

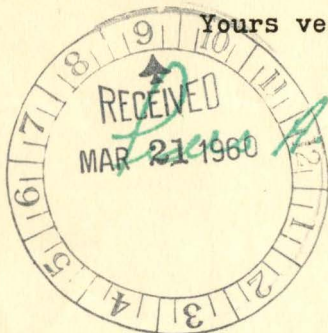
Office of the  
COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO  
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**MEMORANDUM**

The attached refers to a subject  
in which you are interested and  
is referred for your information.

Yours very truly,



*Luis A. Gougeon*

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## Puerto Rican Fumble

It is a pity that someone did not tuck a primer on Puerto Rican politics into President Eisenhower's briefcase during his good will tour to the south. This might have averted the gratuitous blunder made by the President in seeming to endorse the gubernatorial candidacy of Luis A. Ferré, leader of the island's Republican Statehood Party.

Puerto Rico, as Price Day of the *Baltimore Sun* points out elsewhere on this page, is "not Iowa." It is a proud, self-governing Commonwealth and ought not be treated as just another ward in Philadelphia to be carried by a mainland party. Little wonder the island's House of Representatives has rebuked Mr. Eisenhower for "improper intervention" in the Commonwealth's affairs.

The President's news conference comments yesterday, obviously intended to mollify, only make matters worse. While withholding judgment on the merits of Puerto Rican statehood—the chief plank in Sr. Ferré's party—Mr. Eisenhower did not retract his endorsement. "He is a Republican candidate, I understand," quoth the President. "I believe that he is not in any primary struggle . . ." A wealthy industrialist, Sr. Ferré is indeed a Republican and in 1958 contributed \$2000 to GOP organizations. But the important point is that the usual laws of politics do not apply in Puerto Rico's case.

The island's Governor, Luis Muñoz Marín, is a member of the Popular Democratic Party—a group unaffiliated with any mainland faction. More than that he is a hemisphere figure held in highest esteem by all Americans, north and south. In 1953, Vice President Nixon observed correctly that the Governor is a man of whom "all of us can be immensely proud." A key reason for his prestige is that he has been freely chosen by his own people as their leader.

This country has gone to great pains in showing that Puerto Rico is not subject to the whim of Washington and its Governor not a puppet. Congress is considering legislation which would further enhance the island's autonomous status. But suppose, after Mr. Eisenhower's heavy-handed meddling, Sr. Ferré should win? It would conceivably be a Republican "victory" but a national defeat. Mr. Eisenhower ought to reconsider his misplaced party bias.

# Puerto Rican House Censures Eisenhower

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, May 15 (AP)—The House of Representatives today censured President Eisenhower for "improper intervention" in Puerto Rico's internal politics. The slams blew up over criticism Mr. Eisenhower recently extended a Puerto Rican Republican leader.

The 47-17 vote came after an all-night debate. A similar resolution was expected to be adopted by the Senate.

At his press conference in Washington yesterday, President Eisenhower said that if he could vote in Puerto Rico he "like all other good Republicans" would vote for Ferré. The President, however, said he had come to no conclusion about Ferré's stand on statehood for Puerto Rico.

A check of 1956 campaign contributions reported to the Senate, showed that Ferré contributed \$2000 to Republican organizations. The report does not show who got the money.

A motion to censure Mr. Eisenhower was introduced by Vice Speaker Jorge Font Sabido, a Popular Democrat.

The President invited Luis Ferré, statehood Republican leader, on the flight from Puerto Rico to Washington yesterday for his Latin American tour.

James C. Hagerity, the President's press secretary, predicted at the time that Mr. Eisenhower would back Ferré in the November race for Governor against Gov. Luis Muñoz Marín. Hagerity added it would be the best bet for Mr. Eisenhower to support the local Republican candidate.

The Popular Democrats are independent from mainland Democrats. Minor Martin, the Popular Democrats' leader, said he regretted the implication, saying it a matter of "political blunder." Later he sharply criticized Mr. Eisenhower at a public rally.

The Popular Democrats control 10 of 18 seats of Congress. An 47 members of the House in the lower House voted for the resolution. Opposed were 17 statehood Republicans and six independents.

A few hundred leading writ

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## Playing Politics In Puerto Rico

By Tom Wolfe

Special to The Washington Post

IF THE White House is to be kept out of a new, uncharted polity about to be born, it will have to reach its hands to the island of Puerto Rico.

It is not clear what the party, the island of will support the candidates of the Statehood Party for the governorship of Puerto Rico in the November elections. The Statehood Party of the Republic of Puerto Rico, the Statehood Party of the United States, the Republican National Party, and the Democratic Party can all be expected to support the Republican Party. The Statehood Party has not yet decided whether to support the Statehood Party.

Mr. Morones, the Statehood Party, has been known to try to imitate the Statehood Party, the ABC of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico is not yet a state, but its politics are not less settled. The island's political organization, the Statehood Party, is the only national candidate. Mr. Morones indicated, however, that the Statehood Party is not yet a party. But he is not the only candidate. The Statehood Party of Puerto Rico, the Statehood Party of the United States, the Republican National Party, and the Democratic Party.

