

# Albizu Campos

## Puerto Rican Revolutionary

ALBIZU CAMPOS, was one of the greatest and most heroic champions of the nationalist ideal; he stands beside the gigantic figures of Ghandi, De Valera and Macia – at times defeated, but ever noble – who have defended the nationalist ideal in modern times.

The nationalist ideal of Albizu Campos finally burst its insular bonds and found an echo in every rebel in the subcontinent of Central and South America. Together with the complete independence of Puerto Rico, he demanded the economic liberation of all the Spanish-American nations.

From his ideas, arguments have been borrowed by all the revolutionary leaders of today, from Che Guevara and Fidel Castro to the guerrillas now fighting in many parts of this continent.

Cover painting and design by Izzy Sanabria

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## Puerto Rican Revolutionary



by **Federico Ribes Tovar**

The story of the Harvard graduate  
who dared to defy the United States of America

"Pedro Albizu Campos won me to his side from the very beginning, and I still like him. He has a solid education — I don't know how many years of Harvard! Consequently, he is well-acquainted with the rival culture and nobody can expose more skillfully its weaknesses and its crafty machinations. Few men have taught me so much in a single day as Albizu Campos did. I am certain that, one day, this ungrateful America of ours will recognize his merits and proclaim him as one of its heroes. He lives by defending the poor, which is tantamount to saying he hardly manages to exist. Temptation stalks him every day in the form of commissions and jobs he rejects because he is opposed to the doctrine of collaboration with the invader. . ."

#### **JOSE VASCONCELOS**

*Candidate for President of Mexico in the 1929 elections, which he won at the polls, only to have the prize snatched from him. Vasconcelos was Mexican Minister of Education in 1914 and 1921.*



**Don Pedro Albizu Campos**

(Illustration by J.R. Alicea, courtesy of the magazine  
GUAJANA, organ of a group calling itself the  
Young Puerto Rican Poets.)

# **Albizu Campos**

**Puerto Rican Revolutionary**

**By Federico RIBES TOVAR**

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## INTRODUCTION

*Some years ago I conceived the idea of writing a book on the life and philosophy of Don Pedro Albizu Campos the most militant and incorruptible of all Puerto Rican nationalist leaders in modern times.*

*This theme, so profoundly moving to many, so intriguing to others, and of such significance for all Puerto Ricans, attracted me so strongly that it soon became the inevitable topic of all my conversations. It was then that I began to plan this book in earnest, undertaking serious research and seeking expert advice.*

*All these years I have worked incessantly and, I believe, fruitfully, on this project. I have consulted direct and responsible sources of information and I have done my best to maintain an objective attitude, trying to avoid the emotional involvement such a topic inevitably tends to encourage in any person of Spanish language and background who is reasonable and honest with himself.*

*Since my first interviews with authorities on the subject I have pored over innumerable books, documents and records of diverse origin. The newspapers and magazines of Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico and the United States have proved an invaluable source of material and information, as has the tireless assistance of acquaintances of Don Pedro, who have furnished both data and guidance.*

However, I wish to make it clear that I have encountered obstacles — certain people have sought, whether in good faith or bad I do not know, to obstruct me in my efforts. And there were even those who went still further in their panic-stricken advice. Although I do not understand these people, I do not condemn them. They are people who belong to another era, who no longer have any, or very little, influence on Puerto Rico's future.

My experience with younger folk has been exactly the opposite. Those Puerto Ricans who have remained young in spirit, and particularly the young people of today, who have never heard Don Pedro Albizu Campos speak, nor seen him in the flesh, nevertheless admire him and follow his teachings as if fascinated by him, or by his example. And the fact is that one of the great qualities of Albizu Campos was his recourse to direct action. He was not satisfied merely to expound an ideology, he sought to put it into practice, giving it concrete expression in rebellion and protest, which began with his own personal conduct. It is for this reason that, when Albizu passed away in a Santurce hospital on April 21, 1965, he departed this world with the intimate satisfaction of knowing that he had not betrayed any of his ideals and that his conduct had always followed the dictates of his conscience.

It is precisely to this integrity that the youth of today pays homage. I refer to the so-called "rebels," who react against the present state of

affairs in Puerto Rico; to those who have devoted themselves honestly and wholeheartedly to the task of forcing a change and, consequently, of achieving the independence of their country.

And these young men and women, the cultural and political vanguard of Puerto Rico, are interested today in the actions and ideals of Albizu Campos because now, after his death, his ideas are arousing the indignation of the students and the dispossessed masses.

The following quotation is part of a text published by the young poets of the Guajana group, in which they explain the attitude of the young:

"We must collectively and publicly recognize Don Pedro Albizu Campos as our teacher. If there is anything Puerto Rican youth needs it is a TEACHER! Yes, just like that: in capital letters! An exemplary life to look up to when mediocrity weighs heavily on the spirit! A life devoted to the service of our country! The self-appointed educators of our people — the Luises and the Jaimes — do not satisfy our aspirations. What is more, they are repugnant to us. We have not fallen, like so many, into the abject worship of ability. We prefer the cult of integrity. And that must be sought in the clear waters of independence, in the limpid stream of Betances, De Hostos and Don Pedro — above all, Don Pedro!

"If we have just reason to honor, we have, also just reason to accuse — to accuse and

promise punishment to those who have preyed upon us, to those who have sought to involve us in their own inadequacy. Thus, now, at the same time that we honor the Master, we stand up and make ourselves known, so that the Luises and the Jaimes, twins in deceit and comrades in fear, may recognize us and suffer our presence; so that they may see, in us, the failure of their false endeavours, and, someday, the instrument of their defeat."

*Nobody should be surprised by this public recognition accorded by the youth of Puerto Rico to ideas which some had come to consider passé. For if we pause to analyze with care this Western World of ours, in which lip service at least is universally paid to the principles of democracy: all men equal before the law, etc., we shall see that the only theory capable today of reconciling the universality of the democratic ideal with the present fragmentation of democracy is nationalism. In a world divided, the idea of the folk, the ethnic unit, must go hand in hand with the idea of the nation. Albizu Campos' nationalist philosophy continues to be a doctrine of extraordinary vigour because, besides being the archetype of the nationalist, Albizu Campos was, above all else, a REVOLUTIONARY.*

*Federico Ribes Tovar*

## PROLOGUE

### ALBIZU BARS U. S. FLAG AT RALLY

The Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico held a public meeting in San Juan in 1925 to celebrate the birthday of the patriot José de Diego. The Puerto Rican flag waved above the platform, but smaller American flags decorated the hand-rail.

One of the speakers, glancing at the U. S. banners, remarked in conclusion that, if they did indeed represent liberty and democracy in the world, it was high time that liberty was granted to Puerto Rico. But, as he stepped down, a young man, until then practically unknown in San Juan, leaped onto the platform and, without a word and to the astonishment of the audience, calmly proceeded to pluck the U. S. flags off the hand-rail and stuff them into his pockets. Only then did he turn to the audience and explain that the U. S. flag had no place at that meeting, since it was not the symbol of Puerto Rico.



"O American flag," he said, addressing the U. S. emblem, in imitation of his predecessor. "If it is true that you represent liberty and democracy in the world, here in Puerto Rico you represent colonialism and plunder."

Who was this young man who thus won the hearts and attention of the people of San Juan with such a timely and picturesque gesture? What was his background; what influences and experiences had awakened such audacity and such revolutionary and patriotic fervour in his breast? What ideas and philosophy had inspired his action?

His name was Pedro Albizu Campos and he had but recently returned from the United States, where he had studied at the Universities of Vermont and Harvard and received a law degree from the latter. Since his return to Puerto Rico he had lived modestly with his wife in the city of Ponce, practising his profession as a lawyer in defense of the poor and unfortunate, while preparing for the struggle to which he planned to dedicate his life — the campaign for the liberation of Puerto Rico. He had just entered active politics and this was one of his earliest public speeches.

## CHAPTER I

### *Symbol of Puerto Rican Independence*

#### **The Nationalism of Albizu Campos**

Of all Puerto Rico's nationalist leaders in modern times, Pedro Albizu Campos was the most idealistic and the most militant. His undeniable patriotic fervour is only comparable to that of Dr. Ramón Emeterio Betances, who symbolized the yearning for national independence during the XIX Century, when the island struggled to free itself from Spanish rule.

Albizu Campos, convinced of the justice of his cause, fought with romantic gallantry against the overwhelming might of the United States, refusing to consider compromise or half measures: Puerto Rico had to be an independent, sovereign republic. And, like Betances, he believed that true liberty can only be conquered at the price of blood, in fearless and uncompromising struggle. It was he who said: "The supreme test of a man's worth is courage. Courage is the supreme virtue in a man, the supreme

good. Of what use is it for a man to be full of wisdom and physical vitality, if he lacks courage? That is the ultimate good for the individual and the nation . . . When a man passes calmly through the shadow of death, he enters into immortality."

He was one of the greatest and most heroic champions of the nationalist ideal in a world tending toward massive concentrations of population; he stands beside the gigantic figures of Ghandi, De Valera, Senghor and Jomo Kenyatta—at times defeated, but ever noble—who have defended the nationalist ideal in modern times.

But the nationalist ideal of Albizu Campos finally burst its insular bonds and found an echo in every rebel in the subcontinent of Central and South America. Together with the complete independence of Puerto Rico, he demanded the economic liberation of all the Spanish-American nations. From his ideas, arguments have been borrowed by all the revolutionary leaders of today, from Che Guevara and Fidel Castro to the guerrillas now fighting in many parts of this continent, but with one difference: Dr. Albizu Campos never accepted submission to communism.

### Discrimination in his Youth

The name Albizu, which is Basque, is itself an earnest of the wild, free blood that coursed through his veins, inherited from his forebears, generation by generation from time immemo-

rial, in the fastness of their Pyrenean Mountains, where they have jealously guarded their language, their traditions and their liberties.

Pedro Albizu Campos was the son, born out of wedlock, of Don Alejandro Albizu Romero, known as "*El Vizcaíno*," a Basque merchant of Ponce, and a *mestiza* named Juliana Campos, in whose veins flowed the blood of Spaniards, Indians and Africans. He was born in the district of Mochuelo Abajo, a rural area in the Municipality of Ponce, on the 12th of September, 1891.

Thus, Albizu Campos was born a Spanish citizen, and he was only seven years old when he watched General Nelson A. Miles' American troops march through the streets of Ponce.

Since he inherited his mother's dark skin, he was personally exposed, in his youth, to the effects of American discrimination, and the deep scars that humiliation burned into his spirit were indelible.

"For us," said Albizu Campos, "race has nothing to do with biology. Nor dusky skin, nor frizzy hair, nor dark eyes. Race is a continuity of characteristic virtues and institutions. We are distinguished by our culture, our courage, our chivalry, our Catholic sense of civilization."

Nevertheless, Albizu Campos was never an embittered man. Although authors have insisted on portraying the ideas of this Nationalist leader as a product of a colored man's resentment of the discriminatory practices to which he was subjected, especially during his period of mili-

tary service, if his life story is examined with care it is impossible to deduce that Albizu Campos was an embittered individual. His recognized kindness, his profoundly Catholic spirit, with its absolute rejection of hatred, his indifference to material possessions and honors — all these traits are surely incompatible with resentment.

### Roots of his Personality

The exalted patriotism that inspired Albizu's nationalist ideal was authentic. Moreover, by temperament and culture, he was the perfect antithesis of the typical American, which made him all the more bitter to see his beloved country dominated by foreigners whose mores were so different from the traditional island way of life.

Albizu Campos was a man made in one piece — what the French call a man with a sense of the absolute. Consequently, his convictions, rooted in the very depths of his being, were carried to extremes. For him, Puerto Rican culture, stemming from the Roman paternalism based on the family in its widest sense, and brought to the island by the Spaniards, with their cult of honor and personal dignity, which they prized above material interests, clashed head-on with Nordic individualism, combined with Calvinist ideas, which tend to measure human worth by material success.

In American eyes, a man who has failed to carve out a solid economic position for himself is a failure, and poverty bears a stigma. Among Latins, the concept of honor as the supreme virtue is at loggerheads with the idea of pecuniary interest as principal motivation of human conduct. The "worthy" man is the one who devotes his efforts to an ideal, a vocation, or the honorable practice of a profession, without material gain as the main object. And wherever his personal interests conflict with his conscience, the "worthy man" must give preference to the latter, whatever the consequences, which he must then face up to with stoical courage.

Such a basic concept of human values makes it possible to endure poverty with dignity and even with pride, and raises a man in the estimation of society. When this scale of values is at the root of a personality which is also, by temperament, possessed of a "sense of the absolute," the end result is the intransigence and incorruptibility that makes heroes or martyrs of men like Albizu Campos.

### Harvard and World War I

Pedro Albizu received primary and secondary schooling in his native city of Ponce. Because of his exceptional gifts, he had hardly graduated from high school when (on the recommendation of Charles Terry, the principal of his school,) the Aurora Lodge of Ponce granted him

a scholarship to study in the University of Vermont, in the United States. There he was considered an exemplary student, of extraordinary intelligence. He earned his Doctorate in Sciences (specializing in chemistry) and also studied engineering.

His reputation spread to Harvard University, which offered him another scholarship to continue his studies and even obtained employment for him to cover the additional cost. So Albizu Campos entered Harvard University in 1913.

His university career was interrupted by the outbreak of World War I, and Albizu joined the United States Army as a volunteer and asked to be assigned to the Puerto Rican Expeditionary Forces. He had already graduated in military science at the training camp organized at the University of Harvard by a French military mission.

But the U.S. Army refused to recognize his military knowledge and he was assigned to a Negro battalion as a private. Later, he was transferred to the "Las Casas" Encampment for Cadets, in Massachusetts. Albizu Campos later declared that he was determined to acquire military skills which might someday help him to organize the collective defense of the Puerto Rican people.

The armistice having been signed while he was working as an aide to General Cristna, Albizu Campos received a letter of notification from the President of the United States, Woodrow

Wilson, asking him to present himself at Harvard to represent that university at a European Congress to be held in Paris. He was unable to arrive in time to leave with the rest of the delegation and was given passage with all honors aboard a U.S. warship. But when the vessel put in briefly at a Southern port and Albizu saw how the Negroes were mistreated and discriminated against in that part of the country, he refused to continue the voyage and did not attend the congress.

When he was discharged from the Army with the rank of First Lieutenant, Albizu Campos was already a passionate enemy of the United States. He rejected the appointment of First Lieutenant of the Reserve, declaring that the Puerto Ricans should not become a Copey army for the United States.

### **Mows Lawns to Supplement Income**

In 1918, the young man returned to Harvard to continue his studies.

He had a scholarship, but it was not sufficient to cover his expenses. Before the war he had eked out his meagre income with money earned by helping other students prepare for their examinations, making translations and writing articles for the famous newspaper The Christian Science Monitor. But when he returned to the University after the war, he either could not or would not get any other job but lawn-mowing.

Albizu Campos earned signal honors at the University of Harvard, where he represented his class at big events. When Eamon de Valera the future liberator of Ireland, visited the university, Albizu Campos was appointed to preside over the campaign in favor of Irish independence. He was also chosen to answer the speech of India's patriot philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore. He led the student movements in favor of independence for those two countries, and he was the first to breach the solidly conservative atmosphere of the university by organizing a discussion between professors and students on the Irish question. He was the only speaker there to come out in favor of complete independence for Ireland, but, this notwithstanding, the learned audience pronounced his discourse the "speech of the evening."

Albizu Campos was also the president of the Cosmopolitan Club, entrusted with receiving and organizing the foreign students.

### **Albizu's Conversion to Catholicism**

Before Albizu Campos entered the university, he had come under the influence of the doctrines of Rosicrucianism and other theosophical systems which had been introduced into the island following the change of sovereignty and made a considerable number of converts.

At Harvard, he met two Catholic priests, whose friendship and philosophy greatly in-

fluenced his ideas. Father Ryan awakened his enthusiasm with his stories of Ireland's heroic struggle for independence. And Father Luis Rodes, a clever Catalonian who was the director of the Ebro Observatory for many years, showed him how to combine science with faith and mysticism with a practical sense.

The Puerto Rican poet and patriot Juan Antonio Corretger very aptly analyzed this intimate process in a lecture on Albizu Campos which he delivered in 1966.

"Albizu's conversion to Catholicism was a personal phenomenon," he stated. "It was a case of an individual conscience influenced by unconscious factors, like every psychological development. But his activity on behalf of Catholicism is a conscious act of conservation of what Puerto Rico has been, in the face of the American policy of forcing Puerto Rico into another mold. If imperialism, following the liberal principle of freedom of creed and conscience, encourages the proliferation of Protestant churches, of Oriental beliefs, of the Masons, as factors tending to disintegrate the psychological unity of Puerto Rico, 'then we must encourage Catholicism,' says Albizu Campos, 'to preserve what the invader seeks to destroy.'"





*Albizu Campos in 1930*



*As a young man with a law degree from Harvard University, Pedro Albizu Campos took up the legal defense of impoverished defendants and Nationalists accused of revolutionary violence. (UPI)*

## CHAPTER II

*Harvard Graduate Becomes  
Revolutionary**Albizu Meets a Peruvian Girl*

It was at Harvard that Pedro Albizu Campos first met the woman who was to be his wife, Laura Meneses. A Peruvian girl who was studying at Radcliffe College, the feminine section of the university, she had already received a Doctor's Degree in Natural Science at the Universidad de San Marcos (San Marcos University) in Lima, and had been completing her studies in the United States since 1920.

Laura described her first encounter with Albizu Campos in the following terms:

"One day, as I entered the Department of Philosophy to hear a lecture by the Hindu intellectual Rabindranath Tagore, a young student started to come out just as I was about to go in, and courteously stepped aside to make way for me. To me, he looked like a Hindu. He looked at me intently, perhaps because of my type of American Indian of the Quechua people.

"I saw the student with the refined manners

and assured stride for the second time as he left the Music Department.

"The students of Harvard were not famous for courtesy in those days, and they regarded the 'coeds' of the women's section with disdain.

"But it was with singular courtesy that this student greeted me when he was introduced to me at her home by Mrs. María Teresa Llosa. Mrs. Llosa was a Puerto Rican and the wife of the distinguished composer of my native land, Luis Duncker Lavalle. Albizu Campos, who was then studying law, showed his fine musical sense and his profound feeling for that art, which he apparently inherited through his family link with the illustrious Puerto Rican composer Juan Morel Campos.

"I noticed that he hardly spoke to me. It was much later that he explained this to me. For some time, Mrs. Duncker had wanted to introduce him to me, but he had failed to cooperate. He had known many Spanish-American girls and they had given him a bad time. He had almost decided not to have anything more to do with them.

"That night he escorted me home. It had been snowing heavily."

Miss Moulton, the American professor of Spanish, gave a tea party at her house, to which "Pedrito" was also invited. During the evening, Laura's roommate asked Albizu Campos to look after her friend during the next few days, which she was going to spend in New York.

"At 11:00 a.m. the following day, which was a Monday, he called me on the telephone and invited me to lunch," continued Laura. "I told him I had to study. He repeated his invitation and I my refusal. And I went on with my studies.

"At around noon, I was surprised by his arrival. We had lunch in the Harvard diningroom, and later went for a walk. We returned home and he did not leave until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. On Wednesday, he called again, and we went to lunch together, but he left early because he had to study for his examinations. We lunched together again on Thursday and had a long conversation. Suddenly he proposed marriage, and I burst out laughing.

"From then on he visited me almost every night.

"His good humor is one of his best qualities. But what I most admired in him—more than his extraordinary intelligence and culture—was his kindness."

### **Return to Puerto Rico in 1921**

Pedro Albizu received several interesting offers during his student years, but he did not accept any of them. Since he had studied engineering for a year at the University of Vermont, he was invited by that institution to continue his studies there.

While he was studying there, the University, recognizing his profound culture, asked him to

deliver several lectures. An American businessman who heard him speak on one of those occasions offered to pay him \$200 a month, and all expenses to tour the country, giving lectures. He did not accept this offer, because he wanted to continue his studies.

He rejected another offer of \$15,000 a year to take charge of the Spanish-American division of a Protestant organization.

Shortly before he was due to graduate as a lawyer at Harvard, he received an offer of a post as assistant in the Supreme Court of the United States, with a salary of \$500 a week and, finally, the U.S. State Department asked the University to recommend an outstanding Spanish-speaking young man to work with the Border Commission to fix the frontier with Mexico. This meant direct entry into the Diplomatic Corps of the United States, but Albizu Campos declined the honor. Always courteous, he replied that he had a mission to fulfill in his own country.

For he had already decided what his life work was to be: the cause of Puerto Rican independence. He wanted to take his acquired knowledge back to his island and devote himself solely to the struggle for its freedom. His determination was to remain unshakeable.

In June 1921, Laura received a scholarship for a summer course in the Marine Biology Laboratory of Woods Hole, in Massachusetts, and Pedro Albizu returned to Puerto Rico. He

had not completed his doctorate of laws because a prejudiced professor had held him back in his subject, preventing him from obtaining his degree. This caused surprise at the University, and he was sent a questionnaire so that he could take a new examination. It was thus that Albizu Campos graduated as a lawyer.

Dr. Albizu Campos returned to his native isle at the age of 30 and with the following academic degrees: Bachelor of Philosophy, Master of Sciences and Arts, Industrial Chemist and Civil Engineer from the University of Vermont, Doctor of Philosophy and Letters and Doctor of Laws from Harvard.

### **Marriage to Laura Meneses**

Laura went to Puerto Rico in July 1922, to get married, and Pedro Albizu Campos and Laura Meneses were pronounced man and wife by a judge in Juana Diaz. But the young wife had to return shortly afterwards to continue her studies at Harvard. There her health suffered and, in November of that year, her husband went to New York to bring her to Puerto Rico, where they took up residence.

Albizu Campos' devotion to the cause of independence was absolute, and his wife, who shared his ideals, decided to sacrifice her brilliant career in order to share the vicissitudes of the hard life they had accepted.

The young couple lived in the district of La Cantera, in Ponce, one of the poorest in the

island. Their wooden house was beside a dirt road.

"Laura appreciated the good people of Puerto Rico who surrounded her and the peaceful environment of the island, but Puerto Rico seemed to her a nation lulled to sleep in dreamy tolerance.

### **The Poor Man's Lawyer**

Dr. Albizu Campos practised his profession of lawyer among the poor and was himself a poor man because of his decision only to accept cases which he considered just. The couple now had two children and their economic situation was such that at times they could not even buy them shirts.

They could have lived in luxury if either Pedro Albizu or Laura had been willing to accept one of the many propositions they received. Shortly after they arrived in Puerto Rico, Pedro was offered an appointment as Judge of Yauco, but he considered this a trap which would compromise his independence. He also rejected a government job because he believed that "one is only free when one lives with dignity, even in poverty."

Both he and Laura were asked to teach courses at the University of Puerto Rico, and this also they turned down, because they felt that nothing should link them with the regime. They wanted to be completely free and answerable only to their own consciences.

When the great Mexican José Vasconcelos visited Puerto Rico in 1926 and met Albizu Campos, he was amazed by the integrity with which the patriot voluntarily bore the ordeal of poverty. He said of Albizu that "one day America will honor him as one of her heroes."

### Albizu Enters the Political Arena

Albizu Campos joined the *Partido Unión de Puerto Rico* (Puerto Rican Unity Party) on his return to the island. It was at a time when the American Governor, F. M. Reily, was dismissing the Independentists from the island bureaucracy, and the *Unión* was headed by Antonio R. Barceló, a resolute supporter of independence.

When, in 1924, however, the *Unión* and the Republicans—the island's two main political parties—formed an alliance, and the demand for independence was eliminated from the joint program, Albizu Campos left the *Unión* and joined the *Partido Nacionalista* (Nationalist Party).

That party was an outgrowth of the *Liga Cívica* (Civic League), founded in 1912 by Rosendo Cintrón and other patriots with the purpose of "preparing the people to receive the baptism of liberty on the day of the birth of our country."

Later, R. Matienzo Cintrón, together with Manuel Zeno Gandía, Luis Llorens Torres, Matías González García, Pedro Sierra (Luis Dalta), Ramón Gandía Córdoba, Rafael Sánchez Mon-

talvo, Eugenio Benítez Castaño, Carlos Zeno, Santiago Oppenheimer and Pedro Franceschi, formed the *Partido de la Independencia de la Isla de Puerto Rico* (Independence Party of the Island of Puerto Rico), whose purpose was to carry on a struggle for liberation of the island.

Later, in 1922, the Nationalist Party entered the political arena, under the leadership of José Coll y Cuchí.

Its constituent assembly was held in the *Teatro Nuevo* (New Theatre) in Río Piedras, on September 17 that year, and it included many university professors and students and youthful intellectuals who cherished the hope of creating a Republic of Puerto Rico. But the Nationalist Party lacked any clearly-defined orientation, and did not represent either the rich or the working people.

In the assembly held in San Juan in 1924, Lic. Marcos Morales took over the presidency of the Nationalist Party, but the party's political effectiveness declined.

Only in Ponce, where Ramón Mayoral Bar-nés had founded the weekly *El Nacionalista de Ponce*, did the party have an organ of its own. And it was there that a young lawyer collaborated with Mayoral and showed amazing talent and dynamism, writing articles which canalized the activities of the movement. It was none other than Pedro Albizu Campos.

