porto Rico. Its chief effect has been to increase the powers of the most unscrupulous of the political leaders who have found and will always find ways in which to control these unqualified voters simply in their own interests. However, as I have said, I will cheerfully accept the judgment of Congress on this important matter.

The Jones bill as it stands is a good bill for Porto Rico and its passage at this session would go far toward

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settling for all time many difficult and important questions here that earnestly cry out for speedy settlement.

I would appreciate greatly a letter from you giving me your idea as to the prospects of the bill in the Senate and as to the date at which we may hope for its final passage.

The island is at present very prosperous owing chiefly to the abnormal price of sugar, and the legislature at its last session, upon the recommendation of the Governor, passed important legislation looking to an increase locally of the revenues for the ordinary expenses of the Government. If the Jones bill should be passed we will immediately inaugurate and greatly enlarge the campaign for the increase of our educational facilities and increase greatly the number and seating capacity of our schools, especially for the rural population.

With the highest personal consideration, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Honorable John F. Skafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

JOHN F. SHAFROTH, COLO., CHAIRMAN.  
JOHN W. KERN, IND.      MILES POINDEXTER, WASH.  
WILLARD SAULSBURY, DEL.      MOSES E. CLAPP, MINN.  
JAMES K. VARDAMAN, MISS.      ALBERT B. FALL, N. MEX.  
OLLIE M. JAMES, KY.      NATHAN GOFF, W. VA.  
JAMES HAMILTON LEWIS, ILL.  
ROBERT F. BROUSSARD, LA.      JOHN I. TIERNEY, CLERK.

*F. P.*

## United States Senate,

COMMITTEE ON  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PORTO RICO.  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

February 28, 1917.

Hon. Arthur Yeager,  
San Juan, Porto Rico,

My dear Governor:-

I have at last been able to get final action on the bill establishing civil government in Porto Rico. If you have been following the Congressional Record you will see that I have had great difficulty in getting the measure through. I first had to make a severe fight in the Democratic caucus in order to get it established as one of the bills that ought to go through and if I had not pushed the matter with the persistency I did, it would have fallen down and that is the only bill out of the large program they made, outside of appropriation bills, that did go through.

I had a fight in the Senate over your salary, Senator Smoot wanted it reduced to \$7000, but it was finally defeated in the Senate. In conference it was finally agreed that your salary should be \$10,000 a year. I believe there would have been a strong fight made on this if senator Smoot had noticed it, but I got through the conference report without any debate and, consequently, it all went through. The bill gives most liberal terms to the people of Porto Rico and I am confident will make them very loyal to the United States.

With best wishes, I remain

Yours truly,

*John F. Shafroth*

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March 9, 1917.

My dear Senator:

Yours of the 28th ultimo has just reached me. I appreciate more than I can tell you this personal letter giving account of your labors, difficulties and final triumph in the interest of the Porto Rican bill.

I assure you that not only I myself but all the people of Porto Rico will always be grateful to you for your work and appreciate to the utmost the skill and persistence with which you have managed this fight, so important to the people of this island.

I note also with gratitude the reference to the matter of the salary of the Governor. I assure you that I have understood from the first your friendly attitude with regard to this matter, and I desire also to add, that aside from all personal interest in the matter, I am confident that the thing that was finally done will prove to be the right thing and entirely satisfactory to the people of Porto Rico and not out of keeping with the responsibility and the duties of the office. ,

Assuring you again of my high personal esteem and admiration for yourself, and of the gratitude of

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[9-Mar 17]

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the people of Porto Rico for your work in their behalf, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Hon. John F. Shafroth, Chairman,  
Committee on Pacific Islands and Porto Rico,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

P. S.- Of course you have received our invitations to visit the Island. I wish to assure you that we would all welcome you at any time that it may be convenient for you to come either now or later, and that Mrs. Yager and myself desire most heartily to include in this invitation Mrs. Shafroth.

July 13, 1917.

My dear Senator:

Your letter of the 30th ultimo has just reached me, having come down by the slow boat.

I am sorry that you have been misinformed as to the situation here in Porto Rico with reference to the referendum on prohibition. I would appreciate it if you would let me know who it is that gives you this misleading information.

I am sending you a copy of the local election law in accordance with which we will hold the election on prohibition on the 16th of this month. I think you will perceive that every precaution has been taken to make it fair, and I assure you that all of its provisions in this respect will be absolutely enforced. Some of the prohibitionists here have taken for granted in advance that the election will be tainted by fraud and that the Government of Porto Rico will attempt to defeat prohibition by all sorts of fraudulent means. There is absolutely no ground whatever for this assumption and never has been.