Its opponents are the Populists, of the Puerto Rican Democracy, for two decades more or less dominant in Puerto Rican politics. They are led by the present Governor, and he holds that office by election. Luis Muñoz Marín. They have no ties with any mainland party.

UNLIKE, shall we say, Kansas, Puerto Rico is not a state. It is associated with the United States in a unique arrangement as the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico in this status partakes of nationhood — though the Populists in the campaign already strenuously under way refrain from saying so, lest their Statehood adversaries raise the false charge that the goal of the commonwealth is independence.

The Statehood Party holds that partaking of nationhood is best. It makes Puerto Ricans "second-class citizens." The Statehood Party brings forward figures from which the most earnest examination cannot remove the taint of vagueness, to dispute the Populists' contention that statehood with its Federal income taxes would bring ruin; that the island would be condemned, definitely to the condition of poorest state in the Union (last fall the annual per capita income for Puerto Rico went over \$500; in Mississippi it is about \$1100). Anyway, the Statehood Party says, it is not a question of economics but of dignity and pride.

The Populists say that it is a question of pride, dignity and economics all together, and believe that citizenship in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is more dignified than citizenship in a State of Puerto Rico would be.

They believe that in the past 24 years Muñoz Marín and a group of able men around him have transformed the island from an economic and psychological colony into a proud, free, prospering community, a lesson in United States good will toward Latin America, and an example of self-help and economic self-help.

This new Puerto Rico, they believe, has the duty of helping to show other peoples of the hemisphere—and beyond the hemisphere—what the United States is about. Dr. Arturo Morales Carrión, Under Secretary of State for the Commonwealth, has put it this way: "It is a place where the Latin American feels at home, where he sees the great impact of United States industrial culture on a Hispanic land, and yet feels that the land and the people have retained their identity, their dignity and their values and traditions."

DOES THE White House perceive that to take sides in a Puerto Rican election will for some Latin Americans seem to have just a taste—considering Puerto Rico's degree of nationhood—of the interventionist?

Is it the judgment of the White House that the value of Puerto Rican votes in New York next fall, both the Populists and the Statehood groups in Puerto Rico?

Does the White House favor to Mr. Llewellyn the disadvantage of making in Puerto Rico a sure bet with no program but the perhaps not quite whole-hearted one of statehood?

Would it even get the votes?

Looking ahead, does the Republican Party wish in effect to give to the minority of Puerto Ricans who sincerely want statehood soon a pledge that cannot in the foreseeable future be fulfilled?

A bit of rethinking seems indicated.

## Eisenhower Censured

His intervention was a violation of the theme of Mr. Eisenhower's public life. He has been a statesman in America. But as he returned via Puerto Rico he showed particular favor to Mr. Luis A. Ferré, gubernatorial candidate of the Statehood Republican party in opposition to the incumbent, Gov. Lada Muñoz Marín, and Press Secretary James C. Hagerty, questioned on the matter, said that Mr. Eisenhower was supporting Mr. Ferré.

The kindest possible reading is that Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Hagerty know little about Puerto Rico or about Muñoz Marín, and are ignorant of the simple political facts that Puerto Rico is not a state of the Union, as Mr. Ferré wishes it were, but a Commonwealth associated with the Union, and that its political parties do not parallel the political parties of the mainland. Yet guidance was available to them.

They could have considered what Vice President Nixon said to the National Press Club on May 21, 1958, when he spoke of:

... Muñoz Marín, a man that all of us can be immensely proud of for his leadership for not only his own Commonwealth but for all Latin America and the United States.

They might have consulted a statement made at the airport in San Juan on February 22 of this year:

Puerto Rico is truly unique.

We are happy that Puerto Rico is a proud free, self-governing Commonwealth, joined to the United States of America by her own choice. This island, in the Caribbean waters between two great continental land masses, has been stirred by two mighty currents of history, enriched by two great traditions of culture. Out of them, Puerto Rico has fashioned her own way of life.

Your program of development—rooted in self-reliance, self-help and self-achievement—has aroused tremendous interest in every area of the hemisphere. By what you have accomplished for yourselves, by the help you have given others to attain their own accomplishment for themselves, you have made for the Commonwealth a record of achievement in which many other people around the globe have found hope and inspiration.

These words were spoken by Mr. Eisenhower, en route to South America, and addressed to Muñoz Marín.

An especially unfortunate—indeed, a politically unethical—aspect of the affair is that when a President expresses an opinion on Puerto Rico's internal politics the Puerto Rican electorate has no direct means of answering: it has no vote in mainland national elections.

Yet the Puerto Rican electorate is not voiceless. Its representatives can speak. They have now done so, in an extraordinary vote of censure of Mr. Eisenhower for "improper intervention."

The rebuke was asked for, invited; nor does the President's statement in his press conference yesterday that his support of Mr. Ferré does not at this time extend to advocacy of statehood fix up the blunder. If the incident has any good in it at all, its value may lie in the demonstration that if Puerto Rico is not a state neither is it the colony in thrall that some Latin-American extremists say it is.

THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 17, 1960