At the Nationalist commemorative ceremony in honor of José de Diego, held in San Juan



in 1925, the flag of Puerto Rico was unfurled on the platform and a few American flags adorned the handrail. When the time came to close the ceremony a man who was almost unknown in San Juan at that time mounted the platform. To the amazement of the large audience, the young speaker, before addressing himself to the public, removed the small flags and stuffed them in his pocket. Later, he explained his action by saying that that banner was not the symbol of Puerto Rico. This speaker was the same man who sought in the columns of *El Nacionalista de Ponce* to enlighten the Puerto Rican people.

### Tour of Latin America

In 1925, Albizu Campos was already emerging as the most outstanding figure among the Independentist leaders of the period. His dedication to the cause was absolute. And it was doubtless for this reason that the General Assembly of the Nationalist Party, held in Ponce in 1925 to elect its new leadership, took this valiant and brilliant fighter into account.

Lic. Federico Acosta Velarde assumed the presidency of the party and young Pedro Albizu Campos was unanimously chosen as his vice-president.

Later, at the first meeting of the new executive committee, held in San Juan, the need was discussed of sending a delegation abroad to continue José de Diego's campaign to awaken

the peoples of Latin America to the colonial status of Puerto Rico. Albizu Campos was chosen for he was the only one who was prepared to make the sacrifice of paying the cost of the trip with his own resources.

Don Pedro did not have the money to undertake such a mission, but he was determined to carry it out in one way or another. His wife helped him by taking their children to live with her at her parents' home in Peru, for she believed that a wife's first duty was never to stand in the way of an extraordinary man. So they broke up their home and sold what they could, for Albizu would not have been able to maintain his family in Puerto Rico during his absence.

So, in 1927, Albizu began a tour of the Spanish-American countries which lasted for two and a half years. All he had in his pocket was two hundred dollars, which was all the party could give him for the purpose.

During this tour, Albizu Campos was able to popularize the cause of Puerto Rican independence in a number of Latin-American countries.

In the Dominican Republic, only recently evacuated by the American occupation, he founded an organization to work for the independence of Puerto Rico (*Pro-Independencia Puertorriqueña*). Federico Henríquez Carvajal and Américo Lugo, two outstanding intellectuals of the period, agreed to represent Puerto Rican nationalism in Santo Domingo. In that republic,

Albizu delivered numerous lectures which helped to build up public opinion in favor of Puerto Rican independence.

From there, he went to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, risking his life to carry the message of the Puerto Rican freedom movement to the leaders of the resistance to the American occupation there. His interview with Pierre Paulie and Jolibois Fils, the Haitian nationalist leaders, was a memorable one, and has become part of the history of Haiti.

Albizu was known in other countries because he had defended since 1921, in the newspaper *El Nacionalista de Puerto Rico*, the independence of the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Nicaragua against the American invaders, and also because he had combatted all the dictatorships of the day. "All liberal-minded men should prepare to combat dictatorships," he had said. "Dictatorship, whether civil or military, represents a step backward. It is what holds the people back. It is the shame of the XX Century."

The *Junta Nacional Cubana Pro-Independencia de Puerto Rico* (Cuban National Junta for the Independence of Puerto Rico) was formed in Havana, under the presidency of Enrique José Varona, who said in a manifesto: "In 1892, Cubans and Puerto Ricans established the *Partido Revolucionario Cubano* (Cuban Revolutionary Party) "to achieve the complete independence of Cuba and help to achieve that of Puerto Rico; Cuba is therefore the country

which has the greatest obligation to assist and defend Puerto Rico . . .

"Our people has a debt to the people of Puerto Rico and a sacred obligation handed down to us by Martí in the basic principles of the Cuban Revolutionary Party."

In Cuba, Albizu Campos took part in the struggle against the dictatorship of General Gerardo Machado.

Speaking as a delegate of the National Association of Veterans of Cuban Independence, before the statue of Martí, he asked his audience: "Does contemporary Cuba reach the moral level of the feet of this statue?" and answered his own question: "No, it does not." Then he went on to denounce the conditions of life in the island under the oppressive dictatorship.

Such activities exposed him to government persecution and he was forced to flee the country under the protection of the Mexican flag. In Mexico, he failed to obtain an interview with President Calles, but he did make contact with Latin-American organizations and strengthened the bonds of solidarity among the Spanish-speaking peoples of the continent.

In 1929, Albizu returned to Cuba to attend the Latin Press Congress, composed of delegations from the Latin-American countries and the Latin countries of Europe. A motion of Albizu Campos led to the closing of the Congress, for he demanded that it declare its solidarity with the cause of Puerto Rican independence and call

upon the United States to evacuate Puerto Rico, as well as Haiti and the Philippine Islands. He also demanded the exclusion from the Congress of the delegates of the Associated Press, the United Press and The New York Times, on the grounds that these organizations did not form part of the Latin press.

From Cuba he went to Panama, and from there to Peru, where his wife helped him to make contact with the political organization known as APRA. In that country, he offered advice for a possible uprising against the dictator Augusto B. Leguía.

Nobody can measure the influence Albizu Campos may have had on the Spanish-American peoples during his propaganda mission. A brilliant and impassioned orator, his descriptions of Borinquen, the beautiful but poverty-stricken tropical island which was a "Yankee possession," have been an inexhaustible source of arguments for many politicians of this hemisphere who have since attacked the United States.

On his return trip to Puerto Rico with his family, he stopped off at La Guaira and visited Caracas, Venezuela, to establish relations with the opposition to the Juan Vicente Gómez dictatorship.

For Albizu Campos, the independence of Puerto Rico meant the unity of all the Hispanic peoples in the ideals of liberty and democracy, which would lead, in time, to fraternal relations with all the peoples of the earth.



*Early in his political career and on one of the numerous occasions on which he was arrested, Albizu Campos takes leave of his followers. (Wide World Photos)*



Map of Latin America, showing Albizu Campos' itinerary during his propaganda tour of the American republics.

### CHAPTER III

## *Albizu Campos Begins the Struggle for Liberation of Puerto Rico*

### **President of the Nationalist Party**

While all this was taking place abroad, the freedom movement was languishing in Puerto Rico.

Albizu Campos returned at a moment of disorganization, at the end of 1929. He arrived aboard the SS. "Magallanes," together with his family, early in January 1930. Now he had three children, a son and two daughters, named Pedro, Laura and Rosa Emilia, respectively. They went to live in the district of Las Palmas (now Villa Palmeras) in Santurce.

Don Pedro's immediate task would be the complete reorganization of the *Partido Nacionalista* on new revolutionary lines, with continental and world-wide ramifications.

In a general assembly held in May 1930, at the *Ateneo Puertorriqueño* (Puerto Rican Athenaeum), Pedro Albizu Campos, who was now thirty years old, was elected president of the party, and, under his leadership, the most active and import-

ant phase of the movement for the liberation of Puerto Rico began, with an effort to cooperate with the government.

Two programs were approved, one political and the other economic, and both were purely nationalistic in their approach. The economic program was as follows:

- "1) The workers shall be organized so that they can demand of the foreign, or invading, interests the share in profits to which they are entitled, taking over their administration immediately and appointing responsible and patriotic men to manage them.
- "2) Every effort shall be made to see that the burden of taxation falls upon non-residents, so as to eliminate absentee landlordism and divide real estate among the greatest possible number of land-owners.
- "3) Every possible step shall be taken to reverse the effect of free shipping between the United States and Puerto Rico, which today exclusively benefits the invader.
- "4) The consumption of Puerto Rican agricultural and industrial products shall be favored exclusively, seeking by all means to see that they satisfy the national requirements.
- "5) Exportation and the creation of a merchant marine shall be encouraged.

- "6) Native banks shall be exclusively favored, and where there are none steps shall be taken to establish them.
- "7) The island's finances shall be organized in such a way, with a responsible native banking system, that national deposits shall be made exclusively in the native banks, and steps shall be taken to free the country of foreign loans, both public and private, so that agriculture, commerce and industry may re-develop in Puerto Rican hands."

As part of the political program, the assembly agreed, among other things, to declare that "the immediate suppression of American colonialism cannot be longer delayed and it is resolved to hold a constituent assembly to establish the government of a free republic, sovereign and independent, in Puerto Rico, as soon as a majority vote can be obtained."

The oath taken at the close of the assembly gives an idea of the radical tone of the party from that moment on: "Assembled here, we solemnly swear to defend the nationalist ideal and to sacrifice our homes and our lives, if that should be necessary, for the independence of our country."

A wave of ardent patriotism swept the entire island and Dr. Albizu Campos was now a well-known and popular figure. The family was visited by many people who had ignored them when they lived in Ponce; these new friends



included Luis Barceló, president of the Liberal Party, his son Antonio, and Luis Muñoz Marín.

### **Albizu and Muñoz in the Same Camp**

Two outstanding political figures dominated the public scene in Puerto Rico at that time: the Nationalist Pedro Albizu Campos and Luis Muñoz Marín, who seemed to want to extend the political ideas of his father, Don Luis Muñoz Rivera, with the introduction of socialism into his program.

At that time, Theodore Roosevelt (Jr.) was the Governor of the island. He had made a friend of Muñoz Marín and they both sought a remedy for the financial calamities which beset Puerto Rico as a result of the maladjustment caused by the change in sovereignty and aggravated by a series of devastating hurricanes which ruined the crops. During those years, the United States, under the Republican administration of President Herbert Clark Hoover, was in the grip of the great economic depression which began in 1929.

Muñoz Marín was inclined toward socialism, but he believed that Puerto Rico could not maintain its principal source of wealth, the sugar industry, without the big plantations.

The ideas of Albizu Campos differed radically from those of Muñoz Marín. For him, the yearning for freedom came first.

"Nationalism," he said, "is the motherland organized to achieve its sovereignty." And he

maintained that the land should be returned to the Puerto Ricans, foreign companies should be nationalized, production and import and export markets should be diversified, and the island should be industrialized. He was unalterably opposed to the big plantations and to absentee capital.

Muñoz had declared: "I am a radical nationalist for moral reasons and reasons of collective pride which cannot be debated, and also for economic reasons which I am prepared to debate at any time. I support the whole of that part of the economic program of Puerto Rican nationalism which does not tend to limit the present moral sovereignty of Puerto Rico or interfere with its future political sovereignty . . .

"I shall vote for the Unionist Party and for Mr. Pedro Albizu Campos. For the Unionist Party because it stands clearly and unequivocally for independence. The Nationalist Party, for which I wish the greatest success, cannot, at this time, express that sentiment as forcefully as the Unionist Party . . . If the Unionist Party removes independence from its platform, or de-emphasizes that ideal, I shall vote for the Nationalist Party."

### **Unyielding Political Line**

Under the leadership of Albizu Campos, a re-organized Nationalist Party showed new vitality, and followed a clear political line. It organized a campaign with political meetings that attracted

vast crowds of people. Its ideas inspired the island youth, drawing new sap from old roots: the doctrines of Betances, Hostos, De Diego, Duarte, Martí and the grand figures of the liberators of Latin America, especially Simón Bolívar.

Albizu Campos hoped to achieve, with the independence of Puerto Rico, the political and economic liberation of all the Latin-American nations. He considered the Antilles the scene of a decisive battle between Latin America and the United States, which, he said, stood "face to face in Puerto Rico with the spirit of Lexington, Saragossa, Ayacucho..."

To reach the people, he made use of the radio, the press, the popular theatre and any means that came to hand.

Albizu Campos' political line was unyielding. "To take our country, first they have to take our lives," he asserted.

It was about that time that a delegation called on Lic. Tous Soto, president of the Republican Party, which favored "Statehood," and proposed that he make offers to Albizu Campos in exchange for his abandoning his hard political line. But Tous Soto replied: "Albizu Campos is the only man left in Puerto Rico, and I shall do nothing to destroy him."

Overwhelming forces and powerful influences, however, had resolved to strangle the liberation movement.

Despite Albizu Campos' opposition, a majority in the party who had failed to grasp fully

his principle of non-cooperation with the regime, decided to participate in the elections of 1932. The movement registered as the *Partido Insular* (Island Party) and, in less than a month, it had obtained the legal number of members to qualify, which was 28,000. Its public meetings were attended by enormous crowds and, in view of the enthusiasm of its supporters, it gave the impression that it was about to sweep the elections throughout the island.

But when the election were held, only 5,300 Nationalist votes were recorded and Albizu Campos' candidacy for Senator received a total of only 13,000 votes.

Then Albizu advised his followers not to participate in any more "colonial elections" which served only to appoint the "high employees of the colony." From then on, he laid down a firm policy of non-cooperation with the regime and proclaimed the necessity of organizing rebel movements. "Where tyranny is the law," he asserted, "revolution is order," and added, "Every political movement which provokes reaction, triumphs."

### **Bonds of the Republic**

From that moment on, the Nationalist Party devoted all its energies to intense agitation. It demanded a Constituent Assembly to proclaim the Independent and Sovereign Republic of Puerto Rico, and that movement coincided with the accentuated independentist attitudes of the Liber-

al Party, aggravated by the fact that the pro-American parties had won a majority of both houses of the island Legislature in the elections.

The young intellectuals swelled the ranks of the Nationalists and the university students considered Albizu Campos the moral force in their classrooms.

At the end of 1930, Albizu Campos decided, in agreement with the Nationalist leadership, to float an issue of bonds to raise funds for the Republic of Puerto Rico.

That issue had three denominations: one hundred dollars, bearing the likeness of Ramón E. Betances; fifty dollars with the portrait of Hostos, and twenty-five dollars with that of Francisco Ramírez, the first president of the republic proclaimed in the Lares rebellion in 1868. The total amount of the issue was two hundred thousand dollars and it was put on sale in April 1931 in Puerto Rico, and in the Summer of 1932 in the United States. Subsequently, two other issues were launched, for twenty and ten dollars, respectively.

The upshot of this was that the Consulting Judge of the U.S. Army, who was at that time General Blanton Winship, later Governor of Puerto Rico, demanded a formal indictment of the Nationalist Party, but after some deliberation, and in view of the fact that the sale of the bonds did not progress any further than had been expected, no trial was held.

## The Nationalist Guerrillas

On December 17, 1932, the Nationalist Party held an assembly in the Victoria Theatre in the city of Humacao, at which a commission was appointed to draft a constitution for the Republic of Puerto Rico, and the people were called upon to join the party in a powerful organization to win the country's independence.

It was at this assembly that the creation of an Army of Liberation, also known as the Cadets of the Republic, was agreed upon. These partisans wore white trousers and black shirts, which symbolized the nation's mourning over its colonial captivity. These battalions or groups were equipped with wooden rifles, which they used for drill and also in parades.

The feminine counterpart of this organization was known as the *Cuerpo de Enfermeras* (Nurses' Corps) and its uniform consisted of white and black skirt, bonnet and blouse.

Direct action was soon to follow.

At the first of a series of meetings held in 1932, Albizu made a direct attack on the general administration of Puerto Rican affairs by the Federal Government, and also on the recently-appointed Governor, Robert H. Gore.

Shortly afterwards, a bomb was found in La Fortaleza, the Governor's official residence, and that same week another exploded in his Summer residence at Jajome Alto, in the mountains, a few hours drive from San Juan. The explo-

sion in Jajome occurred shortly after the departure of Governor Gore, who was accompanied by the island Chief of Police, Col. Francis Riggs.

On the 16th of April, 1933, the elimination of the Puerto Rican flag as the national banner was discussed in the Capitol in San Juan. On the same date, the Nationalists celebrated the birthday of José de Diego in the nearby Plaza de Armas, where Albizu Campos explained to the crowd what was even then taking place in the Capitol. With cries of "Long Live the Republic" (*Viva la República*), the people stormed the Capitol. When rioters were met by the police and forced down the steps of the building *en masse*, the handrail gave way and one man was killed and several injured. Albizu Campos was arrested for incitement to riot, but he was acquitted by the court.

The bellicosity of the Nationalists provoked the violent reaction which was to be expected on the part of their opponents, symbolized by the police force. First, however, bribery was attempted. Laura Albizu asserts that Police Colonel Francis Riggs called on Pedro Albizu Campos to assure him that he sympathized with his party, but that his position prevented him from taking a public stand. Nevertheless, he added, he wanted to help the Nationalist organization to the extent of \$150,000. Albizu eluded the acceptance of this donation and that

signalled the beginning of a period of police repression against the Nationalists whenever they organized any public demonstration.

### **The Case of the Slap in the Face**

Besides being an intense nationalist and a fiery revolutionary leader, Albizu Campos was also a professional lawyer, with a degree from Harvard University.

It is curious to follow the lawyer in the practice of his profession, in which, as we point out elsewhere, he devoted himself exclusively to the defense of cases which he considered just. In most of these cases, his clients were persons in precarious economic circumstances and their difficulties were almost always connected with anti-American activities or acts of rebellion, which is to say, acts of violence. To appreciate this situation, we must follow his political history to where the highlights of his professional career impinge upon it. This happened on several occasions, but there is one case which has become famous in legal history. It occurred in 1931 and was commonly known as "Velazquez's Slap in the Face."

Without going into any critical revision of the case, it can be said that its shock value was undeniable. Albizu had a double purpose in handling it the way he did, with cool, scientific reasoning which was perfectly executed in practice.

The case itself was simple enough. A militant Nationalist of Santurce, Luis Florencio Velázquez, was accused of assault on the person of Judge Emilio del Toro, President of Puerto Rico's Supreme Court. This attack was no more than a slap delivered in public as punishment, according to Velázquez, for offensive remarks against members of the Nationalist Party made by the judge at a meeting.

Velázquez admitted the facts of the indictment in court and was sentenced to a year in prison. The case was then taken to the District Court. The trial aroused considerable interest because Don Pedro Albizu Campos had personally taken charge of the defense. To the amazement of the public, which packed the courtroom to capacity, the defense placed the accused on the witness stand, and he ratified the accusation in all respects. Thereupon, Albizu merely justified the action of the accused by stating that he had been unable to contain his indignation on hearing a Puerto Rican judge insult the patriots.

With this weak defense, all he achieved was that the District Court confirmed the sentence of the lower court, and also ordered Velázquez to pay the costs. As soon as sentence had been handed down, the defense lodged an appeal with the Supreme Court, of which Judge Emilio del Toro was the president.

Jurists throughout the country were aghast. They were intrigued by a defense strategy which

seemed more calculated to incriminate the defendant than anything else.

The day of the Supreme Court hearing arrived. The courtroom was packed from early that morning, and lawyers, professors, students and politicians, with hardly room to move, whispered their comments on the case, trying to guess what Albizu Campos was up to.

The hearing began and Don Pedro Albizu solemnly cleared up the mystery in the first few minutes. He moved that the sentence be annulled on the grounds of lack of jurisdiction.

The explanation was as follows:

The United States established in Puerto Rico a territorial division and judicial powers. Certain lands and buildings are Federal property and over them the Government of Puerto Rico has no jurisdiction. And the fact was that the Supreme Court, in which the case was being tried, was installed in one of those buildings belonging to the Federal Government. And since the courts of Puerto Rico which had sentenced Velázquez for slapping Judge Emilio del Toro had no jurisdiction on Federal property, the sentence was null and void.

This was the second slap in the face, more resounding even than the first, that Judge Emilio del Toro received in public. When the case was heard in the Circuit Court of Boston, it had no recourse but to revoke the verdict of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico.



Jurists consider this case—Velázquez's Slap—as one of the most important ever to be tried in Puerto Rico. On that occasion, Lic. Pedro Albizu Campos revealed his professional skill and clearly showed that Puerto Rico's colonial status could not be disguised.

## CHAPTER IV

### *The First Revolutionary Outbreaks*

#### **Workers and Country Folk Support Albizu**

Albizu Campos won the support of the working masses when, in 1933, a strike of gasoline consumers broke out. A general strike ensued, which brought the island to a standstill and the government had to mobilize troops.

This movement, under the moral leadership of Albizu Campos, managed to impose his cause upon the whole country for the first time in history.

In 1934, Albizu Campos received an urgent appeal from the agricultural workers of the big sugar cane plantations, who had declared a general strike, and now asked him to lead them again. The strike was a success, but Albizu Campos did not wish to take over the leadership of the labor movement; he felt that the workers should supply their own leadership.

## Massacre at the University

The situation grew so serious that people began to fear for the Nationalist leader's life. Ramón S. Pagán, the party's labor secretary, managed to get into certain secret meetings and denounced the existence of a plot to kill off Dr. Albizu and the Nationalist leaders.

Albizu Campos then advised Pagán not to take the risk of appearing in public meetings. Nevertheless, he attended a meeting held by the Nationalists in the University of Río Piedras October 24, 1935, and a clash with the police resulted, in which, besides many wounded, one policeman and four Nationalists lost their lives, and one of them was Ramón S. Pagán.

At the funeral of the victims of *Ciudad Universitaria* (University City) Albizu Campos made a violent speech attacking the Government of Puerto Rico, the Police and the Liberal Party, whom he held responsible for a premeditated plan to murder Nationalists.

He swore—and his audience swore with him—that the slaying of his friends would not go unpunished.

## Party Practically Declares War on U. S.

The party held an assembly in the Campo Alegre Theatre, in Caguas, in December that year. A turbulent meeting practically declared war on the United States. The immediate evacuation of the island by the Americans was demand-

ed, with the threat that there would be a "resort to armed force."

"Military service" was declared compulsory for all the militants of the Nationalist Party, and it was agreed to float a loan in Puerto Rico and abroad to defray the expenses of the struggle.

The immediate result was a schism in the party, for many refused to accept the new tactics of violence. The dissidents held an Independentist Assembly in Mayagüez October 21, 1934, and agreed to continue working for the independence of Puerto Rico, but by legal, peaceful and diplomatic means. The new party *Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño* or P.I.P. (Puerto Rican Independence Party) adopted as its banner the flag of the *Grito de Lares* (Lares Proclamation).

The Albizu Campos family had moved to Aguas Buenas. They lived in a house in the suburbs of that town, with a guard on duty around the clock. Assaults on their home were attempted four times and each time were repelled by the Nationalist guards. The situation was so dangerous that many advised Albizu Campos to leave the country, but he was determined to remain in Puerto Rico "to guide the people through one of the most difficult periods of its history."

## Assassination of Riggs and U. S. Reaction

In February 1936, the Nationalists Hiram Rosado and Elias Beauchamp assassinated Col. Francis E. Riggs, the island's Chief of Police.

Col. Riggs' execution by "revolutionary jus-

“We have already brought to you the precious ashes of other heroes. Nationalism has brought the nation its transmutation, for Man was not born to vegetate nor grow fat and strong, but to stand firm upon the supreme principles worthy of his immortality. There is only one gateway to immortality: the gateway of valour, which leads to sacrifice for a sacred cause. We must sacrifice ourselves for the independence of our country.”

Rosado and Beauchamp were arrested and slain out of hand at General Police Headquarters on February 23, 1936. The police explanation of what the Nationalists consider murder was not very convincing, even to the most extreme anti-Nationalists.

Many Nationalists attended the funeral services and heard Albizu Campos renew, during a vibrant funeral oration, the oath taken at Rio Piedras.

We reproduce below excerpts from this speech, which was to have violent repercussions, leading up to a series of episodes that culminated in the mass arrest of the Nationalist revolutionaries.

“We have here, gentlemen, precious ashes,” began Albizu. “Precious ashes which bear witness to the immortality of Puerto Rico. And they said, gentlemen, that valour was dead in our land. And when they said that valour was dead in the motherland, they condemned it to the death of slavery. But, gentlemen, the lie has been given to that phrase that the Puerto Ricans, taken collectively, are cowards. That is a legend a corrupt leadership has brought us to justify their trafficking with the life of the nation. Our people is courageous, our people is a heroic people.

“We have already brought to you the precious ashes of other heroes. Nationalism has brought the nation its transmutation, for Man was not born to vegetate nor grow fat and strong, but to stand firm upon the supreme principles worthy of his immortality. There is only one gateway to immortality: the gateway of valour, which leads to sacrifice for a sacred cause. We must sacrifice ourselves for the independence of our country.”

Elsewhere in his rousing speech, Albizu refers to Col. Riggs, describing him as the principal cause of the death of the Nationalists Rosado and Beauchamp at Police Headquarters, in these words: “A tyrant has fallen who was called Col. Riggs, whom may Heaven forgive the crimes he has perpetrated in Puerto Rico. We say this without hatred nor rancour, but with the purest Christian certitude, as if we looked him straight in the eye, as we did one day in El Escambron.. The murder at Rio Piedras was his work, and his guilt in that slaying is shared by a number of misbegotten Puerto Ricans. Responsible, together with them, is Gen. Blanton Winship, who occupies La Fortaleza. Cold-blooded murder, to perpetuate murder as a method of government, is being carried out by the entire Police Force. I say to my countrymen, when the police of this regime take your sons or your brothers away under arrest, take care, for they are educated in the school of murder,

"It is not to the police station that those arrested should be taken, but to prison. But here in Puerto Rico, it is not done that way, for the police know that their authority ends when an arrested person is taken to prison, where only the warden has power of life and death. Arrested persons should be turned over to the courts, so that their guilt or innocence may be determined.