As to the charge referred to by you that signatures to the petitions to submit the question to the people had been secured by bribery or other fraudulent means, I have this to say: when those signatures were secured

(13 Jul 17)

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some weeks ago it was generally understood that both sides of the question were in favor of a referendum, and there was no opposition therefore to the securing of the petitions. Of course under those circumstances it was perfectly easy to get 10% of the voters to sign a petition of this sort. I paid no attention to the canvass whatever, but just assumed that the petitions would be secured without any difficulty and in ample volume and filed in the regular legal manner. There was certainly no need of fraud at all. After the time had elapsed during which petitions could be secured and election-day was approaching, then for the first time the prohibitionists began to raise an outcry about fraud in getting the petitions and have been asking that the Government make a diligent inquiry and investigate all suspicious cases of securing signatures everywhere in the island and prosecute everybody and throw out the petitions. This seems to me to be unreasonable and unprofitable at at this stage of the proceedings, for we all want a referendum -prohibitionists, anti-prohibitionists and the Porto Rican Government desires to have a referendum on this question, and it seems to me a little inexplicable that now the prohibition side of it should be expending so much energy in an attempt to have the petitions thrown out and to defeat the very thing they profess to desire.

(13 Jul 17)

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However, the election will take place under the law which I herein enclose, and both sides of this question will have a representative at the poles who will be accorded their full rights under the law, and everything that I can do will be done to insure an absolutely fair and impartial election and the results of this election, whatever they may be, will be accepted by the Government of Porto Rico and the law absolutely enforced to the fullest extent possible.

As I said before, I would be glad to have you give me the sources of this information, or rather misinformation as to the situation here.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Hon. John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senate,  
Washington, D. C.

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United States Senate, *P. J.*

COMMITTEE ON  
PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PORTO RICO,  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 30, 1917.

Hon. Arthur Yager,

San Juan, Porto Rico.

My dear Governor:

I have been informed that Porto Rican officials have refused those favoring prohibition from having a representative at each of the polling places during the counting of the votes at the election of July 16, 1917.

I hope that you as Governor will exercise all your authority and influence to obtain representatives from each side at the polls. There has also been charged that signatures to petitions to submit the question to the people have been forged and that bribery has been resorted to to obtain signatures to such petitions.

I sincerely trust that you will see to it that all such offending persons are prosecuted and that in every way a fair election will be held. It must be remembered that the prohibition law is an existing law which takes effect March 2, 1918, unless repealed in the exact manner provided in the Organic Act of Porto Rico, and unless the election is free from fraud the law will continue in force. The burden of proof will be upon those who contend that the law is repealed to show that each step required has been complied with, the most important of which is that the election shall be free from fraud; and for that

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[30 June 17]

A. Y. (3)

reason those who desire its repeal should see to it that everything is fair and honest, both in the procedure and in the casting and counting of the votes.

Congress passed the provision in the full belief that a fair election would be held and those who resort to fraud or unfair methods are simply inviting further legislation upon the part of Congress of a more drastic nature.

Hoping that you will take active measures to prevent any unfair methods in the election, I remain,

Yours truly,

John F. Shafer

April 3, 1918.

My dear Senator Shafroth;

Your letter of introduction for Mrs. Harrington and her daughters was sent me by mail the other day, and I was very glad to learn of Mrs. Harrington's coming to Porto Rico. I have written inviting her and her daughters to call upon us in the near future, and I hope to establish with Mrs. Harrington and her daughters a very pleasant acquaintance for myself and family. Good American teachers are getting scarce in Porto Rico, and I hope that the Misses Harrington will find it to their interest to remain here sometime and engage in this work.

Most things are going forward very satisfactorily here in the Island. Of course we are having our troubles with labor conditions just at present and these troubles are complicated greatly by the peculiar conditions here in Porto Rico. One of the most serious complications is that the agricultural laborers on the sugar estates are almost entirely unorganized, as are agricultural almost everywhere, and are entirely illiterate and easily influenced by agitators; and the leading agitator here, Mr. Iglesias, is also a political leader, the head of the Socialist Party and of course a candidate for office and at present a Senator at large in the Island; and this dual capacity on his part makes it impossible to secure fair conferences on the labor disputes, because this man demands full recognition as the labor leader and then makes us of all influences to increase his political power. I am in hope that everybody at Washington, including Mr. Gompers and Secretary of Labor Wilson, will bear in mind constantly these peculiar conditions in Porto Rico, which of course can not be corrected at once.

Of course our political situation you are thoroughly familiar with. We have adjusted all immediate troubles and are going ahead with the government; but of course this adjustment could not be made to the complete satisfaction of both parties, and the minority party feel naturally that they have not gotten all that they were entitled to, and with the usual Latin-American temperament they blame the Governor for everything - even the results of the election which placed them in the minority.

For your information I will state that the legislative leaders have started mandamus proceedings in the courts against the Executive Secretary of Porto Rico to compel him to include in the volume of statutes of the regular



(3-Apr-18)

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session those laws which were not signed by the Governor within the 30 days, on the theory that the legislature had only taken a recess and was in continuous session, and in this way have the courts settle in a judicial way the legality of the proceedings of the legislature in adjourning the regular session to a future date. We are looking for a decision of the Supreme Court of Porto Rico on the question at an early date.

With best wishes for you and kind remembrance for Mrs. Shafroth and your boys, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Governor.

Honorable John F. Shafroth,  
United States Senator,  
Washington, D. C.

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