16 de mayo de 1959

Me ha extrañado la pregunta que se formulan los autores del informe.
El Artículo 11 (once) del Proyecto Fernós dispone en su inciso (a) que el Comisionado Residente recibirá reconocimiento oficial por parte de todos los Departamentos del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos tras de presentar al Departamento de Estado un certificado de elección que expida el Gobierno del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico.

Esta disposición carece de la más leve novedad. Tiene su antecedente en lo ya dispuesto en el Artículo 36 de la actual Ley de Relaciones Federales con Puerto Rico, que a su vez constituye el Artículo 36 del Acta Jones de 1917, que a su vez procede de la Sección 39 del Acta Foraker de 1900. Por tanto, desde que los Estados Unidos establecieron un Gobierno Civil en Puerto Rico a comienzos de siglo, ha existido la tradición de que el Comisionado Residente que aquí elegimos, nos represente en los Estados Unidos y sea reconocido como tal por los Departamentos del Gobierno Federal tras de presentar un certificado de elección ante el Departamento de Estado en Washington. Repito mi extrañeza, puesto que los distinguidos letrados autores del extensísimo informe hubieran podido comprobar fácilmente estos datos de haber consultado el primer tomo de las Leyes de Puerto Rico Anotadas, donde figuran nuestros documentos constitucionales básicos, con su respectivo histórico.
Since the last titanic struggle between the forces of freedom and their enemies, followed by lesser conflicts which themselves highlighted today's status of unceasing alert, Armed Forces Day has attained new dimensions, new meanings of great importance to all of us. It is the day on which we express our pride and confidence in all the men and women in the several branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, whose alertness and dedication guards our way of life, guards our very lives and those of our children. It is eminently fitting that we should so express our appreciation to those many thousands who on the whole remain nameless in the days' news and in the Halls of Fame. Without their skill, without their devotion, without their alertness, our most powerful weapons, our most awesome means for protecting our cherished ways of life, would be little more than so much hardware. I should like also to pay a personal tribute to the many thousands of Puerto Ricans who have joined the U.S. Armed Forces and given both their dedication and their lives to the preservation of the ideals of democratic freedom.

Many who have beheld the modern day's fearful armaments have stated with some truth that today is an age in which "man's science has outstripped his wisdom for using that science." It is, however, a comforting fact that with the means at hand for the destruction of civilization everywhere, and of man himself along with that civilization, man has hitherto had the wisdom not to indulge in such destruction. And the members of the armed forces whom we honor today are in many important ways the guardians of that wisdom. More than ever, in this day of terrible possibilities, we need
our armed forces and their men and women; more than ever, we must, and gladly do, rely on the good sense of those men and women; more than ever we are indebted to them on the one hand for their readiness for that one moment of dreadful action which may spell our doom or salvation, on the other for the probability that that moment, in large measure because of their alertness, may never come.

While they hold the fort, we have the opportunity to look around us and seek new ways of protecting and buttressing civilization. We design and perfect our physical weapons, and we must design and perfect more. We enlist, train, and trust the men and women who may have to use those weapons, and we must enlist, train and trust more. But meanwhile, we also are coming to realize that the one great defense of the free and democratic way of life is that way of life itself, its strengthening, its spreading—by choice, design, and example—to all the world's people.

The ultimate protection of freedom and democracy is not guns or bombs; it is more freedom, more democracy every day, for all God's children on earth, to be spread and strengthened by all means while the armed might of the free nations of the world assure us the time and the opportunity so to do. Nuclear arms are tremendous and terrible weapons for defense or offense; the human spirit, the human drive for freedom and decency in human life, is infinitely more tremendous, infinitely more terrifying to its enemies.

That dual role, of military protection going hand in hand with the