"In this case, the Police, under the command of General Winship, committed a murder worse than those of the gangsters of Chicago. Worse, because the gangsters have a code of honor and do not kill a kidnapped man. General Winship seeks to base a policy on the suppression of the law, the courts, the attorneys and the judges. For what need is there for such officials when, with a half dozen brigands armed with machineguns, with an army at his beck and call, with a fleet and with a tyrannical regime to dispense justice in the name of a foreign despotism, they can murder at Police Headquarters all who are taken there?

"They say there is freedom in Puerto Rico, and that Albizu Campos even speaks over the radio. Albizu Campos has put everything to the test. And when they have seen that a patriotic movement has arisen, not to seek the spoils of office, but to point the finger of accusation at the criminals, it turns out that Nationalism is a bad thing.

"The day after the murder of Pagán, of Santiago, of Rodríguez Vega, of Quiñones, and

Pearson's mortal wound Col. Riggs declared in a newspaper that there would be war to the death against all Puerto Ricans. This he said to Puerto Rico, which is a noble, kindly people. Riggs forgot everything, and we forget him in the very presence of his mortal remains, for we believe in the immortality of the soul and he lives to answer to eternal God for the crimes he committed against these two victims immolated on the altar of the motherland. So Blanton Winship is right and we cannot imagine why he asks the Legislature to restore the death penalty. A man who comes with his army, his fleet, his cannons, and stained with the most noble blood of our country, to ask the Legislature to restore the death penalty, serenely and in the name of Yankee fraternity with all Puerto Ricans!

"The police shuts away its defenseless victims and shoots them to death, and afterwards the policemen mutually exonerate one another, in an attempt to cover up their crime.

"A man is found beaten to death and others riddled with bullets. Tyranny creates irresponsibility in government. Nobody is responsible under a tyranny. When a tyrant says he is not responsible for a crime, he is saying to his henchmen: 'You're not responsible either.' It is written in black and white. The lesson of tyranny has been learned and General Winship is right. Captain Martínez Chapel is right. They are all supremely right.

"There are no laws, no courts, nothing. Tyranny is not interested in any of that. It is only interested in crushing the nationalism of the invaded country. They are right; but these murders cannot go unpunished in the conscience of men of honor and courage.

"While there are free men, brave men, the murderers will not remain unpunished. The Yankee regime is doing us a supreme favor. The Yankees seek to intimidate us with murder. They can kill Albizu Campos. It will solve nothing. They can kill 10,000 Nationalists. A million Puerto Ricans will rise up. The best and quickest way to create a nationalistic country in 24 hours is to continue that school of murder. Nationalism will not attack from ambush, but face to face, face to eternity.

"Here we have two true heroes. Elias Beauchamp and Hiram Rosado, blood of heroes, are the fruit of an ideal and of its reconquest. Their ideology is the independence of Puerto Rico. It is an ideal and a consecration to heroism and sacrifice. Here are two heroes, two brave men, who say to me, and to all the people of Puerto Rico, that the oath of dedication to the independence of our country is valid and has been sealed with the blood of immortals."

### First Sentence: 10 Years in Prison

Apart from other historic events which we shall consider later, the violent repression of the Nationalist uprisings occurred as a result of the

persecution to which these patriots were subjected.

It was the revolutionary dynamic of Pedro Albizu Campos that won for his country a place in history.

A demonstration was organized in the city of Utuado to protest against the slaying of the Nationalists and there was another clash with the police, in which one man was killed and another wounded. Then Governor Winship prohibited all public demonstrations and ordered an investigation.

It began with police raids and searches at several Nationalist offices, as well as the homes of the party leaders. Documents and recordings of the speeches of Albizu Campos were seized and submitted to a Federal grand jury, convened in San Juan. At the same time, Albizu himself and a considerable number of his followers were indicted. Among them were Juan Antonio Corretger, secretary general of the party; Luis Velázquez, Julio Velázquez, Rafael Ortiz Pacheco, Clemente Soto Vélez, Erasmo Velázquez, Juan Gallardo Santiago and Clemente Rosado Ortiz.

The grand jury of the Federal Court in the District of Puerto Rico handed down its report on the existence of a conspiracy to overthrow the Government of the United States by force, charging Pedro Albizu Campos and other Nationalist leaders with organizing to incite violence. The accused were arrested and brought to trial. In the first trial, the jury, composed of

seven Puerto Ricans and five Americans, was unable to reach a verdict and was dismissed.

For the second trial, a new jury was selected, made up this time of ten Americans and two Puerto Ricans. The court convened with Federal Judge Robert A. Cooper presiding.

This time, Albizu Campos and his comrades were accused of conspiring to overthrow the government by force, of inciting rebellion against the United States and of recruiting soldiers to fight against the United States, and the Nationalists were sentenced to ten and six-year prison terms, which they served in the Penitentiary of Atlanta, in Georgia.

A singular event bears witness to Albizu Campos' popularity and support among the people. When the Federal Court indicted the Nationalist leader and his comrades, in April 1936, a public collection was immediately held, and, on the very same day of the indictment, bail was posted: ONE MILLION DOLLARS, much of it in nickels and dimes.

### Reaction to the Imprisonment of Albizu

The country was deeply moved. The First National Congress for a Constituent Assembly was then being held in the Municipal Theatre of San Juan, with delegates from all over the island in attendance, and, in his opening speech, Lic. Jaime Benítez, president of the *Frente Unido Pro-Convención* (United Front for the Convention), accused the American Government in connection

with the Nationalists' trial. The Congress protested on behalf of the condemned men and a continent-wide campaign was organized for their release from prison.

A march on behalf of the prisoners, in which persons from all parts of Puerto Rico were to parade through the streets of the capital, was stopped by order of the Governor. All public demonstrations were strictly prohibited, and even the cemeteries were closed, to prevent flowers being placed on the graves of the dead.

Among the Puerto Ricans in New York, an imposing demonstration was organized on behalf of the political prisoners of Puerto Rico, which was attended, according to *The New York Times*, by more than 10,000 people.

Albizu Campos' arrest caused great consternation throughout Latin America. The press gave great prominence to the reports of the trial. The many expressions of sympathy for the Nationalist leader included a letter from the renowned Chilean writer Gabriela Mistral to Judge Cooper, which reads as follows:

"Puerto Rico is now in the throes of its struggle for independence, through which our twenty republics have already passed. It corresponds to the basic impetus of Americanism, as our continent experienced it in flesh and spirit in the year 1810.

"The personalities of the Puerto Ricans on trial are identical in moral purity and civic significance with those of the great patriots San

Martin, O'Higgins and Artigas in the southern lands. The heroic and painful endeavour is the same, their spiritual quality is identical . . . The attitude of the American authorities towards the Nationalist leaders of Puerto Rico will have extraordinary significance for us . . ."

Despite every effort, on February 12, 1937, the Court of Appeals of Boston upheld the verdict and, on June 17, the men held in La Princesa Prison in Puerto Rico were transferred to the Federal Penitentiary of Atlanta to serve their sentences.

The following day, a group of Nationalists made an attempt on the life of Federal Judge Cooper, who had imposed sentence on their leaders. The judge was on his way home in his car, when he was cut off by another vehicle, from which shots were fired at him. One of the bullets shattered his windshield, the others went astray.

As a result of this attack, two members of the Nationalist Party, Jesús Casellas Torres and Aníbal Arsuaga, were arrested. In January 1938, they pleaded guilty of the attempted assassination of Judge Cooper.

Santiago Iglesias, Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico in Washington, was also a target for Nationalist violence.

This occurred at a public meeting in which the Resident Commissioner defended the use of the American flag in Puerto Rico. At that very instant, the Nationalist Domingo S. Crespo, who

was present in the audience, drew a pistol and fired several shots at Iglesias, who fell to the ground, slightly wounded.

### Communism and Albizu Campos

Albizu Campos' political career from the very beginning clearly reveals that his movement never had any direct link with the communists.

In Puerto Rico, the members of the Communist Party have always sought independence for the island. But this does not mean that they were in agreement with the Nationalists. Quite the contrary: we have seen how the Communists expelled one of their leading members, Juan Antonio Corretger, solely because he shared and cultivated the ideas of Albizu Campos.

However, following the first imprisonment of the Nationalist leader, there was a change in the Communist Party line, both in the United States and in Puerto Rico.

In the United States, the party displayed unusual energy in working for the release of Albizu Campos. As a result, many cited these activities as proof of a supposed connection and/or understanding between the two organizations. Actually, there was nothing more than cooperation among various political associations or groups connected with political organizations which had united to obtain the Nationalist leader's freedom. This joint movement was given considerable prominence in the Communist newspaper, *The Daily Worker*, which



announced, in its March 26, 1937, edition, that "a joint movement for defense launched by the International Workers' Defense and the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico has been organized in New York to obtain the release of Albizu Campos and the other convicted Nationalists."

Later, in its edition of April 6, 1937, the same newspaper announced, with reference to the committee for the defense of Albizu, that:

"The new committee includes representatives of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, the American League Against War and Fascism, the International Worker's Order, the International Workers' Defense, the Communist Party, the Young Communist League and Organizations of East Harlem."

It is significant that all the organizations mentioned have been identified by the Department of Justice as communist in tendency, with the exception of the Nationalist Party, which has been declared subversive by the Attorney General of the United States — but without the addition of "communist."

It is therefore clear that neither Albizu Campos nor the Nationalists were concerned with anything else in those days but the independence of their country. But the island bourgeoisie was experimenting — to use the phrase of Luis Muñoz Marín — with "independence at the end of a long chain," and, to benefit from this, it needed, on the one hand, to free itself of Amer-

ican domination, and, on the other, to overcome and crush the Nationalists who, with their constant insurgency, obstructed the normal development of the bourgeois economy. Part of this campaign was the accusation that Albizu Campos was in league with the Communists, the purpose of which was to reduce his influence among the people.



*The Nationalist leader appears before a Federal grand jury, accused of conspiracy to overthrow the United States Government by force. In the trial that followed, he was sentenced to ten years in prison. (UPI)*



*The assassination of island Chief of Police Col. Francis E. Riggs marked the beginning of an era of intensified Nationalist violence in Puerto Rico. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*



On Palm Sunday, March 21, 1937, the island police fired upon a Nationalist parade in the city of Ponce, killing 21 demonstrators and wounding 150. This tragic event is known in Puerto Rico as the *Massacre of Ponce*.

## CHAPTER V

*The Massacre of Ponce and  
Its Tragic Consequences***Fateful Palm Sunday**

While the prisoners were being held in La Princesa Prison, the Nationalists organized a series of protest demonstrations on their behalf. These parades were forbidden, but, in Ponce, Mayor Tormos granted authorization for a peaceful demonstration.

Governor Winship ordered the police there to adopt extreme security measures and, an hour before the parade was scheduled to begin, ordered the Mayor to cancel the permit.

The Nationalist leaders, the Police Chief and the Mayor held a hasty meeting, in which no agreement was reached. The Nationalists insisted on parading, and pointed out that their *Cadetes de la República* (Cadets of the Republic) and the *Cuerpo de Enfermeras de la República* (Nurses' Corp of the Republic) had arrived from the countryside and were already gathered for the event. The Mayor sympathized with them, but was overruled by the Chief of Police, who had recourse to force.

The parade began peacefully enough, to the strains of *La Borinqueña*. It was Palm Sunday and the sun shone brightly on people returning from mass with palm fronds in their hands who had stopped to watch. But the festive atmosphere was belied by the presence of a cordon of 150 armed policemen who surrounded the square.

As the marching youths approached, Captain Soldevila appeared at the entrance to the square and ordered the procession to halt. The marchers looked to their leaders for instructions. A shot was fired. Spectators and marchers broke ranks. There were more shots, panic, shouts and imprecations. Bursts of machinegun fire swept the square. The firing lasted 15 minutes and when it was over there were 21 dead and more than 150 wounded. About 150 of the demonstrators were arrested.

Speeches were forbidden at the funerals of the victims in Ponce, but were made elsewhere in that city and in Mayagüez. One of the speakers was a Protestant minister, the Rev. Juan Hernández del Valle. More than 15,000 people attended the funerals in Ponce and more than 5,000 in Mayagüez.

The arrested Nationalists were tried, but it was not possible to determine in the investigations where the first shot had come from. *El Imparcial* published violent editorials accusing Winship of responsibility for the massacre. *La Democracia*, organ of the Liberal Party, asked

for the removal of Winship and the dismissal of Orbeta. A protest meeting was organized by members of all the political parties, but the Mayor of San Juan denied a permit for the event.

In Washington, the New York Representative for the Labor Party, the Hon. Vito Marcantonio, raised his voice in Congress to protest against the chaotic situation prevailing in Puerto Rico. Notwithstanding, General Winship was retained as Governor of the island, an attitude which contrasted with that of the much-criticized Spanish regime, which, during the period of colonial domination of Puerto Rico, had removed several governors as soon as it learned of abuses committed by them in the colony.

### A Historic Document

An account of the Massacre of Ponce which has become a document of historical value is the text of the speech delivered in the House of Representatives in Washington, on April 14, 1937, by Congressman John T. Bernard. It is inserted below as a detailed description of that tragic episode:

The Palm Sunday Massacre in Ponce, P.R.

Cold-Blooded Murder by the Authorities

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. JOHN T. BERNARD, OF MINNESOTA

In the House of Representatives

*Wednesday April 14, 1937.*

Mr. Bernard. Mr. Speaker, friends, I have here an editorial from the New York Post, published March 27, 1937, which I take the liberty to read, hoping that it will make you realize the necessity for this body to conduct a just, impartial, and fearless investigation of the cold-blooded murder by the authorities in Puerto Rico of many peaceful and unarmed citizens of that American possession.

### HAVE WE FORGOTTEN 1776?

On March 21 police turned their machine guns on a Nationalist parade in Ponce, P.R. Seven persons were killed and 40 wounded.

We hope that Congress will initiate an independent investigation into the growing unrest in Puerto Rico. Suppression of the Nationalist movement seems to be growing more bloody and is calculated to undo the good effects of the good-neighbor policy in Latin America and the removal of the last blemish on that policy.—Ambassador Caffery at Havana.

Gov. Blanton Winship has promised an investigation. It is improper for the Governor to be in the position of investigating his own administration. An inquiry of that kind, in which the defendant is also the judge and the jury, cannot command confidence.

Four Nationalists were killed by the police at Río Piedras in October 1935. Two Nationalists, in retaliation, shot and killed Colonel Riggs, head of the insular police. The two were seized and

killed by the police a few hours later. Is there to be law enforcement or perpetual vendetta in Puerto Rico?

What of the severe sentences imposed on eight Nationalist leaders on charges of conspiracy to win independence for Puerto Rico. Have we forgotten our own traditions? The Nationalists are only a minority. Our tactics are winning sympathy for them. If Puerto Rico wants freedom, our answer should be to grant it. Reply by machine gun is unworthy of a people that cherishes memories of its own "seditious" nationalists in 1776.

Mr. Speaker, on Palm Sunday, March 21, in Ponce, the second largest city in Puerto Rico, the police forces fired with machine guns, rifles, and pistols into a crowd of marching Nationalists. Seventeen were killed, more than 200 wounded.

The Nationalists are the most militant fighters for independence in Puerto Rico. Following a period of intense propaganda, the leader of the Nationalist Party, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos, a Harvard graduate, was arrested, together with seven of his followers, and indicted by officers of the Federal court in Puerto Rico on sedition charges. On July 31, 1936, the eight Nationalists were convicted and sentenced to serve from 6 to 10 years in the Federal Penitentiary of Atlanta, Ga., thousands of miles away from their homeland. An appeal was entered immediately but the judge refused to grant bail pending appeal.

The public sentiment was aroused with the conviction of these men, since Dr. Albizu Campos is one of the most beloved leaders of the Puerto Ricans. A fight ensued to free the political prisoners. A defense committee was organized in Puerto Rico. A national congress was also called and held with delegations of all the municipalities. It was decided to launch a united defense movement. Hundreds of public meetings were held throughout the island. Puerto Rico was stirred up.

Simultaneously, a campaign for the liberation of the Puerto Rican political prisoners was carried on in the Spanish section of New York City. On August 29 a monster parade was held in New York with 10,000 persons marching, as reported by The New York Times.

The government of Puerto Rico headed by Gen. Blanton Winship decided to block the campaign for the raising of funds for defense and for the independence of the island. So the Mayor of San Juan denied a permit for a parade that was to be held August 30 by the national congress and the defense committee. The parade was postponed.

A new request was made to the Mayor of San Juan; he reconsidered his position and granted a permit to hold the parade on September 6. On September 3 General Winship asked Commissioner of Labor Rivera Martínez to remove congress president Geigel Polanco as legal adviser to his department. The commis-

sioner refused on the grounds that Geigel was one of his most efficient employees. Geigel, being a member of the Liberal Party, was hired by a coalitionist administration. He was head of the Bureau of Social Research and responsible for the most advanced social legislation in the island for the last 8 years. Geigel resigned his office to relieve Rivera Martínez of the government's pressure. On the night of Friday, September 4, Colonel Orbeta broadcasted an order calling off the parade. He said at that time that he was acting at the request of General Winship.

The president of the defense committee, Rafael Torres Córdova, and Geigel had a conference with the chief of police. He told them that in the event that they had held such a parade he would have shot both of them down. They filed on September 4 an injunction against Winship and Orbeta in the San Juan district court but it adjourned the hearing.

Police, soldiers, and marines were fully equipped with tear gas and blackjacks and concentrated ready for action. It was evident at that time that the Governor was antagonizing the supporters of independence to justify a collective massacre in the event the parade was held, and it was called off, although more than \$1,000 had been spent for its preparation. It had been previously announced that in the parade were going to march members of the different political parties, prominent among them being several university professors, and

Luis Muñoz Marín, a leader of the Liberal Party.

The action of the Government was received with a storm of opposition, both editorial and otherwise, *El Imparcial* and *La Correspondencia* having condemned the action of Winship. But the parade was not held.

Subsequently, rules were approved by the board of trustees of the University of Puerto Rico, at the request of General Winship, forbidding the teachers to express publicly their political or religious creeds, and an oath of allegiance to the Federal Constitution was forced upon all college professors and schoolteachers.

Independence supporters were discharged from the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration—P. R. R. A.—and from other public offices. A reign of official terror against Puerto Ricans began.

Juan Juarbe, secretary of Albizu, asked for a passport to go to Argentina in December 1936. Winship turned down his application, claiming that he was going to campaign for independence. He had to leave without any passport.

The Nationalists dedicated all their efforts to fight for the freedom of Dr. Albizu Campos and the others. But on January 31, 1937, the Nationalist Party held its annual convention at Caguas. It was reported as the largest convention of the party. Thousands paraded through the city. Nothing happened. It was a peaceful parade. Yet the demonstration showed that the party was stronger than ever.



On February 12, 1937, the Boston Circuit Court of Appeals sustained the convictions. An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of the United States and is now pending. Funds are still needed to cover the expenses. Having the above facts as background, let us see what happened at Ponce on Palm Sunday.

The Nationalists were going to hold a meeting and a parade in Ponce on March 21. During the meeting they were to make a collection. The mayor, Tormes, issued a permit. One hour before the time set for the parade and when the demonstrators were ready to march, the mayor canceled the permit on frivolous grounds. As Winship pointed out in a statement issued after the massacre, the parade was called off by the mayor at the request of Winship and Orbeta. General Winship went out of San Juan. Colonel Orbeta went to Ponce and concentrated there a heavy police force, among which he included all the machine gunners. For many days the government had been planning their action in Ponce.

Chief of Police Guillermo Soldevilla, with 14 policemen, placed himself in front of the paraders; Chief Pérez Segarra and Sgt. Rafael Molina, commanding 9 men, armed with Thompson machine guns and tear-gas bombs, stood in the back; Chief of Police Antonio Bernardi, heading 11 policemen, armed with machine guns, stood in the east; and Chief of Police Esteban Rodríguez, commanding 12 men, armed with rifles, placed himself in the west.

The demonstrators, at the order of their leader, and while La Borinqueña national song was being played, began to march. Immediately they were fired upon for 15 minutes by the police from the four flanks. The victims fell without an opportunity to defend themselves. Even after the street was covered with dead bodies, policemen continued firing.

More than 200 were wounded; several were killed. Men, women, and children, Nationalists and non-Nationalists, demonstrators and people passing by, as well as the people who ran away, were shot. They were chased by the police and shot or clubbed at the entrance of the houses. Others were taken from their hiding places and killed. Leopoldo Tormes, a member of the Legislature, told the reporters how a Nationalist was murdered in cold blood by a policeman after the shooting, in his own arms.

A 7-year-old girl, Georgina Velez, while running to a nearby church, was shot through the back. Two women, Georgina Maldonado and María Hernández, were also killed, and a girl of 14. Carmen Fernández, 33, was severely wounded. After she fell down a policeman struck her with his rifle, saying, "Take this: be a Nationalist." María Hernández was a member of the Republican Party, and while running away was clubbed twice on her head by a policeman. Several of the wounded have their arms and legs fractured, many of them non-Nationalists and having nothing to do with the parade.

Dr. José A. Gándara, one of the physicians attending the wounded, testified that wounded people running away were shot and that many were again wounded through the back. Don Luis Sánchez Frasier, former president of the Rotary Club in Ponce, said that he had witnessed the most horrible slaughter perpetrated by police on defenseless youths. No arms were found in the hands of the civilian wounded nor in those of the dead.

About 150 of the demonstrators were arrested immediately after, several of them being women. Defense attorneys Ramos Antonini and Gutierrez Franqui asked that the prisoners be moved from the police headquarters to the jail, because the policemen, armed with rifles, were provoking them. All the Nationalist leaders were also arrested. They came out on bail.

The usual speeches at the funeral were called off, but, nevertheless, they were delivered both at Ponce and at Mayagüez. Among the speakers was Rev. Hernández Valle, a Protestant preacher. More than 15,000, as reported by *El Mundo*, attended the funerals at Ponce and more than 5,000 at Mayagüez.

After the arrests and because of stormy public protests, the Governor ordered an investigation, but issued a statement congratulating the police forces and blaming the Nationalists.

On March 24 José A. Buitrago and Antonio J. Colorado, known Puerto Rican intellectuals, and Jaime Benítez, a professor of sociology in

the University of Puerto Rico, sent a letter to the Governor which was published in the daily press condemning the Government investigation as partial and as one which commanded no confidence.

*El Imparcial* published two fiery editorials denouncing the police as murderers and pointing at Winship as responsible. One of them ended with the words written with his own blood on the sidewalk by a dying Nationalist, "Viva la República (Long live the Republic) "Abajo los asesinos" (Down with the murderers) *La Democracia*, political organ of the Liberal Party, has written several successive editorials condemning the massacre, and asking for the ousting of Winship from the island and the recall of Orbeta. A protest meeting was organized to take place on March 24 by members of all the political parties, but the Mayor of San Juan denied the permit. Among the persons requesting the permit were Fonfrias, president of the Liberal Youth, a Liberal Party auxiliary, and Walter Rivera, a Socialist lawyer, member of the Civil Service Commission, and son of the Commissioner of Labor. Father Orjales, a Catholic priest, said from the pulpit on Good Friday:

Public justice crucified centuries ago the Son of Nazareth, and in Puerto Rico public justice crucifies in the streets defenseless children, men, and women.

A member of the House of Representatives said:

"What happened in Ponce is worse than what happened in Ethiopia."

Martínez Aviles, former candidate for the Senate, assailed General Winship. Muñoz Marín on arriving in Puerto Rico from Washington at Easter, said:

"I notice that the public indignation over the wanton killings is profound and universal. As to the basic causes of these happenings, I must say that as long as the Government in Washington insists upon delegating power to an American bureaucrat, who himself has said that we have the right to be free if we want to be free, to fight the pacific and orderly defense of the ideal of independence, the said bureaucrat would be jeopardizing the good faith of the Government he represents, and increasing the probability of the occurrence of future tragedies like the one of Ponce. Men who venerate the memory of George Washington will understand this historic truth without any argument."

When Muñoz Marín speaks of a bureaucrat he is referring to Dr. Ernest Gruening, a former liberal. But he said to the newsmen that it could be applied to General Winship as well.

All the permits for parades and meetings have been denied to all persons connected in any way whatsoever with the Nationalists. The Governor mobilized the regular army, the police forces, and the National Guard was subject to a call on Friday, March 27 at midnight, in an effort to terrorize the people. The total military forces

stationed were reported to be 1,200 National Guardsmen, 600 regular soldiers and 1,000 policemen.

Civil liberties have been crushed in the island, and General Winship promises new machine gun fire to disperse future parades.

The reports of the United States newspapers up to now are based on information received from one of the following sources:

- (1) United Press.
- (2) Associated Press.
- (3) The Governor of Puerto Rico.
- (4) The official bureau in Washington in charge of the affairs of Puerto Rico.

Both the United Press and the Associated Press have in Puerto Rico two biased agents, enemies of the independence movement. *La Democracia*, in its edition of March 30, indicates that Harwood Hull, who represents United Press, has a patronage job in the P. R. R. A. and that his son is working for General Winship. The Governor of Puerto Rico is one of the persons held responsible for the massacre. The official bureau in Washington in charge of the affairs of Puerto Rico is controlled by Dr. Gruening, who is actually also an enemy of the liberation movement.

