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Fellow citizens: We celebrate today the first anniversary of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, created by the people of Puerto Rico under a constitution of their own adoption. Our Commonwealth status, brought about as a result of a compact between the people of Puerto Rico and the Congress of the United States, is a new form of political relationship in the American Union and in all America, a new form of political freedom in harmony with the economic freedom of our people. It cannot escape your perception that a relationship based on free agreement, such as this one, has great meaning for the self-respect of the people, and that whatever strengthens self-respect is a source of greater energy to the spirit and to the will.

The present position of Puerto Rico is that of a frontier of understanding between two different ways of cherishing freedom, that of North America and that of South America. Naturally, this understanding will not cause other peoples, nor is there any reason why it should cause them, to adopt a relationship similar to that existing between Puerto Rico and the United States of America. There is no historical situation like the one out of which the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has been created, nor can such a situation conceivably emerge. But this relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States can be useful, and men of good will throughout the continent must endeavor to make it useful, in showing how the deep meaning of freedom is revealed and its basic values are enriched through expression in different cultures.

In truth, the political life of Puerto Rico does not date back more than a century. For about half of this period it was linked with the country of our origin, and for the other half with the United States. We take pride in our racial and cultural heritage. Toward our fellow citizens of the United States we have come to feel the sincere affection that goes with the common citizenship under which we have developed our economic efforts and our democratic principles. The Spanish people have a democratic strength deep in the marrow of their soul, but it is more closely connected with respect for the dignity of man and for the freedom of the mind than with the free, sound and stable organization of the State. The people of the United States are a towering symbol of democracy in sound governmental organization as well as in respect for the individual. We have tried to honor these two sterling qualities in our democratic heritage by using them in the right way, and to contribute something of our own to their historic manifestation by adding the fervor of our aspirations.

Thus Puerto Rico, although it does not make a monetary contribution to the United States Treasury, contributes with deep satisfaction to the better understanding of the Union throughout the Americas, to the better understanding of the peoples of our same origin on the part of the people of the United States, and to the betterment of democracy among all peoples. Although we are poor as money goes, we are rich in these other things, and I believe that our contribution is a highly creditable one.

Let me turn now to economic questions. Within size, we have

2001 2002 118

a task as challenging as the west frontier was for the United States through the nineteenth century. We have to advance as the men of those days advanced. But we are not a continent of almost limitless space, but a small overcrowded community tightly surrounded by the sea. Our frontier is not westward or eastward, but inward. We cannot make new lands produce for our needs, as there is no new land. Only new skill, new knowledge, new technique and a dedication constantly renewed remain to be pioneered--and we are pioneering them. ↩

↩ We cannot have more land by seeking it in a covered wagon, but we can have more understanding, more know-how growing inside of ourselves, by seeking it with an open mind. *P*uerto Rico is very densely populated. There are 650 of us to each square mile of territory. Half of the land can be cultivated, so there are 1300 of us to each cultivated mile. The size of this problem can best be gaged by thinking of it in this way: Suppose the population of all the continents and islands of the world should move into the United States, then the United States would have about 650 inhabitants per square mile, as Puerto Rico has now. But if we are to make a proper comparison, we must suppose further. Suppose that, with all the population of the world within its territory, the United States should find themselves lacking in practically all natural resources--no coal, no oil, no metals. Suppose further that with all the people of the world inside its boundaries American industry should be only beginning to develop. If you can imagine all these things together, you have a fair picture of what the people of the United States would be facing under such cir-

cumstances, and of what the people of Puerto Rico are facing today. If the whole United States were facing such difficulties, we know how the American people would meet the challenge; ~~how the American businessman, technician, teacher, farmer and worker would meet the challenge.~~ The challenge would be met. There would be no defeatism. The cry of despair would not be heard in the land. Energy would be brought forth out of need. Imagination would stand ready to do its job, and sound common sense would stabilize it. The tough problems would be tackled, and in due time they would be licked.

This is just what you can see in Puerto Rico today. You see a people, a community of your fellow citizens, beset by grave difficulties. You see them doing about them what you would do about them, with fine courage, unquenchable determination, and a reasonable amount of good humor.

We are engaged in increasing production, and we must increase it at three speeds. Fast enough to keep up with the growth of the labor force, and faster to take up the lag of unemployment that would drag from the past, and faster to continue improving the standard of living of our people, which is the highest in the Caribbean and one of the highest in the whole Latin part of the Hemisphere.

At this point I wish to emphasize that the industrial growth of Puerto Rico, encouraging as it is to us but insignificant as compared with the economic life of the United States as a whole, is not depriving any region of the continental United States of any of its established industries. We do not intend to do so. On the

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contrary, it is our deliberate policy not to do so. We are aware of our moral responsibility not to use our good economic relations with the United States as a means of harming any part of the Mainland. We are conscious of the fact that we must use our good relations to the limit by creating new wealth in that part of the economy of the United States known as Puerto Rico, and not by transferring wealth from one section of the economy to another. That is why, ~~by a resolution of the Executive Council,~~ no tax exemption is granted to any firm that closes a plant in any part of the United States in order to open one in Puerto Rico.

The economy of the United States generates more than \$25 billion of new capital each year. Out of this new and enormous capital wealth Puerto Rico is legitimately seeking an investment of \$30 or \$40 million of new capital a year--I repeat, of new capital, not transferred capital. The American citizens living in Puerto Rico compose 1-1/2 per cent of the population of the United States. And our industrial plan calls for less than one-fifth of 1 per cent of the new capital generated, not without the modest collaboration of Puerto Rico, by the American economic system every year. It would seem clear that, as good citizens, we need have no fear that the industrial system of the United States is in danger of destruction at the hands of Puerto Rico!

We are still climbing a steep hill. We are far from the top but already we can see it in the distance. Let us look at it even from afar. What are we going to find there when we reach it?

We are going to find in part what we want to find, what we can conceive and dream to be worthwhile. For people like us do

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not search exclusively for objectives that are there although time keeps them at a distance from us. There is an inner destiny in us that is pulling us to the top. What is it we want to find, what is it we want to carry with us and display at the top of the hill?

It is something more than the improvement of our economic standards of living. It is a way of life, a culture. The economy is intended to sustain and further a culture, a way of life. Culture is only in a degree the tool of economics. What a people with spiritual values want is a way of life. Their economic effort must be made to serve that purpose.

I see at the top of the symbolic hill a people will housed-- very few of them in luxurious homes and none in wretched huts or shacks. I see the opportunity for honest work at a rate of pay moderate but adequate to a good and peaceful life. I see families that are tranquil in the thought that their children will be educated to the maximum of their abilities, and happy in the knowledge that they will have security against sickness and old age and the hazards of fortune. I can see that some will have more than this as a result of their own effort, and in some cases much more than this. But none will have less than this. I can see that all of us will work with enthusiasm, freedom, and a sense of duty and respect for the rights of others. I see private initiative for the common good conceived of as a duty rather than only as a right.

A life of freedom well lived is part of the ideal in the hearts of our people. The negation of freedom and the abuse of freedom are uncivilized and are contrary to the higher traits of the human

spirit. As between these two, the abuse of freedom ^s is preferable to the negation of freedom. But far better than both is the culture that uses freedom with the dignity that freedom deserves. Our fraternal feelings toward all men are also a part of this ideal. I believe that we will come to realize even better that which we already know well: that all men are more alike than they are different from one another. Our friendly people will become a brotherly people, and Puerto Rico will be an example and a solid bastion of resistance against the nationalistic spirit that is destroying peace and hope among men everywhere.

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