

Courtesy - Curiola

2-1

21 May 1959

Dear Congressman Bow:

A few days ago, El Mundo published a UPI despatch from Washington with a summary of your remarks at a hearing of the IES program. This has been interpreted locally as a sharp criticism on our Commonwealth program of cooperation with the State Department, on the basis that we are hiding to our visitors the true nature of our relationships with the United States.

I am certain there is a misunderstanding somewhere. As you may recall, when I had the pleasure of receiving you in my office, we went at great length into the operation of our different cultural and technical exchange programs. I explained to you, then, the approach we follow in making our visitors and trainees aware of Puerto Rico's great progress under its Commonwealth status. We make every effort, whether at this Department or at other government agencies, to provide the foreign visitor with the most up to date data on our development. And regarding our political relationship with the United States, we provide him with basic information on our constitutional documents. It is our experience that the nature of the Commonwealth relationship and the history of its origins and constitutional process constitute a revelation to most visitors and put the United States in its true light as an anti-colonial and freedom-loving nation.

We are aware that the U. S. Government has an extensive orientation program for its visitors. It is only proper that we should avoid duplicating this effort. However, in cases where the foreign visitor stays in Puerto Rico for training courses on public health, labor relations, education, etc., he has an opportunity to study U. S. systems and how they have been applied successfully to Puerto Rico. In general, every visitor is aware of the U. S. impact on Puerto Rico and how we have harmoniously blended many ideas and techniques with our old Hispanic traditions.

As of possible

500 3000 40

As of possible interest to you, I am attaching some testimonies in our files on the effectiveness of our orientation center, including quotations from a report by Mr. Francis R. Valeo, former Consultant to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Our job here is a difficult and delicate one because we try to do our best so that visitors will understand the U. S. through the Puerto Rican experience without feeling that we are trying to propagandize or indoctrinate them. We strongly hold that any foreigner, if he is intellectually honest, would come to regard the United States in a beneficial light if he is placed objectively before the true facts of life in Puerto Rico.

We work here for the United States as much as for Puerto Rico. We feel we are contributing something of some usefulness to the great U. S. task of leading the free world and winning the support of underdeveloped areas. The available evidence seems to support our conviction.

Best personal regards from,

ARTURO MORALES CARRION
Commonwealth Under Secretary of State

Hon. Frank T. Bow
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Enclosures

AMC/pv