Aware of the true facts, it is the duty of all the conscientious and liberal-minded persons of the United States to protest against the Govern-

ment's action in Puerto Rico, and of Congress to conduct an immediate and impartial investigation.

I thank you.

Appendix to the Congressional Record, Pages  
934-935-936.

### Attempted Assassination of Winship

It was in an atmosphere of public insecurity that the authorities banned, on the 25th of July, 1938 —fortieth anniversary of the occupation of Puerto Rico by American forces— the Nationalist protest held every year on that date at Guanica, historic site of the landing.

Instead, Governor Winship organized, in the mourning city of Ponce, an imposing military ceremony to mark the occasion, with an array of armed might never before seen in Puerto Rico. Cruisers with landing forces participated and Air Force planes maneuvered over the city.

As the American infantry paraded past the rotunda in the middle of Degetau Square, which served as a reviewing stand and was crowded with American and native officers, a Nationalist student, Angel Esteban Antongiorgi, suddenly appeared in front of the platform and fired on Winship and those who surrounded him, killing Col. Luis Iriarry of the National Guard of Puerto Rico. Among the wounded was a detective who leaped in front of the Governor when the shooting began.

The student was shot down. A group of Nationalists was arrested and among them was Tomás López de Victoria, who, according to official versions, gave the Nationalists the "forward march" order during the tragic Massacre of Ponce, which, according to the same source, provoked the incident.

The attempt on Winship's life was followed by a reign of terror which fanned the revolutionary flame.

The offices and homes of the Nationalists on the south coast were raided and the Nationalist leaders arrested. After an investigation, the survivors of the Massacre of Ponce were held responsible. Six young **Nationalists** were accused of a plot to kill the Governor and condemned to life imprisonment.

(After the accused had served eight years of their term, they were released by order of Governor Tugwell, who stated that it was not a principle of American justice to punish men for their political convictions.)

Laura Albizu Campos, who felt that she was being persecuted in Puerto Rico, went to New York to work for the release of her husband and the other prisoners. From there she went to Cuba, where she remained until 1941, when she left for Peru with her children.

In 1939, the Nationalist leaders were offered their freedom on terms they could not accept. The acting leader of the party, while Albizu

Campos was in jail, Ramón Medina Ramírez, was interviewed by Lic. Pedro Capó Rodríguez, who worked for the American Government in Washington, D. C. The latter had undertaken a confidential mission. He had already visited Dr. Albizu Campos in the prison in Atlanta and the Nationalist leader, after listening to his proposition, had referred him to Mr. Medina. That proposition consisted of urging the Nationalist Party to participate in the 1944 elections, on the assurance that they would obtain control of the government of Puerto Rico with the support of the Washington authorities. All the political prisoners were to be set free and Albizu Campos was to head the election campaign. They could continue to proclaim the independence of Puerto Rico, but would have to eliminate violent action and radicalism in their teachings.

Medina Ramírez rejected the proposal, knowing that Albizu Campos would suffer the most horrible tortures and die in prison rather than see his ideals watered down. For the Nationalist leader, "not even immediate death could influence his honor."

Subsequently, Lic. Ramón Medina Ramírez learned from Don Pedro himself, whom he later met in exile in New York, that the latter had spoken on that occasion with all the jailed Puerto Rican patriots, offering them their liberty under the aforementioned conditions, and without exception they had answered that they preferred to continue to serve their terms rather than give

in. In this they echoed the words of Albizu Campos himself: "Sacrifice, imprisonment or death, this is the badge of honor of men who love liberty."

### Revolt Against Military Service

As part of its refusal to recognize the authority of the United States over Puerto Rico, the Nationalist Party was the first political organization formally to oppose compulsory military service.

In 1942, this opposition led to a big round up of Nationalists who had signed a resolution refusing to serve in the Armed Forces of the United States. Those arrested included Julio Santiago and Buenaventura Rodríguez, the owner of the shop where *El Nacionalista de Puerto Rico*, the official party organ, was printed.

Julio Pinto Gandía, who was found guilty of involvement in the attempted assassination of Federal Judge Cooper, defied the Selective Service authorities after his release from the Federal Penitentiary of Petersburg, Virginia, in 1943. Pinto Gandía was called up while still serving his sentence, and he immediately declared that he would not obey the Selective Service Law, claiming that the United States governed Puerto Rico "under an illegal military intervention." He was arrested by FBI agents in June 1945.

This fierce struggle begun by Albizu Campos in the forties has since been a rallying point for all the independentist and student organizations. As a result, acts of rebellion have occurred in the

University of Puerto Rico which have assumed the proportions of a veritable uprising. The aim of the students continues to be the complete elimination of the ROTC, the military training program installed on campus.

Moreover, an important group of citizens has set up the *Comité Alvelo Pro-Defensa de la Juventud Puertorriqueña* (Alvelo Committee for the Defense of Puerto Rican Youth), presided over by Dr. Piri Fernández de Lewis. That organization can count on the support of the vast majority of the professors and students throughout the island.

### **Independence at the End of a Chain**

The grave disorders in Puerto Rico had serious repercussions in Washington.

Following the sentencing of the Nationalist leaders in April 1936, and on the 26th of that same month, Senator Millard Tydings introduced into the U.S. Congress, with the backing of the Government, a bill proposing that the people of Puerto Rico should vote in a plebiscite on whether or not it wished to be independent. It was to be held on the first Monday of the following November, and if the majority voted in favor of independence, the Puerto Rican Legislature was to call a Constituent Assembly to set up a Republican Constitution.

But the clauses of the Tydings Act aroused strong opposition in very important sectors of island opinion, because its economic conditions

were very unfavorable. The interests of the United States were to be guaranteed until they had completely withdrawn from the island; the Puerto Ricans were to lose automatically their American citizenship and their immigration to the United States would be restricted in the usual manner; Puerto Rico's trade with the United States would be like that of any other foreign nation and customs tariffs for products imported from Puerto Rico would be gradually increased. The United States was to eliminate all economic assistance and the island was to cover its own administrative expenses and provide for its own military defense, etc., etc.

The Socialist leader Santiago Iglesias called the Act a hurricane for Puerto Rico, and Luis Muñoz Marín demanded a bill that would offer the electorate more alternatives. Albizu Campós remarked that "to consult a nation on whether or not it wishes to be free is an insult," and added that the Nationalist Party would continue its struggle.

The Tydings Act, however, received the support, although conditional, of the Puerto Rican Legislature, which appointed a Constitutional Commission, and that of a great many mayors. Of 77 island municipalities which held open sessions of the City Council to debate the question, nearly half accepted the proposed plebiscite and 40 followed the policy of the Nationalist Party, which demanded a Constituent **Assembly** for the establishment of the Republic of Puerto Rico.

### Albizu Campos in New York

Meanwhile, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos languished in the Atlanta Penitentiary as Convict No. 51289, and his health gradually deteriorated.

The crisis came in 1943, when he suffered a heart attack and had to be transferred to Columbus Hospital in New York. The specialist there diagnosed a fatal case of angina pectoris and he was not expected to survive for more than 24 hours. Nevertheless, the patient reacted favorably and remained in the hospital for two years until he had recovered.

While there, he was kept under constant vigilance. It was discovered that a microphone had been installed at the head of his bed, and, on one occasion, an attempt was made to remove him from the hospital under arrest, but, through the efforts of his friends, many of them Americans, it reached President Franklin D. Roosevelt's ears and was prevented.

When he left the hospital, almost paralyzed, he was confined in New York City until the end of his term. He was now a man without a country, for the sentence of the court had stripped him of his American citizenship, which, as a Puerto Rican, was his by right.

In New York he was interviewed by visiting notables, both from the United States and other parts of the world, who, on passing through the great metropolis, wished to make the acquaintance of "the last of the liberators of America."

A select minority of American intellectuals organized the *Liga Americana Pro-Independencia de Puerto Rico* (American League for Puerto Rican Independence) which boasted such outstanding members as Pearl Buck, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, and Ruth M. Reynolds, who appeared before the American Congress and the United Nations in a formal defense of Puerto Rican rights.

Many Nationalists in New York, where they had taken refuge during periods of persecution in the island, seeking safety in the anonymity of the great city, managed to make contact with Albizu Campos, and they reorganized in New York, to continue the struggle. They became, at one time, the most powerful force among the Puerto Rican voters in the city.



## CHAPTER VI

### *Albizu Returns and the Struggle is Resumed*

#### **The Siege of Albizu's House**

After serving his full term, Albizu Campos returned to Puerto Rico in December 1947. Cuba and Mexico had sent him invitations to live in those countries, but he declined in order to continue the struggle.

The islanders received him with an imposing public demonstration. His wife Laura joined him in April 1948 and the family lived for a time in the Hotel Normandie, but later took a house on the corner of Sol and Cruz Streets, in Viejo (Old) San Juan.

Albizu Campos lived with his family practically under a state of siege. A police car was stationed in front of his house day and night and photographs were taken of every person who entered his home. When the Nationalist leader went out in the street, news of this fact was transmitted to the Central Radio Station of the Police Force, whence it was immediately re-

broadcast to other stations in parts of the country Albizu Campos used to visit. If he went for a walk, he was followed by a police agent, as were the members of his family, and persons who visited them were interrogated by the Police. He had to sell his car because it was constantly stopped on the streets and highways, and his correspondence, like that of all prominent Nationalists, was intercepted.

The power of the Nationalist Party, however, had waned during its leader's years of imprisonment, and since the *Partido Independentista* (Independentist Party) was incorporated in 1948. On that date, Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, the president of the *Congreso Independentista de Puerto Rico* (Independentist Congress of Puerto Rico) in New York, went to Puerto Rico, where he was elected to preside over the growing party in the island.

But Albizu Campos' supporters, though now few in number, continued to maintain their uncompromising attitude, encouraged by his teachings, and their intransigence led to acts of violence.

#### **Muñoz Marín and the New Formula**

Two bills relating to the independence of Puerto Rico were still pending in the United States Congress: that of Tydings and another introduced by Vito Marcantonio in 1945, which did not contain the heavy economic penalties embodied in the former. But the House of

Representatives paid more attention to that of Tydings, because its author belonged to the Senate majority and had drafted the final bill that granted independence to the Philippine Islands.

President Harry S. Truman had sent a message to Congress which, briefly, said: "The time has come to consult the people of Puerto Rico on their wishes regarding the final status they prefer for the island . . . and to grant them the kind of government they want . . . The Congress should not consider proposals which it is not finally prepared to convert into law . . ."

But public opinion in Puerto Rico, divided between Independentists and Statists, failed to reach an agreement. Then Muñoz Marín, who, in 1944, had defined the formula of his Popular Party—the "Commonwealth of Puerto Rico"—as a third solution, demanded that the electorate be given the right to choose among several alternatives. He gave priority in his program to the solution of the island's economic problems, demanding democratic Puerto Rican authority for the island's internal administration, while leaving the question of independence in abeyance for the moment.

On May 2, 1947, the Congress of the United States granted Puerto Rico the right to elect its own Governor as of the elections of 1948. In that electoral campaign, Muñoz Marín clearly expounded his new political beliefs. The ideal of independence, he said, commanded respect, but,

after describing the deplorable economic consequences of liberation, he asked: "Would you give that destruction the name of Independence? The idea of Statehood commands respect, but would you give the name of State of the great American Union to the destruction it would bring in its wake?" His own proposal consisted of having the people vote to authorize Congress to approve a law completing the system of internal self-government in Puerto Rico, but without converting the island into one more State of the Union.

His arguments urging that the question of independence be set aside for the time being convinced the more fanatical of the Nationalists that their cause was doomed unless this man was destroyed. Muñoz and his wife Inés, realizing the danger, entrusted their children to certain friends in the event that the leader of the Popular Party was the victim of violence.

In 1940, the Popular Democratic Party headed by Muñoz Marín won the elections, and in those of 1948, Muñoz Marín became the island's first elected Governor.

### The Violence in Albizu Campos

The triumph of Luis Muñoz Marín, with his new Commonwealth formula, fell on the Nationalists like a landslide, blocking the way to the complete independence which had seemed almost within their grasp.

Albizu Campos then decided to step up his public appearances, delivering ever more inflammatory speeches. In the town of Lares, on September 23, 1949, in a ceremony commemorating the rebellion of 1868, he spoke for nearly an hour. In that speech, the Nationalist leader reaffirmed his position, as follows:

"The struggle which began 81 years ago against the mother country, Spain, for the independence of Puerto Rico, continues. The Nationalist Party is going to dynamite the United States and expel the Americans from Puerto Rico. The Yankees have killed many Puerto Ricans. They want to destroy us by means of vicious maneuvers and, in all justice, we have the right to destroy them. Since that is our right, the moment has come to exercise it. Here in Puerto Rico, the only thing that is subversive is the Government of the United States and all its agents.

"There have been greater empires than the United States, even more powerful, and today they are dust. The day always comes when justice arms the weak and puts the giants to flight. Then another *Te Deum* shall be sung. It is we who shall sing that *Te Deum*, but it will be preceded by an armed struggle, with whatever is necessary to achieve the independence of Puerto Rico."

A few months later, on February 23, 1950, at a big rally of Nationalists and Independentists in the town of Utuado, Albizu addressed the fol-

lowing words to the crowd that had gathered there:

"... The Yankees have no right to govern the people of Puerto Rico... Only courage and dignity are required; we do not need either money or arms. There are weapons at Police Headquarters. All those weapons belong to you, for they have been purchased with the cents collected by the insular government, and so have the weapons of the National Guard — all those arms are ours. And a people filled with courage and dignity cannot be suppressed by imperialism. Whoever is not prepared to risk his life, let him hide. There is nothing for those who seek salvation, neither in arms nor in money. If you want liberty, you must fight for it."



*Albizu Campos delivers a scathing attack on the Federal authorities at a Nationalist rally in Puerto Rico.*



*Albizu in his tiny, unventilated cell in the prison in San Juan. A wan smile fails to hide the marks of illness and suffering in his face. (UPI)*

# EL DIARIO DE NUEVA YORK

New York's Spanish Daily  
For a Liberal, Social, & Democratic Press

Pasan de cincuenta los nacionalistas y comunistas detenidos por la Policía de P.R. Rico.  
Truman reafirma el derecho del pueblo puertorriqueño a determinar su propio futuro político.  
Se apunta la posibilidad de que un funcionario del Gobierno Insular esté complicado en los sucesos.

# EL DIARIO DE NUEVA YORK

New York's Spanish Daily  
For a Liberal, Social, & Democratic Press

Guardia Nacional reconquista a Jayuya tras ametrallar con sus aviones las posiciones rebeldes.  
Resistencia armada de los nacionalistas en varios puntos de Puerto Rico provoca nuevas medidas.  
El Gobernador Luis Muñoz Marín declara que el movimiento será sofocado "en uno o dos días".

# LA PRENSA

Los insurrectos son desalojados de Jayuya y Utuado;  
gran parte de Jayuya fue destruida por las llamas.



El C. Político de la ONU vota por levantar el boicót a España.



## CHAPTER VII

### *The Nationalist Rebellion of 1950*

#### **Republic of Puerto Rico Proclaimed**

At the beginning of the year 1950, while Laura Albizu was in Cuba visiting her son who was studying at the University of Havana, the existence of a plot was denounced, the purpose of which was to destroy the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico by assassinating or jailing its leaders. The Nationalists, forewarned, revamped their organization.

On October 30 that year there were outbreaks of violence in several places on the island, which, since they were simultaneous, were assumed to be part of an organized movement.

That movement is known as the Nationalist Rebellion of 1950, and the first skirmishes occurred in various towns on the island. In Peñuelas, a Nationalist commando clashed with a detachment of police. A few hours later, another group went into action in the city of Arecibo, where an attempt was made to occupy the general police headquarters.

In Jayuya, the rebellion was on a larger scale, since that town had been chosen as the main objective. The Nationalists met at the home of Blanca Canales, an extraordinary woman of action. From there, led by Carlos Irizarry, they staged attacks on the police station and the post office. Both objectives were taken and the Republic of Puerto Rico was solemnly proclaimed amidst tremendous commotion.

Faced with the dangerous situation which was developing, the Government decided to call out the armed forces, including the Air Force. The Nationalists defended the town street by street, but, after several hours of fighting, Jayuya was once more firmly under Government control. Many arrests were made, but most of the rebel fighters took refuge in the mountains.

### **Suicidal Attack on La Fortaleza**

By midday on October 30, the Nationalist rebellion had spread to San Juan, the island's capital, where a few isolated but bloody battles were fought.

The first of these fierce clashes was a Nationalist assault on La Fortaleza, the official residence of the Governor, where a suicide commando composed of five men armed with Chech submachineguns and Molotov cocktails penetrated into the patio, or courtyard, of the building in an automobile. Three of the men ducked out of the car and began to fire their

submachineguns at the windows of the building and the members of the police guard, who fell back on the main hall, where they put up a tenacious resistance, pending the arrival of reinforcements. The Nationalists, in the open, offered a perfect target. The shooting lasted for an hour, at the end of which time the members of the commando were dead, as was one policeman. Many more were wounded.

In the car were found fifty gallons of gasoline and a hundred Molotov cocktails. It would seem that this suicide squad made a fatal error during the attack. If they had used their car to block access to the courtyard, the police would probably have been unable to bring up reinforcements in time to prevent their reaching the Governor. It is assumed that the purpose of this assault, besides an attack on the Governor, was to set fire to La Fortaleza, which, from time immemorial, has been the symbol of colonialism in Puerto Rico.

### **A Barber's Heroic Gesture**

That same afternoon, shortly after the attack on La Fortaleza, there occurred in Santurce's Barrio Obrero (Workers' District) what was perhaps the most colorful and dramatic episode of this Nationalist uprising.

The scene of this drama was a barber shop, "El Salón Boricua," located in Cotton Street, at the corner of Barbosa. The hero was Vidal Santiago Díaz, who was one day to become an al-

most legendary figure in Puerto Rico's liberation movement.

This valiant barber's exploit consisted of holding at bay, singlehanded and from the inside of his barber shop, a whole detachment of police and soldiers of the National Guard—in all, one hundred men, who had him completely surrounded and were firing at him from every angle with all manner of automatic weapons.

The heroic barber waged a tremendous battle, like a caged tiger, refusing to give in. Perhaps he thought this provocation was a heaven-sent opportunity to do something out of the ordinary which life had never before afforded him.

Outside in the street everything was shouting and confusion. To deal with this unexpectedly savage defense, more soldiers and policemen arrived. The orders given were to fire on the barber shop, and many of them did not know against whom. Inside the barber shop, it was like a prelude to death by violence, a fitting end for a courageous man indifferent to danger and careless of his life. And when the firing reached its maximum intensity, Vidal Santiago Díaz, seriously wounded, like a brave bull goaded to renewed savagery, and apparently unconscious of the overwhelming odds he faced, fired ceaselessly at his attackers from the windows and the very doorway of his shop, to the amazement of both his assailants and the many onlookers who watched the battle as breathlessly as if it were an action film.

Three hours later, Vidal Santiago, his face and body covered with blood from four separate bullet wounds, finally ran out of ammunition. Yet he was still on his feet, waiting for his assailants to enter and finish him off. But he still had to suffer the effects of the tear gas bombs the police hurled into the shop as an added precaution. Vidal could no longer keep his feet but fell to the floor. After a few moments, the soldiers entered and one of them cautiously approached the inert body of the valiant barber and fired point-blank, administering the *coup de grace*, which, by one of those miracles that defy explanation, failed to end the life of the Puerto Rican Nationalist.

The whole island followed the drama of Vidal Santiago's capture, which was broadcast direct over the radio, and when his body was borne to an ambulance, the announcer said: "The soldiers stare at one another in amazement. They had expected to see more Nationalists, but there is only one." One of the onlookers, who had drawn near, exclaimed, "But this is Don Pedro's righthand man!"

Vidal Santiago Díaz, who was the Nationalist leader's personal barber, was also, in fact, his most trusted follower. He used to comment on this with his friends and customers:

"I discovered the patriot within me," he would say, "in my talks with Don Pedro."

The presence of Albizu Campos, the cultured patriot who fought for the rights of the



poor and the liberty of his country, awakened the patriotic soul within this simple barber, who knew nothing of ideologies and philosophies. From that moment on he had professed a loyalty which he was to maintain in the future through all tests and trials, because, for him, as for all the patriots, "Albizu Campos has placed violence at the service of an idea which will make all Puerto Ricans brothers once the motherland is free."

Vidal Santiago Díaz lost almost all the fingers of his left hand and the bullet that creased his skull damaged certain tissues, with the result that he has never fully recovered. Notwithstanding the facts of the case, he was sentenced to eighteen years imprisonment. This sentence was later reduced and, because of his physical condition, he was pardoned after two years.

In jail, Vidal described the events of the fateful day as follows: "On October 30, I was surprised to hear over the radio about the first revolutionary outbreaks, which had begun ahead of schedule. I also heard that Albizu was besieged in his house and that his light and water had been cut off to force him to come out, so that he could be killed. This last report persuaded me to send a telegram to the Attorney General, offering my good offices, if what was sought was the arrest of Albizu."

The reply to his proposal was the dispatch of police and soldiers of the National Guard, which gave rise to the incident we have described.

## Tear Gas Used to Capture Albizu

During these events, which cost Puerto Rico 25 deaths and a large number of wounded, Albizu Campos was in his home in San Juan, which was, at the same time, the party's general headquarters.

The police forces which regularly watched the house were visibly increased on the night of October 30. Machine guns were installed on nearby roofs and the corner of the streets Sol and Cruz was cordoned off, the residents of other floors in the house being ordered to evacuate them.

The young Nationalists Doris Torresola and Carmen María Pérez were in the besieged house with Dr. Albizu, as was the university student José Muñoz Matos. The house was fired upon and Miss Torresola was wounded. Muñoz and Miss Pérez carried her out between them during a lull in the shooting and all three were taken to prison.

Albizu Campos was left alone. Shortly afterwards, to his surprise, the old militant Alvaro Rivera Walker arrived, and it is not known why the police let him through.

The firing continued intermittently until November 2, and finally, during the early morning hours of November 2, tear gas was used and the surrender of the Nationalist leader was demanded through a loud-speaker.

Rivera Walker, half-asphyxiated by the gas and fearful of its effect on Don Pedro Albizu, who had a heart condition, approached him to point out the uselessness of a resistance which

might well be fatal to him. But, on this point, Don Pedro was adamant. **HE WOULD NOT SURRENDER** while the rebellion still continued.

Then Rivera pointed out: "Don Pedro, our revolt has not won support; we have lost and many patriots have been shot down. There is no point in continuing the struggle now. . . ."

Albizu got up and looked him straight in the eye. "It is true," he said solemnly. "What has been lacking is public support. The nation failed us. But a people that loses the strength to throw off a tyranny ends by venerating it. A great man told me that some years ago and I shall never forget it. That's why we're here, just the few of us fighting, even though the people does not support us. . . ."

"But you are more important alive than dead, Don Pedro," Rivera replied, and, without waiting for any further discussion, he tied a white towel to a broomstick and pushed it out through a hole made in the door by a bullet. The Nationalists were invited to surrender and assured that their lives would be respected. They left the house and were promptly bundled into a car and taken to Police Headquarters.

That same morning, all the leaders of the Nationalist Party and four Communist leaders were also arrested. They were locked up beneath the police barracks in San Juan and in other places, where they were closely guarded by policemen and armed soldiers. More than 1,000 people, among them many women, were arrested.

On the fourth day, they began to release the labor leaders, then the Independentists, but not so the Nationalists, who, on the tenth day, were transferred to the district prison of San Juan and kept absolutely isolated.

The Independentist Party was the only one that publicly proclaimed its respect for "the patriots who offered their lives in the cause of Puerto Rican freedom" and its president, Dr. Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, publicly expressed his opposition to the repressive measures taken.

### **Suicide Commando in Washington**

On November 1, 1950, the day after the bloody events in Puerto Rico, two New York Nationalists, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola, took the battle to the United States. They went to Washington, D. C., and attacked the guard at the gates of Blair House, where President Truman was then in residence. They killed one of the sentinels and wounded the other.

Torresola died as a result of the shooting. Collazo was wounded in the chest.

It all began the previous day.

On the morning of October 31, 1950, Collazo got up at the usual time and asked his wife to call the factory where he worked and tell them he would not be in because he was sick. He also asked her to go to the bank and draw out \$100.

Later, he went out with the money to meet his friend Torresola. They took the Subway to-

gether and went to midtown Manhattan, where they purchased underclothing and two black hats. Then they bought tickets for Washington at Pennsylvania Station.

Collazo returned home at 11 a.m. and packed his bag, and his wife, assuming that he was going to Puerto Rico, begged him not to leave her. At 3 p.m., the two men took the train for Washington. It was past 7 p.m. when they arrived in the capital. They registered separately at the Tarris Hotel, under assumed names.

Torresola had two automatic pistols, which they had brought with them. They met in the bathroom between their hotel rooms and Collazo, who was unfamiliar with this type of weapon, practised loading them.

