alien and the Government will relieve the alien from the hardship resulting from leaving and reentering the United States. It will also greatly simplify the administration of the law.

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. A. FERNÓS-ISERN

[illegible]

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 25, 1955

Mr. FERNÓS-ISERN. Mr. Speaker, with justified pride I address myself on this occasion to the House of Representatives of the United States. Three years ago, on the 25th of July of 1952, the flag of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was raised for the first time on the occasion of the inauguration of the new regime which had begun for the people of Puerto Rico, for the first time in their history, they were living under a constitution of their own adoption. Thus the people of Puerto Rico had organized themselves as a free self-governing body politic with sovereign powers in all matters not reserved, under the terms of a solemn compact, to the Government of the United States.

The people of Puerto Rico became then citizens of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, but that did not alter the fact that they were and continued to be, loyal citizens of the United States.

The relationships between the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Federal Government albeit parallel are not equal to those of a State of the Union vis-a-vis the Federal Government, but the significance for the people of Puerto Rico of the creation of the Commonwealth was the same as for the people of an incorporated Territory who attain the dignity of statehood.

The creation of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was the culmination of a series of events which evolved during the span of half a century and which began early in the century with the recognition of the existence of unincorporated Territories within the United States political system; areas and peoples who are subject to the sovereignty of the United States but who, according to decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, "constitutionally are not an integral part of the United States."

A projection parallel to that of incorporated Territories toward statehood, was then made for the unincorporated areas. It had led the peoples of those areas into a status of association, by mutual consent, with full enjoyment of self-government and without loss of common citizenship, common defense, and common protection.

As history teaches us, seed of future events has been sown unrecognized in past events. A short row in the perspective of half a century, considering the geographical location of Puerto Rico, its demographic and cultural origin, the smallness of its geographical limits, the dignity of its population, the lack of natural resources, the high aspirations of its people, it is seen now, from the starting point of that Supreme Court decision, all these factors conspired and led, by gradual steps, inexorably, towards a formula which would give the people of Puerto Rico the dignity of freedom they craved, together with the security which they needed if they were to exist and could not have it in isolation.

And so, after 50 years of what might be called the fermentation of thinking and the distillation of ideas, there evolved in the minds of the people of Puerto Rico the happy solution with in which they could attain the status of political dignity to which they could aspire without the sacrifice of their security and prosperity.

Thus, with the overwhelming support of the people of Puerto Rico and with the cordial cooperation of the Government of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was born 3 years ago.

I shall eternally be thankful that it devolved upon me to bring the expression of the aspirations of the people of Puerto Rico before the consideration of Congress when I introduced H. R. 7674 on March 13, 1950, which became Public Law 600 of the 81st Congress, establishing the compact and authorizing the creation of the Commonwealth.

I shall be thankful again that I had the honor to preside over the Constitutional Convention of Puerto Rico from September 1951 to February 1952, and that again I was privileged to introduce the joint resolution which became Public Law 447 of the 82d Congress, ratifying the Constitution of Puerto Rico.

I shall live eternally thankful to the Congress that both in 1950 and in 1952, almost unanimously adopted both pieces of legislation.

My legislative duties have not allowed me to be in Puerto Rico today, to participate with my people in the enjoyment they feel, mindful of the fact that on the very same date that we celebrate this anniversary, we also celebrate the anniversary of the landing of United States troops in Puerto Rico, an event which took place on the 25th of July of 1898, under the command of Gen. Nelson A. Miles. That was the beginning of the association of the people of Puerto Rico with their fellow citizens of the United States.

But the fact that I cannot be today in Puerto Rico is amply compensated for by the fact that I can be here today with my colleagues of the House, to whom I am so deeply indebted for their spirit of generosity, fairness, and kindness toward the people of Puerto Rico.

I have had the honor of speaking in the name of the United States, before the corresponding committees of the United Nations, when the status of Puerto Rico was there considered. As an alternate delegate of the United States, I presented there the reasons why the United States was justified in ceasing to report to the United Nations on Puerto Rico, as provided under the chapter for dependent areas, since Puerto Rico had ceased to be a dependent area.

I found expressions from such sources as I hardly could be expected, but I found there the support, the understanding, and the applause for the United States and for Puerto Rico from the majority of the peoples there represented. The majority of the peoples of the New World, who speak the same language as the people of Puerto Rico and who deals with the people of Puerto Rico a common origin and a common cultural heritage—especially did they express their deep satisfaction with the action taken by the United States.

The good neighbors of the South American continent, of the republics of Central America, with few exceptions all speaking supported the United States in its decision. The people of Spain for the United States, too, felt that the United States had done for them what made me proud to be a citizen of the United States, and proud that the United States received those expressions of sympathy and just recognition of the occasion of having done justice to Puerto Rico.

