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## Puerto Rican Sovereignty Backed in U.N.

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UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.,

Aug. 28—A United Nations committee approved a resolution today recognizing the "inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence."

The resolution was approved by the Colonialism Committee, 12 to 0, with 10 abstentions. It fell short of demands by Cuba—backed by China and the Soviet Union—that the committee clearly classify Puerto Rico as a colony of the United States.

Nevertheless, Ricardo Alarcón Quesada, the Cuban chief delegate, hailed the decision as a victory, and the vote was greeted by applause from the public gallery, where members of the Puerto Rican Independence party and the Puerto Rican Socialist party were seated—reportedly with guest tickets from the Cubans.

### U.S. and British Withdrawals

The United States and Britain withdrew from the committee in January, 1971, Washington complaining that its resolutions were one-sided and rammed through by a majority of Soviet, Asian and African members hostile to the United States.

In the current debate, the United States did not ask to participate, but in a letter to the committee, it protested a "Cuban act of interference in the affairs of the United States" and called the move by Cuba "an insult to the people of Puerto Rico."

A United States spokesman said after the meeting that the resolution which emerged was considerably weaker than Cuba had wanted, and that it meant that Puerto Rico would not be listed as a colony under the committee's jurisdiction.

This listing would have permitted the committee to call petitioners in open session and

would have provided them with a forum to push their demands for independence.

In a referendum in Puerto Rico in 1967, the island's present commonwealth status was supported by 425,081 votes; another 273,315 wanted statehood, but only 4,205 voted for independence.

Leaders of the Puerto Rican independence movement have challenged the totals as an inaccurate reflection of public sentiment because they say

they urged voters to stay away from the polls because the balloting would not be fair.