On the morning of November 1, they toured the city in a cab and learned from the taxi-driver that the President was then living at Blair House, because the White House was under repair. They returned to the hotel and, that same afternoon, took another taxi, which dropped them three blocks from Blair House, which they approached from different directions. Three uniformed policemen were on guard in front of the building.

When Collazo drew close to the entrance, he fired at one of the guards, wounding him in the leg. Meanwhile, Torresola had dropped one of the other guards, mortally wounded, and was firing at the third, when the dying man, in a last effort, fired a bullet which shattered Torresola's skull.

Collazo, who was wounded in the chest, was arrested and later condemned to death.

The Puerto Ricans of New York were appalled, whatever their political beliefs. The other Spanish-Americans of the city and many American intellectuals expressed their solidarity with the Puerto Rican community.

A Pro-Oscar Collazo Committee headed by the Puerto Rican journalist Luisa Quintero was organized. It took fervent and active steps and many doors were opened. Everybody cooperated: the organizations of Spanish-America sent messages to President Truman, and telegrams from everywhere swamped the President of the United States, against whom the attack was directed. But it was alleged that no decision could be made because the condemned man refused to sign a petition for clemency. Nevertheless, bowing to the unanimity of the public demand, the President commuted Oscar Collazo's death sentence to life imprisonment on June 24, 1952.

When the commutation of the death sentence was reported over the radio, a demonstration was organized in the Bronx, which paraded the streets of that borough and those of Manhattan until the small hours of the morning. It was understood that a man who fights for the independence of his people is not the same as a common criminal. For this was a political offense, committed for idealistic reasons and at the voluntary sacrifice of the lives of its perpetrators.

## Albizu Is Sentenced to 53 Years

In the district jail of San Juan, Don Pedro Albizu Campos occupies a tiny, unventilated cell. Since the prisoners had been forbidden to purchase any food, their diet consisted exclusively of the rice and beans served in the prison. He was a sick man who should have followed a special diet. Consequently, for a month, he existed on the coffee served him in the morning. His weakness became so pronounced that he could scarcely stay on his feet. The warden was alarmed because the prisoner did not eat nor sleep, and was delirious without running a temperature . . . He feared he was going mad. On the advice of the doctor of the prison infirmary, Drs. Suarez and Pavia were called in for consultation. They diagnosed Albizu's condition as serious and found him to be on the verge of madness due to the solitary confinement and the deficient diet.

Albizu Campos was then transferred to another part of the building where there was sufficient ventilation and three of the Nationalists sentenced with him were appointed to look after him. They prepared his food and persuaded him to take sleeping pills. A month and a half after this transfer, the patient had recuperated. Then his trial was held.

The Attorney General of the United States declared the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico a subversive organization. The political trials of Puerto Ricans by American courts and their im-

prisonment in U. S. jails were denounced by world opinion, so the prisoners who were in the United States were transferred to Puerto Rico and their cases were also tried in the island. Puerto Rican judges handed down the sentences of the Nationalists. Albizu Campos was sentenced to prison for 53 years, which is to say, until the end of his life, a sentence which was to be served in the State Prison of Puerto Rico.

## Reaction of World Opinion

On the island, the people were silent. But the *Partido Independentista*, the newspaper *El Imparcial*, and Dr. Francisco Susoni, in *El Mundo*, valiantly expressed their opinion in favor of the accused patriots. In Spanish-America and Europe there was a reaction in favor of Albizu Campos and the other condemned men.

The President of Cuba, Carlos Prío Socarrás, sent a message to Governor Muñoz Marín asking him to guarantee the life of the Nationalist leader and his comrades. A group of Cuban Congressmen went to San Juan to intercede for the Nationalists, but when they were arrested by the immigration authorities in Miami and subjected to an intensive interrogation, although two of them had been granted entry permits, they decided that their trip was futile and returned to Cuba. The Puerto Ricans of Venezuela expressed their support of the Nationalist movement in Puerto Rico, and the Federation of University Students of Cuba and the Cuban historian

Emilio Roig condemned the repressive measures imposed upon the Nationalists. In Buenos Aires, the World Congress of University Youth, whose executive board was composed of representatives of Argentina, Mexico, Syria, Italy and Colombia, demanded the liberty of the prisoners. Ecuador set up a committee to struggle for the freedom of the Puerto Ricans; and the Haitian poet, Moravia Morpeau, addressed a message to President Truman and to all governments demanding Puerto Rican freedom.

In Europe, the Nationalist movement awakened profound sympathy, especially in Spain, where newspapers like ABC, of Madrid, a Monarchist organ, proclaimed editorially Puerto Rico's right to become a free nation, like the other nations of Spanish origin. Moreover, the Spanish Government issued a public statement defending Puerto Rico's right to independence.

While the struggle was in progress in Puerto Rico, Miss Thelma Milke, the Nationalist Party observer at the United Nations, had requested in New York the intervention of the Security Council of the United Nations in the island. Her registration as an observer was cancelled and she was forbidden to enter the U.N. compound.



*The Nationalist leader is led off to jail after resisting a police attack on his home for two days. Tear gas bombs finally had to be used to force his surrender.—Below, Albizu is locked up in his cell at the police station. (Wide World Photos)*





*On October 30, 1950, a Nationalist uprising broke out in various parts of Puerto Rico.—Above, a wounded youth is taken to hospital. (UPI).—Below, members of the National Guard of Puerto Rico carry out a wounded man on a stretcher. (Wide World Photos)*



*The Nationalists took the city of Jayuya, where they proclaimed the Republic of Puerto Rico. The Government had to use the Army and the Air Force to dislodge them.—Above, two rebels are taken prisoner by the National Guard. (UPI).—Below, Elio Torresola, right, brother of Griselio Torresola, who was killed during the attempt on President Truman's life, was captured during the fighting. (Wide World Photo)*



*Clean-up operations in the city of Jayuya, principal objective of the Nationalist uprising. The Nationalists had to be dislodged from the local Police Headquarters and Post Office building. The rebels were led by Carlos Irizarry. (UPI)*





*A raid on La Fortaleza by a five-man commando was repelled by the police.—Above, two Nationalists lie dead in the courtyard beside their car. (UPI).—Below, the Nationalist feminine leader, Carmen Pérez, is taken into custody. (Wide World Photos)*

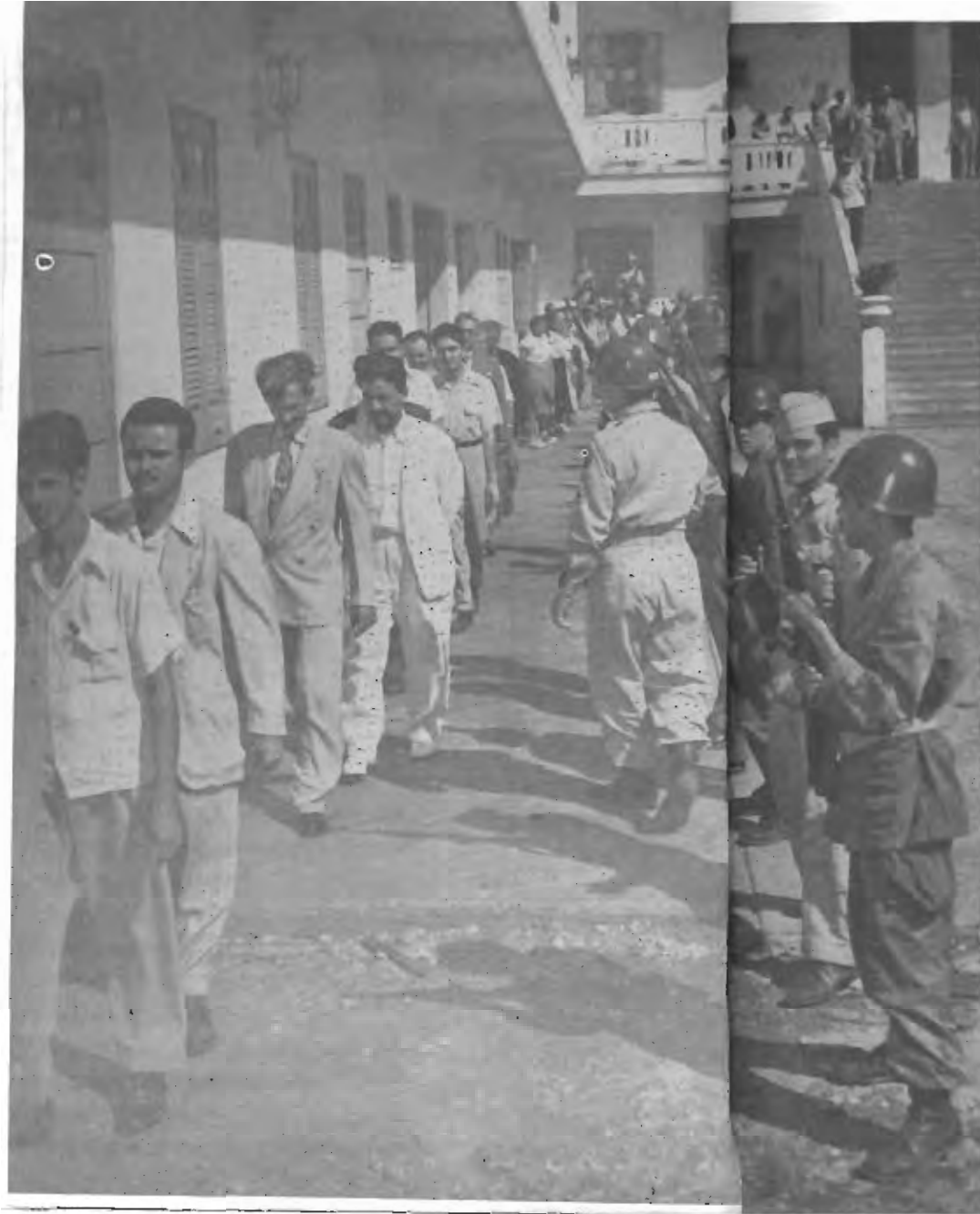


*Above, the well-known Nationalist leader Blanca Canales is arrested during the rebellion. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*

*Vidal Santiago Díaz, Albizu Campos' barber, whose epic battle with the police during the uprising has made him a hero of the liberation movement in Puerto Rico. The bullet hole in his forehead marks the coup de grace that failed. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*







*Following the abortive Nationalist revolt, the leaders of the independence parties were arrested en masse. More than a thousand people were imprisoned at Police Headquarters in San Juan and elsewhere. On the fourth day after the uprising, the authorities began to release the prisoners, beginning with the labor leaders, and afterwards the Independentists. Only the Nationalists and four Communist leaders were held. (Wide World Photos)*



*Puerto Rican women played a very active part in the Nationalist rebellion and many were rounded up by the police. In the photograph, a policewoman holds a pistol on Nationalist women prisoners at police headquarters in San Juan. (Wide World Photo)*



On November 1, 1950, two Puerto Rican Nationalists attacked the guards at Blair House, temporary residence of President Truman.—Above, the body of Griselio Torresola, who was killed in the shooting. (UPI).—Below, Oscar Collazo lies on the ground, badly wounded. (Wide World Photos)



One of the three Blair House guards was killed and another wounded.—Above, the wounded man, Donald T. Birdzell, is given first aid at the scene.—Below, Oscar Collazo leaves the courtroom in Washington, where he was condemned to death April 6, 1950. The sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. (Wide World Photos)



*Mrs. Griselio Torresola is taken to the Women's House of Detention in New York following her arraignment in Federal Court in connection with the shooting at Blair House, in Washington, D.C.*



## CHAPTER VIII

*The Commonwealth Formula Calms  
Patriotic Fervour***The Muñoz Marín Era**

On September 17, 1951, a year after the Nationalist uprising in Puerto Rico, the sessions of the Constituent Assembly began in the island Capitol. The text of the Constitution was approved February 6, 1952. The Puerto Rican community, organized under its own constitution, would henceforth enjoy the status of Associated Free State of Puerto Rico, rendered in English as Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

This constitution was ratified by the electorate and submitted to President Truman, who promptly approved it and recommended it to the Federal Congress. The debates in the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States were held in a friendly atmosphere, favorable to the Commonwealth.

The only dissenting voice, upholding the ideal of independence, was that of Representative Vito Marcantonio, who maintained that the proposed constitution was a fraud and demanded "honest" legislation which would end the colonial system in Puerto Rico. Some Representatives urged Statehood, but finally, in a joint meeting of both houses of Congress, the constitution was approved with certain amendments and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico proposed by Muñoz Marín and his Popular Democratic Party was officially established.

The ceremonies of inauguration of the Commonwealth were held with great pomp and pageantry in San Juan on the 25th of July, 1952. The celebrations were held in front of the insular Capitol, where the flag of Puerto Rico, created by the Puerto Rican Section of the Cuban Revolutionary Junta of New York in 1895, was officially unfurled for the first time. A World War I hero of the American Air Force, Eddie Rickenbacker, brought the red-and-white striped flag, with its blue triangle, bearing a five-pointed white star in the center, from New York by plane. To its right waved the flag of the United States. The strains of "The Star-Splangled Banner," national anthem of the United States, filled the air, and for the first time, an enraptured public heard "*La Borinqueña*" played as the official anthem of Puerto Rico, for it had just been recognized as such by the island Legislature.

## Albizu Campos Is Declared Insane

The imprisonment of the Nationalist leaders had smothered the patriotic frenzy and terrorism in the island.

When the representatives of the Nationalists at the United Nations charged that Dr. Albizu Campos was being subjected to torture in prison, the people did not wholly believe it, but there was widespread fear for the health of the rebel leader, loved by many and respected by all. After the Nationalist prisoners had been held incommunicado for a year, visits were authorized, but the prisoners, indignant about the searches to which their relatives were subjected, asked them to suspend their visits.

At all events, Albizu Campos had managed to smuggle messages out of the prison. In one of them, he said: "They have burned my face, my hands, my feet and there is no part of my body which is not marked by brands or fiery emanations. The attack is constant, day and night, every second of the twenty-four hour day. The assault is always concentrated to prevent me from sleeping or resting, seated or lying down."

An investigation by the United Nations and the OAS was never carried out, but the alarming messages of Albizu Campos and the rumor that he lived wrapped in wet towels prompted the Justice Department to publish a notice in the press declaring that Albizu Campos was suffering from senile dementia praecox.

## Nationalists Reject Pardon

The alarming rumors about the Nationalist leader's state of health in prison were confirmed on September 21, 1953, by a confidential report received by the newspaperman Teófilo Maldonado and published in his column in *El Imparcial*, and there were rumors abroad that his life was in danger.

As a result of all this, on the 28th of that month, Governor Muñoz Marín pardoned Albizu Campos. As soon as this was announced, a crowd of people began to gather outside the jail, awaiting his release, but the prisoner was not informed of the pardon until October 1. This pardon restored Dr. Albizu's civil rights on condition that he did not revert to his terrorist tendencies. Don Pedro expressed his thanks for the pardon, but rejected it on the grounds that it did not include his comrades who were sentenced for the same offense. The Secretary of Justice replied that the prisoner had no power either to reject or accept the pardon, and Albizu Campos was released one month before completing the third year of his term.

According to *El Imparcial*, Muñoz Marín had decided to pardon the Nationalist leader due to his advanced age and his poor state of health, and under pressure from the President of Costa Rica, José Figueres.

In his first press conference, one hour after his release from prison, Albizu Campos asked Muñoz Marín to review the cases of the

other prisoners calmly and then extend the pardon to them also. He pledged the independence of Puerto Rico with a fruit juice and later showed newsmen his left leg and foot, which were covered with reddish marks. He declared that it was his intention to undergo medical treatment so that, as soon as he had recovered his health, he could return to the struggle for his country's independence with redoubled vigour.

On the second day after his release from prison, Albizu had the Nationalist flag unfurled from the flagstaff over his house, while his followers, gathered in the street below, applauded enthusiastically. This flag is divided into four rectangles by a white cross. The upper rectangles are blue and the lower ones red, and there is a five-pointed white star on the blue field of the top left-hand rectangle.

### **Torture? A Doctor's Testimony**

A few days later, when a group of friends visited him at his home, one of them made a disparaging remark about Muñoz Marín. Albizu interrupted him.

"Nobody can be referred to in such terms in this house. Kindly refrain from this kind of talk." Throughout his life, his motto always was: "Whoever feeds on hatred becomes an animal."

Dr. Albizu asked the Governor to order the police to cease the surveillance of his house and not to continue persecuting the Puerto Rican Nationalists.

Still a sick man, he received visitors—very numerous, especially during his first week of liberty—at his bedside. He also granted daily interviews to the press and radio until his doctors intervened because his physical exhaustion was obvious.

Since Albizu Campos had entered prison in good health and emerged a physical wreck after only three years, the Nationalists sought testimony to the effect that he had been subjected to unusual scientific tortures. They brought Dr. Orlando Daubry, president of the Cuban Cancer Association, and an expert on radiation and lesions caused by it, from Havana.

The famous specialist stated that Don Pedro Albizu Campos had burns caused by radiation and that his symptoms were those of a person subjected to intense radiation. He also declared that "his mental condition is normal" and that wrapping himself in wet towels was the best way to diminish the intensity of the radiation. The patient had declared that his swellings were the result of radiation received in prison.

Albizu Campos' wife, who had been living in Mexico for the past five years, was unable to join her husband now that he was at liberty.

## CHAPTER IX

*Albizu Campos' Last Battle**Gunfire in the House of Representatives*

On the 1st. of March, 1954, just as the Inter-American Conference was opening in Caracas, four Puerto Ricans unfurled their national banner and, with a cry of "Long live free Puerto Rico," sprayed the House of Representatives of the United States with bullets. Five Congressmen fell wounded.

The gunmen were described as members of the same group that tried to assassinate President Truman in 1950. This time, also, the attack was planned in New York.

Disarmed and arrested, the attackers were identified as Lolita Lebrón, 34 years of age, Andrés Figueroa Cordero, 29, Rafael Cancel Miranda, 25, and Irving Flores, all residents of New York City.

The following note, written in English, was found in Lolita Lebron's handbag: "I give my life for the liberty of my country. I take full responsibility for everything."

Later, in her statement to the authorities, she insisted that the Nationalist Party knew nothing of the plot, and added: "The whole thing was my idea. It was the idea of the four of us. I am prepared to offer my life for the liberty of Puerto Rico."

She and her three companions were taken to New York to be tried, together with other members of the Nationalist Party, for seditious conspiracy. Lolita was confined to a mental hospital, St. Elizabeth's, in Washington, because, so it was claimed, she was of unsound mind.

*Albizu Faces Bullets and Tear Gas*

According to the Chief of Police of Puerto Rico, Salvador T. Roig, the attack on the U. S. House of Representatives was planned in New York and the Nationalists living in Puerto Rico took no part in it. Nevertheless, the police attacked Dr. Albizu Campos' house with gunfire and tear gas, and he was arrested and dragged off to prison, unconscious and half-asphyxiated. The other leading Nationalists were jailed together with their leader.

The Governor of Puerto Rico, Luis Muñoz Marín, revoked the pardon which had been granted Albizu Campos and the Nationalist leader was returned to the prison which he had left only six months before.

According to some versions, this action was inexplicable, since it had been officially announced that Albizu Campos was suffering from



*dementia praecox*. If this diagnosis was correct, he should have been confined to a mental hospital.

An eyewitness account of these events was published in the newspaper "El Mundo" of San Juan on March 7, 1934. The journalist, Orlando Grau Collazo, describes what happened in the following words:

"It was five o'clock in the morning. I live in front of Don Pedro's house, and as soon as the police began to converge on the Nationalist leader's home, I went downstairs to the street. The shooting began at 6.00 a.m. and did not cease until 7:30.

"Put the machine gun down, Sotomayor," shouted Captain Benigno Soto, knocking at the door of Albizu Campos' house, to carry out the Justice Department's order of arrest. 'Now, then, this is the police. You're all under arrest,' he shouted again.

"The Nationalists remained silent.

"Some of the policemen then went to work with their clubs to break down the door, while others continued to shout, demanding surrender. Suddenly, both sides opened fire.

"The first volleys lasted about ten minutes. The police fired from the roof of the Pentecostal Church, as well as from a boardinghouse facing Albizu Campos' home.

"The police shouted, but nobody seemed to understand. All was confusion.

"Let's use the bomb. Bring up those bombs," cried one of the officers.

"The neighbors began to appear at doors and windows, rubbing the sleep out of their eyes.

"Get inside, there," warned one of the policemen. 'Do you want to get yourselves killed.' And, as the shooting was resumed, the curious again sought the safety of their homes.

"A policeman named Bibiano was given orders to fire with an automatic carbine from the roof of the Pentecostal Church. A barrage of fire crashed into the door of Albizu Campos' house. The old ruin of a building held, and so did Albizu Campos and his followers.

"The police ran out of ammunition and Col. Roig himself supplied his men with bullets. A little later, two hefty men wearing bulletproof vests, presumably agents of the FBI, crawled along the street with their revolvers out and tear-gas bombs ready.

"The first bombs sent everybody scurrying for cover — everybody, that is, except the Nationalists, who seemed determined to resist. But when gas began to take effect among the Nationalists, they opened the door, and the first to emerge was José Sotomayor.

"A few minutes later, Carmen María Baez surrendered and began to shout: 'Don Pedro is lying on the floor.'

"Col. Roig gave orders to his men to bring the Nationalist leader out. Meanwhile, Isabel Rosado and Doris Torresola, both semiconscious, staggered from the house. A little later, Albizu Campos was carried out on the shoulders of two po-

licemen. He was stunned. He was foaming at the mouth and his face had a cadaverous look, like wax.

"A reporter named Teófilo Maldonado asked him, 'How do you feel, Don Pedro?'"

"After a brief pause, Albizu Campos said simply: 'We have done our duty.'"

### "Great Is the Man . . ."

When, following the attack on the House of Representatives in Washington, Albizu Campos' pardon was revoked, for an act for which Lolita Lebrón assumed full responsibility, the Chief of Police of Puerto Rico, Col. Salvador T. Roig, expressed the opinion that the Nationalists living in Puerto Rico took no part in that assault, since, "if they had intervened directly or indirectly in the attack, the Police would have known at once."

In New York, the *Comité Americano Pro-Independencia de Puerto Rico* (American Committee for Puerto Rican Independence) issued a statement blaming the American Congress for not having solved the problem of Puerto Rico, and abroad, especially in Mexico, people openly sympathized with the cause of Puerto Rican Independence, and the illustrious Mexican writer, José de Vasconcelos, commented on the shooting up of the U. S. House of Representatives in an article published in "*Novedades*", Mexico, under the title of "Great is the Man," which we reproduce below.

"Great is the man who decides to confront without reservations everything that goes against his convictions. There is no more moving spectacle than that of one who, renouncing his personal comfort and expecting to sacrifice his own life, acts according to the dictates of his untrammelled conscience and proceeds with absolute disdain of the timid and hypocritical. The sovereignty of the responsible conscience is the highest, the most noble of all the powers of the spirit. It is within our own conscience that the court of appeals sits which hands down the final ruling on our decisions and on our role in the destinies of the society to which we belong.

"There would be no oppressed peoples if that authentic heroism which renounces every advantage, abandons all personal interests, and prepares to put conditions on living together with our fellow beings and continuing our own existence, were a common phenomenon.

"When I read the first news of the amazing event, a feeling of revulsion invaded my spirit. Why that senseless deed which left five members of the U. S. House of Representatives wounded — men who, if they have an indirect responsibility for the policies of their country, are doubtless, on a personal plane, kindly and considerate to their fellow men. And worse still, why the sacrifice of three or four young and courageous lives, whose owners, at best, will be condemned to death. At best because the gallows is the most honorable end for those who have devoted their

lives to a struggle for justice, even if it is without hope, and at worst, these three or four victims of a sublime ideal will have to endure the slow agony and doubt of the years that drag for the prisoner condemned to life imprisonment, while outside indifference and forgetfulness grow in the eyes of the people like a sarcastic comment.

"Is a country worth such suffering. The dedication of the martyr who suffers for his faith is understandable. But that amorphous mass in which there are multitudes of people who are content with their submission, who do not deserve freedom, nor much less the glory of their high destiny.

"In my first reflections on what had happened in the House of Representatives of the United States, there was a sentiment of repulsion, perhaps of condemnation. Afterwards, only afterwards, did I feel pity and, with it, the feeling that there are, in Man, despite his usual wretchedness, possibilities so great that they cannot be perceived by the eyes of the pygmies who form the commonality of each generation. The day following the events, I studied a photograph: that of Lolita Lebrón, the slender young lady dressed correctly and in a way to set off her Spanish type. Graceful and serene, she held in both hands, as she paraded before the UNO in New York, a poster which read: "We demand the complete independence of Puerto Rico."

"The grave representatives of the imposing and useless United Nations doubtless had no time to

look at the poster; probably, some felt themselves briefly attracted by the beauty of the bearer of that silent patriotic demand. The Great Ones of the earth do not put themselves out for anything so trivial as the caprices of a supposed minority on a small island demanding the right to live in accordance with their race, their language and their religion. And they decide, without reflection: the United States has already granted them a national status. What more do they want? Why do they make a fuss? We must hurry and—taking out a watch—we have a couple of receptions after the assembly today, and a banquet tonight. A lot of work.