The association of the people of Puerto Rico and the people of the United States is based not also on compact, on legal documents as it should be. But it has much more solid and much deeper bases. It is based on common relationships, on common history, on common devotion to common principles.

The blood of Puerto Rico's youth flowed in Korea for the same principles and under the same colors as the blood of the other youth from the 48 States of which form this Nation. To the credit of Puerto Rico, by far a very large number of those young men who there died and bled, and not so there been [illegible] were called to duty under provisions of law, but because they volunteered. Their [illegible] record to do their duty.

Mr. Speaker, let me express my thought that the existence and development of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is a credit to the people of Puerto Rico and it is a credit to the people of the United States. Let me express my faith in the principles that [illegible] us so firmly. Let me express my certainty that the association of the people of Puerto Rico to our mainland fellow citizens shall remain forever as it is as today.

Farmers' Home Administration Makes Progress in Assisting Family Farmers

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. WILLIAM S. HILL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 25, 1955

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, [illegible] ago I took occasion to call [illegible] tion to an agency in the United [illegible] Department of Agriculture, the Farmers Home Administration, where some remarkable improvements have been made under the Eisenhower administration.

1957

Puerto Rico: Democracy At Work

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. ABRAHAM J. MULTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 25, 1957

Mr. MULTER. Mr. Speaker, the 25th of July represents a dual anniversary for our island neighbors, the Puerto Ricans. It marks, first, the date that American troops landed on the island in 1898, and it marks, second, the date that the Commonwealth Constitution was adopted in 1952. It has thus been officially established as Constitution Day, to commemorate the two most significant steps that have brought the island to its current position as a locally self-governed Commonwealth joined in integral association with the United States.

From the years of American control, the island received its first training in political responsibility. The first elected House of Delegates was guaranteed by an act of Congress in 1900, only 2 years after the island was freed from Spanish hegemony. In 1917 another important step toward self-government was made when the Puerto Ricans were empowered to elect both houses of their legislature. More important, most Puerto Ricans became at that time American citizens. No longer stepchildren of the American system, they have from that time forth increasingly shared in all the privileges as well as the duties of United States citizenship. The next step came with the appointment by President Truman of Jesus Piñero, a native Puerto Rican, as Governor, in 1946. The following year this position was made elective, and in 1949 the present executive, Luis Muñoz-Marín, was elected Governor. In 1952 the Constitution of the Commonwealth was drawn up by the Puerto Ricans themselves, in accordance with the compact passed by Congress in 1950. Joyfully accepted by the Puerto Rican people, this constitution has been the basis of the present Commonwealth government. And Governor Muñoz-Marín has continued to hold the confidence and full support of his people, as recent elections have amply demonstrated.

These last 5 years, representing indeed the culmination of Puerto Rican hopes for several decades, have shown most dramatically that democracy and progress are not just words or remote ideals to the Puerto Ricans. Political responsibility has a very real meaning to all of the Puerto Rican people, from the Governor himself, once a poet in our own Greenwich Village, down to the struggling farm laborer; democracy means not only government of the people, not only government by the people, but also government for the people. Commonwealth status has given to the Puerto Ricans an added impetus to develop their island's resources and to enhance their social aspirations.

The results, as is well known, are quite phenomenal. The gains of the forties are being surpassed by leaps and bounds. Per capita income is doubling every decade [illegible] bled since the thirties. Illiteracy rates are almost half of what they were before World War II. The university and vocational school are constantly adding new courses and expanding facilities. Government housing projects have vastly reduced the slum areas on the island. New industries are moving onto the island every day. Efforts to encourage the tourist trade to the island have not been overlooked.

All over the island, the far-sighted planning and initiative of the government and the eager cooperation of the Puerto Ricans themselves have made the island literally a workshop of democracy. The strength and importance of the tie with the mainland on the one hand and the vigorous political activities on the island itself have given dramatic impetus to the natural Puerto Rican desire and ability for local self-rule.

The conclusion to be drawn from a study of Puerto Rico's achievements is that an area determined to win its way to political responsibility and economic stability should look first and foremost to the resources at hand—to the intelligence, the ingenuity, and the industry of its own people. To sacrifice these precious assets to a system of force and violence, as has been done in Communist lands, is in effect to chop off the roots of progress while watering the branches. Puerto Rico has shown that the democratic process is no hindrance to economic progress—quite the opposite, in fact.

Let us congratulate the Puerto Ricans, then, on this the fifth anniversary of their position as Commonwealth citizens. They have justified the highest hopes of their friends and I am sure they will continue to do so in the years to come. For the spirit of democratic action, once kindled, is not easily killed. The Puerto Rican people, our fellow citizens, have kindled a bright beacon of hope and of achievement for enterprising peoples the world over.