

19 February 1957

Dear Professor Wilgus:

I regret the delay in replying to your letter of January 29. I am now recovering from an operation and have just returned to the office to attend to my personal mail.

I am very appreciative of the invitation to speak at the Eighth Annual Caribbean Conference sponsored by the University of Florida. I am checking the dates of the Caribbean Commission meeting in December to know for sure whether I shall be able to attend your meeting. As one of the U.S. Commissioners, I must participate in the Commission meetings which normally fall in the first fortnight of December.

There is one point about your program to which I should like to call your attention. I notice that Item IV refers to U.S. Territories. Both from the constitutional and political standpoint, the only U.S. territories in the Caribbean at this time are the Virgin Islands. Under its commonwealth status Puerto Rico has ceased to be a "territory." Puerto Rico is considered now a self-governing commonwealth. It has (being) *been* recognized as such by the United Nations in its General Assembly Resolution of November 27, 1953, copy of which you will find enclosed. Technically, therefore, Puerto Rico would not fall under your Item IV.

In line with our compact with the Federal Congress (P. L. 600) and with the U. N. Resolution, we make it a point,

Professor A. Curtis Wilgus
Director
University of Florida
Gainesville

Professor A. Curtis Wilgus

as you will readily understand, to dispel any confusion that may arise regarding our commonwealth status. I would be most happy and honored to accept the invitation to speak at the University of Florida on this occasion, if you find it possible to change the program so as to have a correct classification of Puerto Rico's status under your general heading.

Warm personal regards from

ARTURO MORALES CARRION
Commonwealth
Under Secretary of State

cc: Sr. Aguirre

Encl. 1

AMC/lmo