The indifference of the many, the treachery to their ideals consummated by governments given to compromise, cause desperation in courageous temperaments. 'What can be achieved by desperation,' the prudent, the Pharisees, are apt to ask. Doubtless nothing immediate. But that same nothing may be a solution, for nothing is preferable to ignominy; nothing sometimes surprises us with the treasures that lurk in its depths. In any event, it is a refuge when the moment comes when death is preferable to a life without honor. Worse is the fate of those who deliver themselves to the nothing that is the wordly life, expecting to find in it satisfactions which content only the unworthy.

"Because of a desperation which was superhuman, three or four island patriots, led by Lolita Lebrón, took the road from New York to

Washington. They made the trip by bus, because it was cheaper. The UNO officials who failed to read Lolita Lebron's posters travel high above in jet planes; they could not discern the humble caravan headed by Lolita Lebrón. The island girl, like her comrades, bought only a one-way ticket. Partly for economy, no doubt, but also because they realized that they were on a trip from which there was no return.

"When a people suffers military occupation without having provoked it; when Puerto Rico was wrenched away from the motherland, in which it had five deputies and one senator, like any other free province of Spain; when a people has given hundreds of thousands of lives in all the wars of its new masters; when, in exchange for all this, they seek to satisfy it with a constitution which does not give it control even over the internal administration of its revenues, nor its customs, nor its foreign affairs; when the group of men who represent the best of a nationality sees that all roads are closed to it and that its struggle is hopeless, because it has to confront a Colossus which is almost omnipotent, for the moment that group of patriots has no other path to follow but that of desperation, nor any other program but the sometimes fruitful program of the absurd.

"There are not many who sympathize with the cause of Puerto Rico. Not all those leftists who issue intellectual manifestoes and raise their fists in the political fronts are prepared to commit

themselves to such a cause. The leftists are cautious. They do not go against what really affects the interests of the rulers of the United States. They denounce imperialism, but are always careful not to annoy the heirs of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Truman and the Good Neighbor policy. Puerto Rico's nationalism, which is not communist nor liberal in the style of *The New York Times* and *The Nation*, is outside all that. In the last analysis, the leftists seldom commit themselves to the attack.

"The Puerto Rican Nationalists, who are, in their majority, Catholics, demand for their country the maintenance of its language and the customs of their Spanish ancestors. The case which can be compared with that of the Nationalists of Puerto Rico is that of Ireland. And history knows no more heroic example of desperate struggle through the ages to final victory. We sincerely believe that it is within the United States itself that the Puerto Rican Nationalists may find loyal friends.

"At any rate, the act of desperation in the gallery of the American Congress has already moved the consciences of two or three American Congressmen, who, with all the reserves of generosity and righteousness that inspire the American people, have cried, in response to the involuntarily criminal bullets of their Puerto Rican assailants: Why do we not grant these Puerto Ricans their independence once and for all?

"The atmosphere of distrust and suspicion that prevails in the Pan-American Assembly in Caracas, which began on the same day as the events in the House of Representatives in Washington, is no secret to anybody. In an instant and as if by a miracle, the United States would earn the confidence, the gratitude, the affection of the twenty nations of this continent by an action which would cost them nothing: the granting to Puerto Rico of an authentic sovereignty, accompanied by a general amnesty, as was demanded in Cuba by the representatives of Spanish-American thought in connection with the Maritime Congress of last year."



*Albizu Campos' house on the corner of Cruz Street, in Old San Juan, which was also the headquarters of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico. The Nationalist leader stands on the balcony, accompanied by one of his bodyguards. (UPI)*



Upper lefthand corner, a shuttered window of Albizu's house, ripped apart by bullets and tear gas bombs. (UPI).—Lower lefthand corner, Doris Torresola, sister of Griselio Torresola, overcome by tear gas, is carried out of Albizu's house. (Wide World Photos).—Above, Miss Isabel Rosado is carried to an ambulance after the police attack on the building. (Wide World Photos).—Below, finally, Albizu himself is removed from the building, also overcome by tear gas. (UPI)



*On March 1, 1954, four Puerto Rican Nationalists fired upon the assembled House of Representatives of the United States, shouting "Long live free Puerto Rico." Five Congressmen were wounded. Three of the revolutionaries are held by the police in front of the Capitol in Washington shortly after the attack. (Wide World Photos)*



*Above, three of the attackers in police custody after the shooting: From left to right, Lolita Lebrón, 34 years; Rafael Cancel Miranda, 25; and Andrés Figueroa Cordero, 29.—Below, the same group, together with Irving Flores, at Police Headquarters in Washington, D.C. (Wide World Photos)*



*Lolita Lebrón leaves the House of Representatives in police custody following the shooting on March 1, 1954. (Wide World Photos)*



*José Vasconcelos, the famous Mexican writer and politician, visited Puerto Rico in 1926. There he met Pedro Albizu Campos and was so deeply impressed that he devoted several pages to the Nationalist leader in his complete works.  
(File photo)*

*Ruth M. Reynolds, secretary of the American League for the Independence of Puerto Rico, who worked tirelessly for the cause of Albizu Campos. Those activities resulted in her arrest and imprisonment in Puerto Rico. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*







*Semi-paralyzed and in a wheel chair, Albizu Campos receives a Puerto Rican flag from a group of citizens. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*

## CHAPTER X

### *Agony and Death of Albizu Campos*

#### **Albizu Transferred to Hospital**

On March 25, 1956, Pedro Albizu Campos suffered an embolism. It was feared that the necessary radiation would result in his death, "which could be attributed to heart failure or cerebral hemorrhage."

His sister Ana María, the only person who could visit him, had seen him that Sunday and found him so ill that he could hardly sit up. The following Thursday she received notice that her brother was only semiconscious. On Sunday night he had suffered a cerebral thrombosis and on Monday his right arm was semiparalyzed. On Tuesday, the paralysis spread to the leg on the same side of the body and since that night he had been unable to sleep. On Wednesday, he had difficulty speaking and was somnolent, and on Thursday he was transferred to the Presbyterian Hospital in Avenida Ashford, in El Condado, Santurce, and by that time he was unable to recognize anyone.

On the morning of the following day, Good Friday, the doctors of that hospital issued a bulletin declaring that Albizu Campos had experienced a cerebral thrombosis caused by the arteriosclerosis from which he had suffered for the past five years, although, up to the moment of the attack, his health had been good, only certain "mental deliriums" having been observed. The bulletin asserted that a repetition of the attack would be fatal.

The invalid, who had been transferred from the jail with an ostentatious display of force, was also closely guarded at the hospital, with two policemen in his room, the windows and door of which were kept closed. Another two guards were stationed outside the door. Only the medical personnel who attended him were allowed to enter.

By April 1, he had improved somewhat within the general seriousness of his condition and seemed to be trying to recognize people. His sister Ana María visited his room that night, but he failed to recognize her, although the doctor found him to be "slightly better."

When he was visited on the night of May 31 by the Secretary of Justice, accompanied by Dr. Montilla, who attended him, his condition was still critical. The only person from outside who managed to see Albizu Campos during the first days of his hospitalization was Dr. Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, president of the *Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño* (Puerto Rican In-

dependence Party ) or PIP, who forced the guard aside when he stopped him and remained with the patient for twenty minutes.

Not even the priest who wanted to offer spiritual consolation was allowed to enter, and this resulted in protests in the hospital, for it was known that Albizu Campos was a fervent Catholic and was being denied the last rites of the Church before he died.

The newspaper *El Imparcial* published at the time a statement of Rosa María Rodríguez, Albizu Campos' niece, who described the filth she had seen in her uncle's cell at the prison when she accompanied her mother, Ana María, during her visits, despite the fact that the latter took him clean clothes every 15 days. She added that, during the days when Albizu was sick in the jail, they had fed him only coffee and *luminal*.

### Wife Is Denied a Visa

Laura Albizu Campos was in Mexico when she learned of her husband's grave illness.

On April 2, she asked the United States Consulate in the capital of that country for a visa to enter Puerto Rico. She had lost the American citizenship acquired automatically through her marriage to a Puerto Rican when her husband's citizenship was withdrawn in 1948. Washington denied her the visa and, when she applied again November 6, it was once more refused without explanation.

Then, on May 15, 1957, she filed a new application with the United States State Department, insisting that she be given the reasons for refusal of the visa. The application was denied, with the mention of a legal provision authorizing consuls to deny visas to foreigners who it is suspected may engage in espionage or subversive activities.

Since the wife was not allowed to go to the sick man's bedside, she asked her son, Pedro Albizu Meneses, who was studying in Havana, to go to Puerto Rico. He arrived in San Juan via Santo Domingo and was arrested at the airport on the grounds that he had left the United States to avoid military service. Finally, on May 18, 1956, he was allowed into the country on condition that he registered for military service.

His son's presence cheered the sick man up, but the young man had to return promptly to Havana, where he was working for his Doctor of Science degree, so that he could take his examinations.

His two daughters also visited Albizu Campos during his illness. Laura Albizu Campos de Meneses arrived from Peru at the beginning of November and Rosa Emilia Albizu arrived in Puerto Rico from Mexico at the end of the year. The latter arrived with her husband, the Puerto Rican Nationalist Manuel O'Neill, and a little girl less than two years old. Since Mr. O'Neill was considered a voluntary exile, who had lost his nationality because he had not presented him-

self for military service, they were first arrested in Miami, and later he was arrested in San Juan. Finally, it was clarified that he had served a sentence in Tallahassee, Florida, for not having served in the armed forces, and that, when he left Puerto Rico, he had passed military service age and had retained American citizenship.

### Back in Prison

In the hospital, Albizu Campos was well cared for and recovered from the brainhemorrhage although the doctors said his medical problems were many. A delegation of Ecuadorean Deputies, who visited him there, were moved to see a "human ruin." Weeping, they embraced him and greeted him as "a man of America."

He was released from hospital by Dr. Eduardo Montilla after 71 days. One June day, early in the morning, he was returned to the prison in an ambulance. His sister, now ill, could not visit him, so his son had to stay in Puerto Rico and miss his examinations, although he could no longer see the prisoner daily, as he could at the hospital, but only once a week.

When his daughter Laura began to visit him in his cell, she noted that his hands were swollen and unduly flushed with blood. Albizu told her that these were the effects of the radioactivity there. The other daughter, Rosa Emilia, filed several writs of habeas corpus, demanding the release of her father on the grounds that the abrogation of his pardon was illegal.

Albizu's most faithful supporters, saddened by their leader's afflictions, dedicated a whole week to his honor when he reached his 70th birthday in 1961. Every day, groups of pickets were stationed in protest and they were composed of members of all the patriotic associations of the island, and on his birthday, September 12, well-known artists sang a "mañanita" before the cell in which Albizu was imprisoned. An honor guard was mounted before the prison twenty-four hours a day, with the organizations taking turns, and the flags of the twenty Latin-American republics, together with that of Puerto Rico and the banner of the Lares uprising, were unfurled.

The following Sunday, a big rally was held behind the Capitol which marched to the house where Albizu had lived and from which he was taken to jail on two occasions. There, a proclamation was read demanding the solidarity of all the free peoples of the world with the demand for the independence of Puerto Rico and the release of the political prisoners. Similar meetings were held in many countries of America, Europe and Asia on that occasion, sponsored generally by labor and student organizations.

### The Tiger of Liberty

The slow destruction of Albizu Campos behind prison bars, the long drawn-out torture, the gradual and implacable erosion of his health and strength, aroused the generous indignation

of writers and journalists throughout the length and breadth of Latin America.

The petty spite of little men in high places, seeking to destroy the spirit before they slew the flesh, was truly self-defeating, for it awakened more resentment than could ever have followed the swift, clean death of the firing squad or the noose.

Among the many protests against this inhuman procedure was an article published on the 6th of June, 1956, in the newspaper *Pueblo*, of Havana, in the column of the well-known Cuban journalist Agustín Tamargo, entitled "The Tiger of Liberty," which admirably expresses the wave of indignation and revulsion which was sweeping the lands to the south of the Río Grande.

"How unjust life is apt to be to some men!" wrote the Cuban columnist.

"Pedro Albizu Campos, that little tiger of Puerto Rican liberty, who should die like a hero in the heat of battle, is being consumed like some insignificant individual behind prison bars or between the white sheets of an infirmary.

"No, they had no right to do this to us.

"From time to time the cables of the Yankee news agencies speak of the great patriot, but only to say that his life is slipping away from day to day, or to villify him.

"Here we see the work of realist politics and the expediences of the state.

"They have invented declarations. They spoke of wet towels and insanity. Nothing seemed

enough to them to defame the purest of memories. They spared no effort in their campaign to extinguish the white, spiritual flame of that exemplary life. Such is the power of fear...

"But, at times, not even the cables can lie, and between the lines, penetrating all the euphemisms, the truth is glimpsed in all its stark monstrosity.

"Yesterday, a cable read as follows:

"The president of the Nationalist Party returned to the island penitentiary early this morning, after spending 72 days in the hospital, where he was taken following a stroke caused by cerebral hemorrhage. Albizu, who is serving a term of 60 years, was released yesterday. He left the prison under escort at the break of dawn. He had to lean on a soldier in order to walk, for his right side is paralyzed. Also, he has lost the power of speech.

"Where is the strength and reason of a liberty that so greatly fears a semi-paralytic of 70 years of age?

"Where is the justice that permits this spectacle, which would move the stoniest of hearts?

"Where is the flexibility and vigour of a democracy which imposes such sadistic and medieval punishment on one whose only sin was to want it to be more universal and more generous, so that all might enjoy its blessings?

"Only a few weeks ago, speaking before a meeting of a New York labor union, the Governor of Puerto Rico, Mr. Luis Muñoz Marín,

declared that the persistence of so many flourishing dictatorships in the Americas was shameful.

"The words of the realist 'leader,' creator of the Associated Free State (Commonwealth), have the tragic hollow ring of sarcasm when placed beside this cable.

"No. Puerto Rico is not a free country, nor can Muñoz Marín, jailor and executioner of Albizu Campos, speak of freedom.

"No. America cannot sing its hymn of glory while this last of the liberators languishes in a dungeon — this quasi-saint who reminds us of Mahatma Gandhi and our own José Martí.

"The dying heart of Albizu Campos and his suffering body, tortured by imprisonment and mistreatment, are today more than ever a symbol.

"They are the symbol of human liberty and of the dignity of the peoples, which shall blaze one day like a star in the pure blue sky of Puerto Rico."

### April 21, 1965: Death of a Hero

Dr. Albizu Campos got worse again in prison. He could not sleep nor hardly eat. There was talk that he was engaged in a hunger strike, but he denied it: he did not eat because he could not.

"I shall never go against my health," he said. His sincere Catholicism could not be reconciled with suicide.

The Government of Puerto Rico transferred

him once more to the Hospital Presbiteriano. With death now very close, Luis Muñoz Marín again decreed his pardon late in 1964. Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Spain demanded that Albizu Campos should not die in prison.

On April 21, 1965, having lived in freedom for four months, Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos passed away at 8:40 p.m., in Hato Rey, Puerto Rico. His body lay in state in the Jansen funeral parlor and in the *Ateneo de Puerto Rico* (Atheneum of Puerto Rico) in San Juan and thousands of his fellow citizens filed past the coffin of the incorruptible patriot for whom "sacrifice, imprisonment or death are the right of men who love liberty." His tomb is near the tomb of José de Diego, another great paladin of Puerto Rican independence.

The newspaper *El Imparcial* devoted these words to the hero and martyr of Puerto Rican Nationalism:

"Albizu Campos, like many of the great men of history, was always moved by the highest passions and most beautiful ideals, one of which: the independence of his country, Puerto Rico, he defended with patriotic intransigence which won him international renown.

"If he had been born at the beginning of the XIX Century, instead of its close, his dynamism and his efforts, his combative energy and his selfless and impassioned devotion to the cause, would have produced the Republic of Puerto

Rico, and he would have been its indisputable national hero, in the sublime struggle to complete the great work of Simón Bolívar."

Albizu Campos is dead, but the ideal he symbolized is not dead. His personality continues to exert even greater influence on many Puerto Ricans than it did in life.



*In 1965, shortly before his death, Don Pedro is visited by his daughter and little granddaughters, who had just arrived from Perú. From left to right: Rosa Meneses, Laurita Meneses, Laura Albizu de Meneses (his daughter,) Alicia Meneses, María Cristina and Helena Meneses. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*



*Albizu Campos' nephews, who live in Peru. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*



*The sculptor Compostela molds Pedro Albizu Campos' death mask, as Antonio Corretjer and Pedro Albizu, Jr. look on. This photograph was taken by Teodoro Torres and won a prize in the contest sponsored by the Association of Women Journalists of Puerto Rico. (Photo from El Mundo, of San Juan)*



*Thousands of Puerto Ricans filed past the coffin of Albizu Campos, lying in state in the Atheneum, to pay final tribute to the Nationalist leader. (Photo from El Mundo, San Juan)*





*A fond farewell from his loved ones. His daughter Rosa María, his wife Laura Meneses, his other daughter Laura, and his son Pedro Albizu, Jr., look upon Pedro Albizu Campos' face for the last time. (Photo from El Mundo, San Juan)*



*Mr. Jensen, of the Jensen funeral parlor, in San Juan, who was entrusted with the funeral arrangements, accompanies Pedro Albizu Campos' widow to her waiting car. (Photo from El Mundo, San Juan)*



*Don Pedro Albizu Campos passed away on the 21st of April, 1965. Almost one hundred thousand people, of all social classes and all shades of opinion, filed past his remains. The funeral was one of the biggest and most impressive ever seen in Puerto Rico. These two photographs show a crowd of young people gathered together to honor the man who gave his life for the independence of Puerto Rico. (Foto from El Mundo, of San Juan)*





Don Pedro Albizu Campos.

## CHAPTER XI

### *The Foundations of Albizu Campos' Political Philosophy*

#### **His Ideal of Heroic Sacrifice**

Albizu Campos believed that the great patriots in the history of the peoples should bear before them like a banner the ideal of a humanity purged by sacrifice, by labor and by combat. For him there was no distinction between private and public life. The former was sacrificed to the latter and both were offered up on the altar of the motherland. No sacrifice was too great.

An affectionate father, Albizu would often hold one of his small children in his arms as he discussed political matters with his comrades, but this concept of his duty to sacrifice everything for his country was so deeply rooted in his personality that he would not have hesitated to give the lives of his own children.

When the President of the United States, Franklyn D. Roosevelt, visited Puerto Rico in 1934, the Nationalist Party declared him persona non grata. As a result, stringent precau-

tionary measures were taken on the island. In Río Piedras, where the Nationalist leader lived and through which the President was scheduled to pass, the houses on all sides of Albizu Campos' home at Calle 2 No. 4 were taken over by Secret Service agents and the local police were confined to barracks.

Dr. Albizu, whose wife was then in Peru, remained in his home with his children and some friends. An attack on the house was feared and the atmosphere was tense.

At this juncture, the children's teacher arrived to take them to a place of safety, but their father said: "No, they are innocent but they are also Puerto Ricans. Innocence cannot relieve us of the duty of sacrificing ourselves for our country."

On another occasion, his little daughters began to cry, for they were afraid their father would be killed. "May my poor children forgive me!" said Albizu sadly. Nothing could turn him aside from what he considered his duty.

### **His Interpretation of History**

History, for Albizu Campos, was a continuation of the Creation. It is the daily work of God, in which He, "Creator and Protector of the Nations," is actively engaged from day to day. History is the collective process whereby Humanity painfully regains, through sacrifice and in harmony with The Almighty, the glorious road from which it was driven by the Fall.

His concept of history was both providential and military. The establishment, development and replacement of institutions is in itself a revelation.

What is essential to his philosophy is the certainty that good will finally triumph over evil. He believed that Man, intelligence guided by God, can be the source of all good, and that Humanity will some day be triumphant, as is individually proved by saints and heroes, over the shadows of death.

### **His Concept of Hispanicism**

Spain, for Albizu Campos, was the Mother Country, but not in the sense expounded by Eugenio María de Hostos in "La Peregrinación de Bayoan" (The Pilgrimage of Bayoan) and which Martí had transformed into poetry and political prediction by erecting a great ideological edifice of Hispano-Antillian fraternity.

The thought of Albizu, who found Puerto Rico already free of Spanish domination in his youth, moved freely onto a different ideological plane, in a different philosophical direction. He did not seek to link up Spain and Hispanicism with the origins of the Puerto Rican revolutionary tradition.

In his personal interpretation of history, Albizu "idealizes" the Spanish tradition in a way at once popular and universalist. He constantly proclaimed that Spain "is the mother of modern

civilization and will rise again, in all her pristine glory and power, as the depository of Christian civilization."

The genius of Spanish Scholasticism is outstanding in the field of legal history. Albizu studied the works and ideas of Francisco de Vitoria in *Relaciones Teologicas* (Comparative Theology); those of Francisco Suárez in *Tratado de las Leyes y Dios Legislador* (Treatise on Laws and God the Legislator); the pre-democratic and revolutionary *Justificación del Regicidio* (Justification of Regicide) of Mariana; and the thought of Soto, Francisco de Ayala and Melchor Cano. He studied many of these works in bilingual editions in Latin and English.

Albizu Campos maintained that the theories of the jurists of Spanish Scholasticism have exercised a decisive influence on the direction taken in the formation of modern society, which they anticipated ideologically, enriching it with progressive ideas of permanent value.

When Vitoria denied the Emperor's right to subjugate the aborigines of the New World, he entered the sphere of the founders of modern international law. If the universal sovereignty of the Emperor is accepted, the foundation of international law is removed, for it would no longer be a law regulating relations between people; it would be a juridical discipline not resulting from "cooperation among equals."

The world-famous American authority on international law, James Brown, says of Vitoria,

"The period of his professorship in Salamanca was a milestone in the history of Scholastic philosophy, and his opinions would one day be considered a classical contribution toward the rights of nations... they would constitute the newest law governing them and, in embryo, the entire system of international law based on association in equality of conditions and the interdependence of the peoples."

Vitoria's principle has been the cornerstone of modern federalism and the inspiration of the United States Constitution, the Statute of Westminster and the United Nations.

Albizu Campos also pointed to the Spanish juridical origin of popular sovereignty (Suárez,) the revolutionary right to overthrow tyranny (Mariana) and the rules governing the conduct of belligerents, including the organization of the Red Cross (Ayala) He reexamines the Hispanic world of ideas and events in the light of a revaluation of the Spanish past which is in no sense reactionary or rightist. Such is the basis of Albizu Campos' assertion that Spain is the mother nation of modern civilization.

His philosophy was not the prevailing trend in Spanish America during the years in which he preached it. The leftist groups still continued in the grip of their XIX Century Republican anticlericalism and communism was still in the process of internal catharsis and external explosion.

When the Republic was proclaimed in Spain on April 14, 1931, the Spanish Republicans in Puerto Rico held a big public celebration at the Teatro Municipal (Municipal Theatre) in San Juan (today the Tapia Theatre) and Pedro Albizu Campos was invited as one of the speakers.

His speech that night was not what that audience, drunk with Republican enthusiasm, had expected to hear; nevertheless, Albizu Campos never reached greater intellectual heights than when he delivered, on that memorable occasion, a funeral oration over the cadaver of the Spanish Monarchy.

The most impassioned Republicans in the audience gradually progressed from surprise to dissent, and from dissent to enthusiastic and emotional applause, as Albizu's closely-reasoned analysis of the Spanish Monarchy's role in America unfolded.

He maintained that Spanish America had not been the work of chance prior to the XIX Century, nor improvisation developing suddenly in a vacuum. He presented the Conquest as a preconceived plan and colonization as a consciously directed effort. Because of this, he held, it was possible to transform the Colonial institutions into the institutions of independence. From the Open Town Councils it was but a step to the Republican Assemblies; the jurists who were to study the Social Contract proclaimed by the French Revolution, and interpret it for America, were the product of the uni-

versities founded by Spain throughout the Americas, from Mexico to Caracas, from Bogota to Lima, from Lima to Buenos Aires. It was from the Militias of the King of Spain and the Royal Armies that the generals of the independence of America emerged in 1811.

Thus, the history of America did not begin with independence, nor was it merely a bridge spanning an empty gulf between the aboriginal societies of Pre-Columbian times and the XX Century. Its political organization did not spring full-fledged from republican institutions, but is a transformation of what a guiding hand had presided over from the very beginning, the organization of the Hispanic societies of the New World—and the hand was that of the Spanish Monarchy. Independence, therefore, is a republican reorganization of the societies created by Spain in her colonies.

Albizu Campos knew very well that his interpretation of history did not sit well with the people who packed the Tapia Theatre on that occasion. But he never mounted a speaker's platform to tell people what they wanted to hear. He never sought the support of the people by pandering to their prejudices. He appealed to the public's intelligence with logical arguments, then fired their will to make great decisions with his impassioned oratory, but always remaining faithful to the truth as he saw it, without hesitation nor compromise.

## His Catholicism

His religious convictions were the source of Albizu Campos' strength in the struggle for the independence of his country. He abandoned Rosicrucianism and Theosophy for Catholicism in an intimate process of self-discovery which took place at Harvard University. A factor in his conversion was the antithesis between the Protestantism and Masonic tendencies of the Americans and the Roman Catholicism of the Puerto Ricans, with their Spanish tradition. His efforts to consolidate the national personality of Puerto Rico by stressing Catholicism should be viewed as an act of conservation of Puerto Rican values in the face of the American policy of forcing the island nation into a mold alien to its cultural heritage.

Albizu Campos' politics were Neo-Catholic — what would later be called Christian-Democrat or Social-Christian, a philosophy profoundly and passionately Spanish and Puerto Rican. This was essentially Albizu Campos' sense of conservation as a feature of Puerto Rican nationalism. He sought to preserve a traditional psychological element in the personality of Puerto Rico, the Catholic religion, to which was linked an extensive complex of customs and folkways, and he worked for the "nationalization" of the Catholic hierarchy in the island, convinced that the local Church was colonial and an Americanizing influence.

Moreover, the Nationalist leader made a subtle

distinction between "civilization" and "culture." Civilization, for him, was an impure composition into which evil also entered, and which may be armed with the delicate instruments of the most advanced science. Culture, on the other hand, he defined as the sum total of the superior values of the spirit, a reflection of the divine in Man.

## Juridical Roots of His Ideology

"The Motherland must be loved as one loves a woman, spiritually and materially," Albizu Campos used to say — and to allow the beloved to be violated robs a man of his manhood. However, as a lawyer, he recognized that every defense must be justified.

Albizu Campos fought for the sovereignty of Puerto Rico on the basis of the Charter of Autonomy granted by Spain, which he claimed had transformed the island into a sovereign nation, and which could not be changed without the express consent of the Puerto Ricans. Consequently, Spain had no power to cede Puerto Rico without prior consultation of its people, nor could the United States accept its cession, since it was bound to honor the independence Puerto Rico already enjoyed.

The Treaty of Paris, therefore, in the eyes of the Nationalists, was null and void insofar as concerns Puerto Rico, because it was not negotiated by plenipotentiary representatives of Puerto Rico nor submitted to a Puerto Rican parliament for ratification.

Albizu's concept of national liberation included the duty of transfer to natives of the island of property belonging to natural and juridical persons in the governing country up to the moment of independence.

This principle does not abrogate the system of private property, and his doctrine is not, therefore, socialistic. It is a question of the transfer to Puerto Rican private owners of such properties in the island as may have been acquired by Americans or other foreigners under the interventionist regime imposed in 1898.

If the Treaty of Paris is null and void insofar as concerns Puerto Rico, then all titles to property granted in the island under that treaty are similarly null and void.

With island property once more in the hands of Puerto Ricans, there would be goods, work, production and consumption in Puerto Rico for all.



*Puerto Rico's first autonomous government, installed in 1898. The members of the Cabinet were (from left to right): Juan Hernández López, José Severo Quiñones, Manuel I. Rosy, Luis Muñoz Rivera, Francisco Mariano Quiñones and Manuel Fernández Juncos. (Photo Ilustración Española y Americana)*



## CHAPTER XII

### *Quotations From Albizu Campos*

*The world economic hegemony which the Great War placed in the hands of the United States is the gravest danger Humanity has ever faced.*

*That American hegemony must be reduced to ashes, no matter what holocaust Humanity must endure to regain its liberty.*

*The Americans have nothing to offer the world unless it be the destruction of their own empire. The American empire is a curse even to its own people.*

*The motherland's right to independence is not open to discussion. And if it is discussed, it will be with bullets.*

*Empire only commands respect when it speaks through the mouths of its cannons.*

*Statehood for Puerto Rico would be the death sentence of our nationality.*

*Before they can take our country, they will have to take our lives.*

*Plebiscites do not apply to the case of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is not a territory claimed by two rival powers; it is not a strip of land disputed by two sovereigns. Puerto Rico is a nation under the military occupation of the United States.*

*For the strong to bear the weak their ears will have to be opened with bullets.*

*The United States is too much taken with its own power—and the cult of power atrophies sensitivity.*

*Hatred between races, between religions, between capital and labor, between the descendants of the original colonists and the immigrants and sons of immigrants—this is the norm of American life.*

*The dominant oligarchy, and even the intellectuals in its universities, are too concerned with the major national and international problems they face, to pay any attention—some because of their hatred—to the plight of Puerto Rico, unless Puerto Rico causes them very serious trouble.*

*The establishment of a protectorate is an act of aggression. It is the subterfuge the great powers make use of to penetrate and undermine the sovereignty of weaker nations.*

---

*The revolution that liberates Spanish America will place the Panama Canal in the hands of the Panamanians, to whom it rightly belongs because it is located in their territory. And when it belongs to Panama it will belong to all Spanish-Americans.*

---

*Our country shall be a free, sovereign nation, despite the opposition of the United States.*

---

*The independence of the Caribbean and Central American nations now under the pernicious influence of the United States will come about as a universal necessity, to maintain equilibrium among the Latin-American nations.*

---

*The motherland must be loved as a woman is loved, both spiritually and physically. Whoever is not shamed when she is violated is no patriot—he is not even a man.*

---

*Sex is a biological accident for the propagation of the species, but the people that has to be reminded of its sex deserves, not sympathy, but punishment.*

---

*Courage is all that makes it possible for a man to step firmly and calmly through the shadows*

*of death; and it is when a man passes serenely through the shadows of death that he enters upon immortality.*

---

*It had been my wish to go to my grave untainted with gold, which corrupts men, and unstained with the blood of my fellow man; but independence, like every supreme good, demands the sacrifice of the wisest, the most noble and the most pure of the nation.*

---

*The motherland is founded on the emulation of heroism. She belongs to no one—not even to the patriots. She belongs only to those who have won her by dying for her. It is they who bequeath her to posterity.*

---

*The motherland is courage and sacrifice.*

---

*Spain is the mother of modern civilization. She will rise once more in her pristine power and glory, fulfilling her duty as the depository of Christian civilization.*

---

*Our America preserves the equilibrium of the world. Its renaissance blazes the trail of human destiny. Its power is directed toward the organization of its own genius, in conformity with the roots of its civilization.*

---

*The opportunity to achieve greatness always slips through the fingers of little men.*

*The establishment of a protectorate is an act of aggression. It is the subterfuge the great powers make use of to penetrate and undermine the sovereignty of weaker nations.*

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---

*Our America preserves the equilibrium of the world. Its renaissance blazes the trail of human destiny. Its power is directed toward the organization of its own genius, in conformity with the roots of its civilization.*

---

*The opportunity to achieve greatness always slips through the fingers of little men.*

*The supreme decision is in the balance: Yankees or Puerto Ricans.*

---

*A nation like the United States, with its tremendous national and international problems, has no time to attend to submissive and servile men (1936).*

---

*Puerto Rico presents a picture of the shipwreck of the most prized human values: honor, patriotism, sacrifice (1932).*

---

*On a moral plane, Yankee imperialism has caused us to despise ourselves on the material plane; from landlords it has transformed us into peons, and from peons into beggars condemned to death (1932).*

---

*Nationalism is the only salvation, because it revives in each of us the conscience of a free man, for whom human dignity is without price, and who cannot understand why he should not have the right to control the destinies of his own children and his own country (1932).*

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*The triumph of Puerto Ricans over Puerto Ricans is the defeat of our nation.*

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*Our painful situation under the imperial rule of the United States is the situation North America seeks to impose on all the sister nations of*

*this continent. Our cause is the continental cause (1926).*

---

*It is not in the interests of any empire to exercise tyranny openly, so it always uses natives of the conquered nation as a cloak for its despotism (1933)*

---

*When tyranny is law, revolution is order.*

---



*Laura Albizu Campos*

## OPEN LETTER TO FREE MEN EVERYWHERE

In an open letter to the free men of the world, published in Mexico in May 1955, while Albizu was ill in prison, his wife, now his widow, Dra. Laura Meneses de Albizu, asserted that Puerto Rico was fighting alone in defense of Latin-America.

"As soon as the United States became convinced that the organized Liberation Movement ('Nationalism is the nation organized to achieve its sovereignty') was a threat to the stability of its military occupation of the island, it eliminated any tolerance for the internal campaign for independence, thus blocking any political solution of the problem it had created," wrote the imprisoned leader's wife.

"Thus the people of Puerto Rico find all diplomatic, juridical and political channels closed to them by American imperialism. Imperial violence and terror reign today in Puerto Rico and the international organizations find their hands tied by the pressure of the imperial power, which prevents any consideration of the terrible situation of a Spanish-American country. And there are twenty Latin-American republics! In the face of all these nations, the United States maintains, by its action in Puerto Rico, its right to intervene militarily in any part of our continent.

"Puerto Rico fights alone in defense of the sovereignty and independence of the Spanish-

American countries, violated continually in Puerto Rico for the past 56 years.

"No serious statesman or politician is deceived because the United States calls its military intervention in Puerto Rico the 'Associated Free State of Puerto Rico' (Commonwealth.) Every responsible Latin American who has studied these matters remembers how the United States sought to cover up an oil colony in Paraguay under the name of 'The Chaco Free State' a maneuver which fortunately failed. And in the 'Associated States of Laos, Cambodia and Viet Nam' the peoples have shown that they do not allow themselves to be deceived by sonorous names.

"Like every colonial regime or system of military intervention, the so-called 'Associated Free State of Puerto Rico' set up by the U. S. Congress (Act 600 of the 91st. Yankee Congress) lacks all the virile attributes of a state. A state should have absolute jurisdiction over its currency, and that of Puerto Rico does not; over migration, which that of Puerto Rico does not; over defense, international relations, maritime legislation, postal communications and broadcasting, its customs, trade and international treaties of all kinds, and that of Puerto Rico does not have those powers either.

"A state should have its own legislative power, but 'the Associated Free State' of Puerto Rico is dependent upon that of the United States. A state should have control over its own judiciary; the so-called courts of Puerto Rico are lower

courts in the judicial system of the United States. Appeals against decisions of the so-called Supreme Court of Puerto Rico must be lodged, first with the Circuit Court of Boston, and then with the Supreme Court of the United States. Without any valid legislative or judicial power, where is the authority of the colonial governor, the so-called Chief Executive of the 'Associated Free State?' Even the post of governor and the entire 'Associated Free State' itself can be eliminated by an ordinary resolution of the United States Congress, in which we Puerto Ricans neither have nor want a single vote.

"The colonial governor, all his fellow collaborators with foreign intervention, and the whole Puerto Rican people are subject to compulsory military service in the armed forces of the United States. If the colonial governor or any of his salaried accomplices of imperialism opens his mouth to protest against that military service imposed by the Yankee Congress, he runs the risk of being cast into prison for 'obstructing U. S. compulsory military service,' as has actually happened to hundreds of patriots. The United States is the only empire that imposes compulsory military service in a country it occupies in America.

"It is thus that 223,000 Puerto Ricans were impressed into the Yankee armies during World War I, more than 400,000 in World War II and some 40,000 in the Korean War, to defend the freedom and independence of the peoples and

democracy in the world — all except Puerto Rico!

"Blood tribute is the limit of what can be imposed upon a people and it is imposed upon Puerto Rico by the United States.

"When the Puerto Ricans are forced to fight in the service of the United States in various parts of the world, killing men against whom Puerto Rico has no complaint whatsoever, and being wounded and killed in turn, the empire decorates them and proclaims them heroes of liberty. When the Puerto Ricans react in their own land against Yankee aggression, the empire declares them murderers, common criminals, and sends them to jail. For the United States, the concept of freedom is a question of geography.

"It is this selfish geographical concept of liberty that the United States seeks to impose on the Latin-American peoples through the example of Puerto Rico. If responsible citizens of the United States now recognize that the exercise of imperial power by their country in Puerto Rico is a threat to their own republican institutions, how can the Latin-American peoples help recognizing the threat to their freedom and independence implicit in the presence of the Yankee military occupation in Puerto Rico? That intervention is a lance thrust into the side of the body that is our family of nations. Diplomacy and politics are sciences of extrapolation. It is an alarming symptom in America when well-known politicians, writers and even statesmen become apolo-

gists for Yankee imperialism in Puerto Rico, some even going to Puerto Rico in a vain attempt to polish the dull surface of Yankee military intervention in a Latin-American country.

"This is not a letter of lamentation, for we women of America maintain that nothing is solved by lamentation. The mother of the Maceos said to the last of her Cuban sons: 'Hold your head high, lad,' to hasten the moment when he could also go to fight for the freedom of his country.

"But the human suffering caused by the foreign tyranny in Puerto Rico must not be forgotten. The struggle is sustained by men and boys languishing in imperialist dungeons. There are many in exile. There is a family, that of the adolescent Esteban Antongiorgi, to which the body of their son, murdered by the Yankee forces, has never been returned, and they still do not know where they have buried him. Grave robbers! There are hundreds of homes, the most honorable homes, which have been destroyed by the tyranny in Puerto Rico, through the death or jailing of the father; in some cases, of both father and mother; and even of both of these, together with their children. There are in Puerto Rico more than 250 children who are in need because of the forced absence — dead, in prison or in exile — of those who maintained them, and who are looked after by a patriotic association.

"That is the United States' attitude toward a people which has never been its enemy. Yet for

those who have been, like Japan, Germany and Italy, the United States is today especially solicitous.

"And all this to maintain in Puerto Rico the exploitation of a market amounting to 750,000,000 dollars a year of its foreign trade, monopolized by the United States; to maintain in Puerto Rico an atomic base for strategic operations, which could serve as a bridgehead for an attack on our sister nations. All for the dehumanized drive of empire! Puerto Rico is the proof that Yankee expansionist policy is real and active in this hemisphere.

"I appeal to all: to men in government, to parliamentarians, to workers, intellectuals, students and artists; to political parties, labor unions and civic institutions; to all the free men and women of America and the world, for the cause of freedom, life and human dignity knows neither frontiers nor continents.

"There was a moment when even the Andes seemed small beside the greatness of our national heroes. It was then that the courage of these men shrunk the very continent itself as San Martin, from Rio de la Plata, clasped the hand of Bolivar on the Guayas; it was then that the officers who had defeated Napoleon in Spain surrendered their swords to the plainsmen and the mountaineers and the *gauchos* of America who became generals because that was the price of freedom.

"This process of the liberation of America has been brought to a halt in Puerto Rico, and from

there imperialist oppression threatens to begin, the reconquest. The empire, proud of its power, believes that it can intimidate our peoples, which never recognized an invincible enemy, when it was the enemy of liberty. For them, only one thing is impossible: to live in slavery.

"Organized barbarism shall not distort the great destiny of our continent. We are reasonable people and we appeal to reason in our efforts to convince the enemy of his grave error, but when he does not respond to reason based on justice and insists upon imposing slavery, then we have recourse to action, because that is inseparable from thought.

"Puerto Rico has to do this, despite the enormous disparity of power, because the defense of freedom is not the defense of life, but the defense of honor. Our men know how to live, but they also know how to die.

"America stands beside Puerto Rico and her heroic defenders. Our continent knows that this is the proper time to take up the struggle on behalf of the geographically-smaller brother who is in trouble. India launched in Asia the struggle for the liberation of the peoples oppressed by imperialism, and Africa is in revolt from Kenya to the Mediterranean.

"The United States is alone in the world, because friends are not won with blows and disdain.

"The lives of the men and women who fight in Puerto Rico for the independence and freedom



of the Latin Americans must be saved. More than seventy of the patriots, both men and women, are condemned to more than ten years in the Yankee jails, including 51 sentenced to life imprisonment. Albizu Campos is at death's door, and only the determined action of the men and women of Our America could save his life. America must act to save these exceptional men and women, who belong to her.

"To fight for independence is not a crime, it is a duty, and for Latin Americans the motherland is the entire continent.

"From the height of their infinite glory, our great men look down upon us and expect us to complete their work with the liberation of Puerto Rico."



*Juan Juarbe y Juarbe, Laura Meneses, (Photo El Mundo)*



## ALBIZU CAMPOS' DAUGHTER SPEAKS OUT

Before returning to her home in Peru, following her visit to her ailing father's bedside toward the end of 1956, Albizu Campos' daughter, Mrs. Laura Albizu de Meneses, categorically denied that the Nationalist leader was insane and charged that his state of health and the burns on his body were due to radiation.

She made these statements when she was interviewed by the journalist José Enamorado Cuesta on his radio program "*Puerto Rico Histórico*" (Historic Puerto Rico) and in answer to the following questions:

*"Mrs. Albizu Campos de Meneses, it is some five years since the Justice Department issued a press release stating that Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos was suffering from 'senile dementia praecox,' according to the opinion of Dr. Troyano de los Ríos. Since then, official and semi-official circles have asserted the same thing, directly or indirectly, claiming, for example, that he needed psychiatric care. What can you tell us about this?"*

"It is true that there is a constant campaign to convince public opinion that my father is mentally disturbed—a campaign directed by foreign officials, which is to say, the U.S. authorities. I ask: What specialized medical authority in Puerto Rico is prepared to certify that Albizu Campos is insane? Furthermore, I ask: What doctor has so certified? Dr. Troyano de los Ríos

visited my father in La Princesa Prison after the colonial Justice Department had issued the press release in question. My father asked Dr. Troyano, in the presence of Don Ramón Medina Ramírez, Don Pedro Ulises Pabón and Don Francisco Matos Paoli, whether it was true that he had said that. The doctor's reply, according to the actual words of my father, was as follows: 'He swore to me on his mother's honor that he had never said that, and added that many people, both young and old, would like to possess my extraordinary mental powers, my marvelous memory, etc.' In the past few months a version has been circulated to the effect that Dr. Montilla has also said that my father is insane. I asked Dr. Montilla a few days ago, in his consulting room, whether he had made such an assertion, and he replied: 'I have never said that Dr. Albizu Campos is insane.'"

*"But there are newspapers and newsmen who insist, or at least, insinuate that Dr. Albizu Campos is suffering from mental disorders."*

"The newspapermen had ample opportunity to interview my father when he was released from *La Princesa* in September 1953. They saw him and even the foreign journalists spoke with him. None of them protested when, in March 1954, he was kidnapped and returned to the colonial jail, and was held responsible despite the fact that he was a citizen who had been declared, officially though in a completely irregular manner, a victim of 'senile dementia

*praecox.*' A person suffering from senile dementia praecox cannot be held responsible under the law and cannot be sent to prison. That is the case in all countries ruled by civilized governments. To maintain otherwise would be a juridical monstrosity."

*"Madame, those official and semi-official circles have based the assertion that Don Pedro Albizu Campos is unbalanced particularly upon the fact that he alleged he had been subjected to radiation and fiery emanations while in prison and even in his home while he was free."*

"The Puerto Rican patriots have tried to investigate this assertion of my father. Dr. Orlando Daumy, then president of the *Asociación Cubana de Cancerología* (Cuban Cancer Association,) which is to say, an expert in application of radiation and the lesions caused by it, was brought from Havana to examine him. The four principal points in Dr. Daumy's diagnosis, revealed in Havana to my mother, Dra. Laura Meneses de Albizu Campos, who sent him, and to Mr. Juan Juarbe y Juarbe, at that time Foreign Relations Secretary of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, are as follows: first: the lesions on Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos' body are burns; second: those burns were caused by radiation; third: Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos' symptoms are those of a person who has been subjected to intensive radiation; fourth: his mental condition is normal. Seldom have I met a person with such mental vigor.

*Have the patriots obtained any other evidence to support Dr. Albizu Campos' claim?"*

"Yes. While my father was at his home, after September 1953, the patriots brought a small Geiger counter. When they entered the house, this apparatus began to mark radioactivity, which increased as they approached my father's sickbed. When they placed it on his body, the counter was stimulated to such a point that it exceeded its capacity and broke down. Furthermore, my father claimed that the radioactivity caused swellings, especially in certain parts of the body, great frequency of urination and the consequent dehydration. Last November, when I began to visit my father in the colonial prison, I noticed that my hands were swollen. I did not say anything about it, so as not to alarm him, but one day he took my hands and looked at me with anguish in his eyes. I asked him what was the matter and he showed me the swollen hands. I asked him if it was caused by radiation and he said, 'Yes.' During that period, for the first time in my life, I suffered a sudden hemorrhage. A friend noticed this and took me home by car.

*"Those official and semi-official circles pointed to the fact that Dr. Albizu Campos used wet towels and shawls to cover himself as a proof that he was unbalanced. What have you to say to that?"*

"My father's political enemies spread that propaganda from 1951 to 1955. You will have

observed that they no longer refer to this matter, even in passing. Do you know why? Because, in 1955, scientists discovered, and published, the fact that water is the best defense for living tissues exposed to radiation. He said that this method is a simple defense against radioactivity and the only one available to him. The report on that discovery is in many publications, even in the 1956 world almanac published by the American daily The New York World Telegram."

*"Have the investigations carried out by the patriots produced any other results?"*

"Many more, which will be made known when the Puerto Rican nation is in a position to open a public trial of all those responsible for this monstrous crime. I can reveal to you, however, that scientific experts on nuclear energy of various countries, including the president of the Atomic Energy Commission of a great power, the Soviet Union, have been consulted. After being informed in detail of all the factors in my father's case, the Soviet scientist said that they did not yet have in his country the gadgets necessary to irradiate a person in that way and under those circumstances, but that it was theoretically possible to do so."

*"What other steps have the patriots taken?"*

"The patriots have had recourse to international bodies to which the United States belongs—the United Nations and the Organization of American States—and demanded that they in-

investigate the situation of Puerto Rico under the foreign military intervention, and especially the aggression to which my father was subjected in prison and even outside it. To that end, the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, headed by Mr. Juan Juarbe y Juarbe, submitted a petition to the United Nations on October 12, 1952, in a document comprising 107 typewritten pages. Also to that end, Mr. Juarbe submitted another petition to the Organization of American States on December 20, 1952—a document in the form of a book comprising 100 photographs. During that same month, the President of my father's Defense Council, Lic. Juan Hernández Valle, submitted another similar petition to the United Nations, consisting of 62 printed pages and a documentary appendix. The United States blocked the consideration of these petitions for investigation. It did not want its lies to be uncovered by an international investigation. My father has always said that he does not ask to be believed, because it is not a matter of faith, but of facts. He only asks that an investigation be carried out by a competent and impartial authority."

*"It has been said that Dr. Albizu Campos was on hunger strike. What is your opinion about that?"*

"My father has always said that a life should be crowned with a supreme act. So he is hardly the one who would be likely to crown it with

a hunger strike. My father does not believe in suicide. The day of his arrival at the Penitentiary of Atlanta in 1937, his fellow patriots were reluctant to eat the mush they were served. He was the first to take his dish, and told them: 'You must eat. What the empire wants is for us to refuse to eat and die of hunger.' He once told my mother: 'I shall never do anything to damage my health.'"

*"To what do you attribute the fact that he did not eat?"*

"He didn't eat, because he couldn't eat."

*"Why was it said that he was on hunger strike?"*

"That was said by those responsible for the crime, in order to hide their guilt, and make it appear that my father was committing suicide and not being murdered. So that he might not quickly recover the power of speech and be in a position to defend himself, they have been injecting him with luminal and other drugs which have reduced him to a state of semi-consciousness. Day and night they have been applying luminal and other drugs, on the grounds that his behaviour was aggressive. They have even discussed subjecting him to electro-shock, which, in his condition, would be fatal, to prove that his case is psychiatric in nature. It is absolutely false that my father received adequate medical treatment in prison, for no favorable result was noted during his sojourn there. All this will be fully

verified when the time comes. A crime like that can be covered up for a time, but not forever."

*"Why didn't your mother come from Mexico?"*

"I have come from Mexico and my mother has informed me of all the applications she has made for many months past, and always accompanied by Mr. Juan Juarbe y Juarbe, at the American Consulate in that city. She has shown me the photostatic copy of her latest application for a visa to come to Puerto Rico submitted to that consulate, as well as the article published by Mr. Juarbe in the daily newspaper *Excelsior*, of Mexico City, on November 23, explaining how the Consulate always denied my mother a visa."

*"And how does the consulate justify that refusal?"*

"The Consul said that it was denied because the Washington government had so decided, refusing to give any other explanation, except to claim that he acted thus in accordance with the immigration laws of the United States. When my mother demanded that he give a specific reason, the Consul replied: 'You know why.' Feeling that this involved him, Mr. Juarbe said to the Consul: 'We do not know on what this denial is based. But we do know that many applicants with whom we are acquainted have been told the specific reason. Under the law many reasons can be adduced. What is the reason in this case?' To this the Consul again replied: 'You know it.' 'In that case,' Mr. Juarbe answered, 'we must assume that it is a continuation of the persecution of every

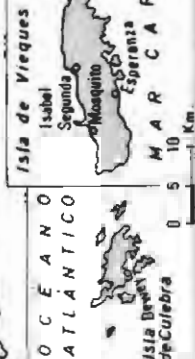
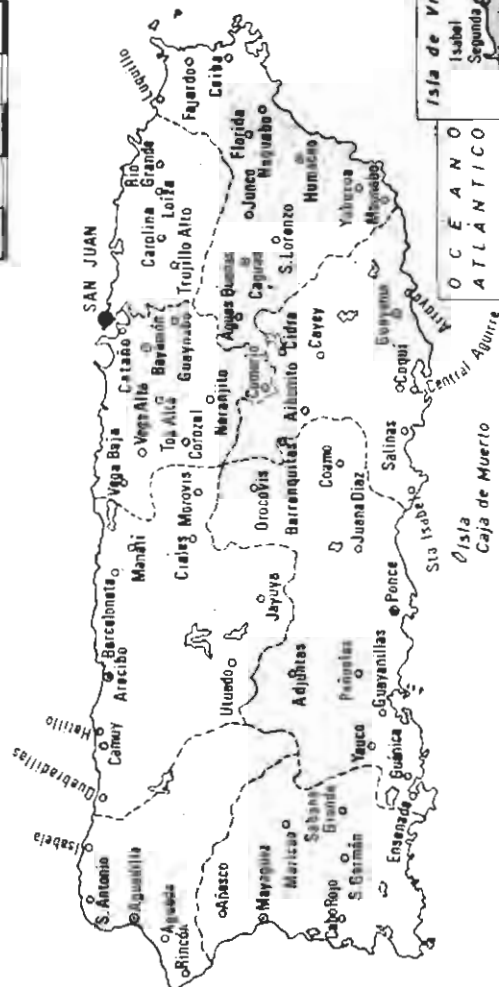
Puerto Rican abroad who defends the independence of his country. Is that the same reason I have also been prevented from returning to my country during the past twenty years? If that is so, we cannot understand when you say you are defending the independence of Hungary.'"

*"What do you think about the struggles for independence?"*

"That the men who devote themselves to that cause have to live a life which is Hell on Earth, due to the criminality of the enemies of freedom. Those men — Bolívar, San Martín, O'Higgins, Artigas, Martí and even George Washington — were tagged as lunatics by the imperialists and colonialists of their day. Later, history vindicated them. These so-called madmen were held up as right-thinking men, exemplary citizens, and the so-called sane ones were shown to be imperialists and colonialists, whose names were added to the roll of foreign tyrants and domestic traitors. The most terrible punishment suffered by the latter, even in death, is the shame their descendants — children and grandchildren, etc. — feel because of their infamous ancestry."

*"Would you like to tell us your impressions during your brief stay in Puerto Rico?"*

"Please extend to all good Puerto Ricans my affectionate greetings and tell them that I have been as happy as it is possible to be under the circumstances to stay a few days in this land, which is my country, and which, when we meet again, I trust will be a free and sovereign Puerto Rico."



## CHAPTER XIII

### *Chronological Listing of Independence Parties in the History of Puerto Rico*

#### UNDER THE SPANISH COLONIAL REGIME (1511-1898)

SOCIEDAD REPUBLICANA DE CUBA  
Y PUERTO RICO (Republican Society of Cuba  
and Puerto Rico.)

An organization founded December 21, 1865,  
by political exiles living in the United States.

*Founding members:* Juan Manuel Macías (Cu-  
ba,) president; Dr. José J. Bassora (Puerto Rico,)  
vice-president; Juan Clemente Zenea, secretary;  
Francisco de Varela Suárez, accountant; Dr.  
Agustín Arango, treasurer.

*Party organ:* "La Voz de América" (Voice of  
America,) a newspaper published in New York,  
the mainstay of which was the Chilean politician  
and newspaperman Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna.

This organization is linked with the Mutiny of  
the Artillerymen in 1867, the most outstanding

figure in which was Andrés Salvador de Vizcarondo. It was also in contact with E. Betances and Ruíz Belvis, in New York.

**COMITE REVOLUCIONARIO DE PUERTO RICO** (Revolutionary Committee of Puerto Rico.) Founded in Santo Domingo on January 6, 1969, by Ramón Emeterio Betances, Carlos Elio Lacroix, Mariano Ruíz Quiñones and Ramón Mella.

*Program:* To proclaim an independent republic in Puerto Rico. To that end, the Revolutionary Committee of Puerto Rico was set up as the Government of the Revolution and, according to its constitution, its leaders had powers to organize juntas and legations, to collect funds and to purchase arms.

The ill-starred Rebellion of Lares in 1969 was planned in part by the members of these revolutionary juntas and legations.

**CLUB BORINQUEN.**—A society founded in New York by Puerto Rican exiles and immigrants on February 28, 1892, whose first executives were Sotero Figueroa, Antonio Vélez Alvarado, Modesto Tirado and Enrique Trujillo, among others.

*Program:* The independence of Puerto Rico. It had its own newspaper, "El Porvenir" (The Future,) published in New York.

**SECCION DE PUERTO RICO DEL PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO CUBANO** (Puerto Rican Section of the Cuban Revolutionary

Party.)—This junta was set up in New York December 22, 1895, and dissolved August 2, 1898.

*Program:* To fight for the independence of Cuba and bring about an uprising in Puerto Rico. Its organ of publicity was the newspaper "Borinquen."

*Founding members:* Dr. Julio J. Henna, president; José M. Torreforte, vice-president; Gumerindo Rivas, organizing secretary; Gerardo Forest, correspondence secretary; Manuel Besosa and Sotero Figueroa, voting members; Dr. Ramón E. Betances, delegate at large; Eugenio M. de Hostos, delegate in Chile.

## UNDER THE UNITED STATES COLONIAL REGIME (1898-1952)

**PARTIDO DE LA INDEPENDENCIA DE PUERTO RICO** (Independence Party of Puerto Rico.)—A political organization founded in San Juan, February 8, 1912.

*Founding members:* Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón, Eugenio Benítez Castaño, Ramón Gandía Córdova, Rafael López Landron, Juan López de Gonzaga, Manuel Zeno Gandía, Luis Llorens Torres, Matías González García, Pedro Sierra (Luis Dalta,) Santiago Oppenheimer.

**PARTIDO NACIONALISTA** (Nationalist Party.) Founded in Río Piedras September 17, 1922.



*Program:* Overthrow of the American colonial regime, immediate independence and proclamation of the Republic of Puerto Rico.

*Founding members:* Lcdo. José Coll y Cuchi, president; Lcdo. José S. Alegría, vice-president; Federico Acosta Velarde, secretary; Dr. Rafael Bernabé, treasurer; Lcdo. Miguel Marcos Morales, Antonio Vélez Alvarado, J. P. Berrios, Antonio Ayuso Valdivieso, Lcdo. Angel Villamil, P. Rivera Collazo, José M. Guevara, among others.

Presidents of the Nationalist Party at different times were Federico Acosta Velarde, Lcdo. Miguel Marcos Morales, Lcdo. José B. Alegría and Lcdo. Antonio Ayuso Valdivieso.

In 1930, the Nationalist Party, under the leadership of Pedro Albizu Campos, adopted a more militant policy and carried out revolutionary acts, even including armed insurrection. Its leaders at that time were as follows: Pedro Albizu Campos, president; Cándido Martínez, first vice-president; Manuel Fernández Mascaró, second vice-president; Manuel Rivera Matos, secretary; Abelardo Ruiz Morales, treasurer. Also very active were Rafael Rojas Lozano, Ramón H. Vicente, Eduardo G. Ramu, Dr. Juan Augusto Perea, Fernando Sierra Berdecia, José G. Garde, José P. Berrios, Jose M. Gil Cabassa, Severiano Lecaroz, M. Guzmán, Modesto Gotay, Ramón Medina Ramírez, Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Dora Torresola, Víctor Carras-

quillo, Juan Antonio Corretjer, Francisco Matos Paoli, among others.

**PARTIDO LIBERAL PUERTORRIQUEÑO** (Puerto Rican Liberal Party). — Founded March 12, 1932.

*Program:* To demand recognition of Puerto Rico's sovereignty in the most rapid and practical manner possible.

*Founding members:* Lcdo Antonio R. Barceló, president; Lcdo. José S. Alegría, Francisco Sisoni, Francisco Sein, José S. Sabater, Lcdo. Ernesto Ramos Antonini, Lcdo. Benigno García, Lcdo. Hernando Gallardo Díaz, Lcdo. Manuel Benítez Flores, Lcdo. Benítez Sánchez Castaño, María Negrón Muñoz, Lcdo. Juan Hernández López, Luis Muñoz Marín, Lcdo. Luis Llorens Torres, Lcdo. Miguel Guerra Mondragón, Juan García Ducos, Manuel A. Martínez Dávila, Mariano Abril, Lcdo. Martín Travieso, Amador Ramírez Silva, Lcdo. Samuel R. Quiñones, Lcdo. Vicente Geigel Polanco, among others.

**PARTIDO COMUNISTA PUERTORRIQUEÑO** (Puerto Rican Communist Party). — Founded in Ponce on September 23, 1934, and dissolved in 1944. It was revived in 1946.

*Program:* This party was set up in Puerto Rico to organize and direct the labor movement along revolutionary lines. Its political doctrine is "to struggle for independence in accordance with communist postulates."

*Founding members:* Alberto E. Sánchez, secretary general; Juan Rivera Santos, Miguel A. Bahamonde, José A. Lanauze Rolón, Estanislao Soler, Ramiro Mangual, Martiniano Ayala, Ovidio Rivera, Juan Sáez Corrales, Antonio Anglero, Luis Vergne and José Enamorado Cuesta.

**PARTIDO INDEPENDENTISTA** (Independentist Party).—Founded October 21, 1934, in Mayagüez, by a group of dissidents which broke off from the Nationalist Party.

*Program:* To achieve the independence of Puerto Rico without violence and, if possible, through the ballot box.

*Founding members:* Emilio Soler López, president; Dr. Juan Augusto Perea, first vice-president; Regino Cabassa, second vice-president; Raúl Colón Leyro, secretary; Emilio Figueroa Berrio, assistant secretary; Dr. Juan Plaza, treasurer; Dr. Luis Perea, Mario Báez García, Luis F. Santos, Ernesto Asencio, Antonio Ramos, Mariano Segarra, Luis Palacio and Angel Carbó, among others.

**FRENTE UNIDO PRO CONSTITUCION DE LA REPUBLICA DE PUERTO RICO** (United Front for the Establishment of the Republic of Puerto Rico).—Founded in San Juan (Ateneo Puertorriqueño) on May 4, 1935.

*Program:* To seek unity among independentists so as to make the demand of the people of Puerto Rico for their sovereignty felt.

*Founding members:* Manuel Rivera Matos, Rafael Torres Mazzona, Carlos M. Soltero, Lcdo. Virgilio Brunet, Juan E. Soltero, Lcdo. Carlos Román Benítez, Luis F. Velázquez, Dr. Rafael Pico, Lcdo. Juan Enrique Geigel, Sol Luis Descartes, Lcdo. Guillermo Silva, Lcdo. Emilio S. Belaval, Ramón Villafana, Mariano Arroyo Suárez, Dr. Rafael J. Cordero, Ana Garcés de Córdova, Dr. Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, A. Casanova Prats, Lcdo. Jaime Benítez, José A. Buitrago, Fernando Sierra Berdecía, Dr. Rafael Soltero Peralta, Dr. Augusto Bobonis, Lcdo. Gustavo Agrait, Jorge Bermúdez, José Sáez, Dra. Margot Arce, Lcdo. Nilita Vientos Gastón, Clotilda Benítez, Berta Cabanillas, J.M. Velázquez, Clara Lugo Sandra, Manuel A. Pérez, Lcdo. Herminio Concepción de Gracia, Luis Llorens Torres, Luis Antonio Miranda, Lcdo. Manuel Benítez Flores, Antonio Paniagua Picazo, Lcdo. Lidio Cruz Monclova, Lcdo. Arcilio Alvarado, Antonio J. Colorado, Lcdo. Ernesto Ramos Antonini, Lcdo. Víctor Gutiérrez Franqui, Lcdo. Gaspar Rivera Cestero, Raúl Grau Archilla, Jorge Font Saldaña, and Rafael M. Baralt.

**ACCION SOCIAL INDEPENDENTISTA (ASI)** (Independentist Social Action).—Founded in Caguas September 10, 1936 (inactive.)

*Program:* "To defend the independence of Puerto Rico by the most certain and effective legal means, with social and economic justice for the people."

*Founding members:* Luis Muñoz Marín, Lcdo. Ernesto Ramos Antonini, Muna Lee, Lcdo. Samuel R. Quiñones, Felisa Rincón, Julio N. Matos, Francisco Susoni, Lcdo. Vicente Geigel Polanco, María Libertad Gómez, Yldefonso Solá Morales, Andrés Grillasca, among others.

**PARTIDO LIBERAL NETO, AUTENTICO Y COMPLETO** (The Sole Authentic and Complete Liberal Party.)—Founded in Arecibo, June 27, 1937.

*Program:* Independence and social justice.

*Founding members:* Amalia Marín Vda. de Muñoz Rivera, honorary president; Luis Muñoz Marín, president; Dr. Francisco Susoni, Lcdo. Rodolfo Ramírez Pabón, Librada R. Vda. de Ramos, Jesús J. Piñero, Felisa Rincón de Gautier, Lcdo. Víctor Gutiérrez Franqui, Lcdo. Germán Rieckhoff, María Libertad Gómez among others.

**CONGRESO PRO - INDEPENDENCIA** (Pro-Independence Congress.) — Founded in San Juan on August 15, 1943.

*Program.* In its proclamation, this organization says: "The people of Puerto Rico demand their right of sovereignty on a basis of friendship and fraternity with the people of the United States... This Congress demands of the people and government of the United States that they immediately recognize the political sovereignty of Puerto Rico."

*Founding members:* Dr. Juan Augusto Perea, president; Lcdo. Vicente Geigel Polanco, An-

tonio Pacheco Padro, Sergio Peña, Félix Benítez Rexach, Dr. Soltero Peralta, César Andreu Iglesias, Lcdo. Antonio Ayuso Valdivieso, Clara Lugo, Felisa Rincón de Gautier, Lcdo. Lidio Cruz Monclova, Florencio Pagán Cruz, Enrique A. Laguerre, Blanca Canales, among others.

*Note:* A second Pro-Independence Congress was held in Hato Rey on December 10, 1944 presided over by Dr. Gilberto Concepción de Gracia.

**PARTIDO INDEPENDENTISTA PUERTORRIQUEÑO (PIP)** (Puerto Rican Independentist Party.) Founded in Bayamón October 20, 1946. Its Constituent Assembly was held in Sixto Escobar Park on July 25, 1948.

*Program:* Independence for Puerto Rico through the ballot box.

*Founding members:* Dr. Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, president; Lcdo. Baltazar Quiñones Elías, Dr. Rafael Soltero Peralta, Juan E. Soltero, Sergio S. Peña, Antonio Santaella, Lcdo. Víctor M. Bosh, Luis Feliú Pesquera, Lcdo. Lorenzo, Piñeiro Rivera, among others.

*Note:* During the year 1969, a reorganization of the PIP placed that association under the leadership of a triumvirate made up of Messrs. Noel Colón Martínez, Rubén Berrios Martínez and Gilberto M. Concepción Suárez. In an assembly held in 1970, the triumvirate was dissolved and an executive committee elected as follows: Lcdo. Rubén Berrios Martínez, president; Lcdo. Carlos Galliza, vice-president; Lcdo. Luis Enrique

Otero, treasurer; David Noriega, political organization secretary; Lcdo. Luis Rivera Lacourt, secretary for electoral affairs; Lcdo. Raul Serrano Geyls, secretary for legislative affairs; Víctor Guillermo Fernández, secretary for labor affairs; José Miguel Perez, youth affairs secretary; Lcdo. Aldo Seguro de Diego, finance secretary.

### UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO (1952-1971)

FEDERACION DE UNIVERSITARIOS PRO INDEPENDENCIA (FUPI) (Federation of University Students for Independence.) Founded in 1956 in Rio Piedras.

*Program:* As an association of independent university students, this group is not affiliated to any political party. The FUPI has been very active in the past few years. Its revolutionary vision involves university youth, calling as it does for the elimination of the ROTC and, consequently, for an end to compulsory military service, as well as for emancipation. During its period of greatest activity (1969-70) FUPI was presided over by Florencio Rosa Merced.

MOVIMIENTO PRO INDEPENDENCIA (MPI) (Pro-Independence Movement.) Founded in Ponce on November 22, 1959.

*Program:* A non-partisan political association, opposed to elections. It was formed by a group headed by Lcdo. Juan Mari Bras, which broke away from the PIP. Adopting an organization

and methods different from those of traditional Nationalism, it made independence its basic aim, together with a program of national reconstruction and social justice.

*Founding members:* Dr. Manrique Cabrera, director general; Lcdo. Norman Pietri, Lcdo. Pedro Baiges Chapel, Lcdo. Lorenzo Piñeiro.

LA MESA DE LARES (The Lares Group.) Founded in Lares in November 1960.

*Program:* To strive for the unity of the nine Puerto Rican independentist organizations now active, namely: PIP, MPI, Partido Nacionalista, A. P. U., Voz de Puerto Rico, FUPI, Communist Party and Juventud Independentista. Apparently, no positive result was achieved.

*Founding members:* Lcdo. Carlos Carrera Benítez.

CONGRESO PUERTORRIQUEÑO ANTI-COLONIALISTA (Puerto Rican Anti-Colonialist Congress.) Founded in San Juan January 17, 1965.

*Program:* To form a non-partisan civic movement open to all Puerto Ricans, in order to wipe out all vestiges of colonialism.

*Founding members:* Lcdo. Yamil Galib, Dra. Piri Fernández de Lewis, Lcdo. Eladio Rodríguez Otero, Lcdo. Enrique González, Dr. Rafael Soltero Peralta, Adolfo de Hostos, Lcdo. Francisco Colón Giordany, Regino Cabassa, René Marques, Nilita Vientos de Gastón, José Arnaldo Meyners, Lcdo. Vicente Geigel Polanco, Manuel Mal-

donado Denis, Dr. Rubén del Rosario, among others.

FONDO PARA LA REPUBLICA (Fund for the Republic.) Founded in San Juan in 1967.

*Program:* Independence by means of a plebiscite.

*Founding member:* Dr. Alvarez Silva.

*Note:* This organization represented the independence movement in the plebiscite held July 23, 1967.

PARTIDO NUEVO SOBERANISTA (PAS) (New Sovereignty Party.) Founded in San Juan in 1967.

*Program:* This organization seeks to free the Puerto Rican people from the psychological limitations imposed by the colonial system and bring about a full flowering of the Puerto Rican national personality. It plans to coordinate all the efforts of the independentists in order to attain full and complete sovereignty and place it, by means of a democratic constitution, in the hands of the Puerto Rican people.

*Founding members:* Lic. Jorge Luis Landing and Francisco Colón Giordany.

PARTIDO UNION PUERTORRIQUEÑA (PUP) (Puerto Rican Unity Party.) Founded in San Juan June 1, 1969.

*Program:* Achievement of independence for Puerto Rico by means of the ballot box and in agreement with the United States.

*Founding members:* Dr. Antonio J. González, president; Lcdo. Antonio R. Barceló, Jr., vice-president; Lcdo. Germán Rieckhoff Sampayó, secretary general; Lcdo. Ricardo Castillo, general treasurer; Lcdo. Alvaro Calderón Mongil, secretary for electoral affairs; Lcdo. José F. Irrizarry, political organization secretary; Dr. Otis Oliver Padilla, public relations and propaganda secretary; Gilberto Alegría, executive secretary; Guillermo Gandía, administrative secretary; Rigin Dapena Vidal, and Lcdo. Manuel Caballer among others.

COMANDOS ARMADOS DE LA LIBERACION (CAL) (Armed Commandos of Liberation.) This movement, which is clandestine, came into existence in the year 1967. Its members are what has come to be known as urban guerrillas. They act as the armed auxiliaries in the struggle for Puerto Rican independence. These groups operate under the orders of the mysterious and super-secret Alfonso Beal.

*Program and Objective:* The purpose of this organization is to produce a crisis which will shake the foundations of colonialism in Puerto Rico and carry out a campaign along lines in accordance with the characteristics of the country. It seeks to bring about the destruction of the American companies which operate in Puerto Rico, among them the Puerto Rican Telephone Co., Woolworth's, Sears, Kresge, Pueblos Supermarket, Grand Union Supermarket, K-Mart,

Bargain Town and the hotel chains, including the Caribe Hilton, Condado, La Concha, Hotel San Juan, Miramar, Isla Verde, etc. It is estimated that CAL operations have caused losses amounting to no less than ONE HUNDRED MILLION dollars, apart from the closing of several hotels, such as the Miramar and the Hotel Condado, among others. (Information obtained from *Tri-continental*, 1969 Supplement, and Bulletin 2 of the CAL.)

**YOUNG LORDS ORGANIZATION.** — Founded in Chicago, originally as a Puerto Rican juvenile street gang, which later, in 1968, evolved into a revolutionary political association.

*Program and Ideology.* The Young Lords have a 13-point revolutionary program which includes a demand for the immediate independence of Puerto Rico, but concerns itself mainly with the organization of a million Puerto Ricans living in the continental United States, and this it seeks to do by drawing the people of the mainland ghettos into a day-to-day struggle for improvement of their living conditions. The Young Lords Organization emphasizes that it is fighting "for the liberation of all oppressed people," and to that end it seeks the cooperation of other revolutionaries, whether continental whites, Negroes or other groups. The women auxiliaries who abound in the organization are popularly known as "Lady Lords."

*Founding Member:* José (Cha Cha) Jimenez.

**YOUNG LORDS PARTY.** Founded in 1969 in New York's East Harlem. This organization originally began as an affiliate of the Chicago-based Young Lords Organization, which granted a license to start a New York chapter to a group of Puerto Rican youths who had helped to organize the so-called "garbage riots" in El Barrio (East Harlem) in the Summer of that year. The Young Lords Party was formally founded, however, in New York in June 1970, following a split with the parent organization.

*Program and Ideology.* The program of the New York group is basically the same as that of the parent organization in Chicago, although possibly with greater emphasis on ideological development and political activism, and a greater interest in growth and expansion, both in the New York area and, recently, in Puerto Rico, and perhaps, indeed, throughout the nation.

*Founding Members:* Pablo (Yoruba) Guzmán, Juan (Fi) Ortiz, Gloria Pérez and Juan González.

Mention should be made of several other organizations, some short-lived, which have nevertheless left their mark on the struggle for independence.

*La Voz de Puerto Rico* (The Voice of Puerto Rico) was founded October 12, 1958, by Lic. Jorge Luis Landíng.

*Acción Patriótica Unitaria* (United Patriotic Action) was organized in 1959 under the leadership of Juan R. Corretjer and Ramón Medina. On the latter's death it was dissolved.

*Liga Socialista* (Socialist League,) founded in 1964 by Juan A. Corretjer, calls itself Marxist-Leninist and advocates revolutionary action against the capitalist system.

*Cruzada Patriótica* (Patriotic Crusade,) an independentist group led by the ex-priest Victorio M. Santiago, known as Padre Margarito. It maintains that a Christian government cannot eliminate private property, but fights against *laissez faire* capitalism, which allows unrestricted dominion over material possessions.

*Mira*, a clandestine organization, operating as urban guerrillas, which emerged in 1969.



A Creole rebellion broke out in Lares September 2, 1868, which is known as the "Grito de Lares" (Proclamation of Lares). The leader of the revolt was Manuel Rojas. Another leading figure in the uprising was Mariana Bracetti (right), better known as *Brazo de Oro* (Golden Arm), since it was she who embroidered the standard of the revolution. They proclaimed a Republic of Puerto Rico, but the Spanish militia put down the rebellion.





**Andrés Salvador de Vizcarra**  
Leader of the Artillerymen's  
Mutiny in 1867



**Ramón E. Betances**  
(1827-1898)  
Abolitionist doctor and politician



**Lola Rodríguez de Tió**  
(1843-1924)  
Poetess and patriot



**Eugenio María de Hostos**  
(1839-1903)  
Professor and writer



**José J. Henna**  
(1848-1924)  
Physician



**Sotero Figueroa**  
Writer and patriot



**Román Baldorioty de Castro**  
(1822-1889)  
Educator and politician



**José Celso de Aguilera**  
(1827-1893)  
Politician



**Ramón Marín**  
Revolutionary journalist



**José Gualberto Padilla**  
(1829-1896)  
Physician and journalist





**Francisco M. Quiñones (1830-1908)**  
President of the Autonomous  
Government of Puerto Rico



**Matías González García  
(1866-1938)**  
Independentist writer



**José de Diego  
(1867-1918)**  
Poet and politician



**Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón  
(1855-1913)**  
Lawyer and politician



**Julio L. Vizcarrondo  
(1830-1889)**  
Journalist and abolitionist



**Antonio Vélez Alvarado  
(1864-1948)**  
Journalist and revolutionary



**Gilberto Concepción de Gracia**  
Lawyer and politician



**José S. Alegria  
(1886-1965)**  
Lawyer and Politician



**Juan Mari Bras**  
Secretary General of the MPI  
(Pro-Independence Movement)



**Rubén Berrios**  
Lawyer and president of the PIP



**Jorge Luis Landring**  
Lawyer and president of the PAS  
(Authentic Sovereignty Party)

*Photos from El Mundo,  
of San Juan*



**Antonio J. González**  
Professor and president of the PUP  
(Puerto Rican Union Party)

**Juan A. Corretjer**  
Poet, President of the  
Liga Socialista (Socialist League)



**Msgr. Antonio Farrilla**  
Bishop — Independentist



**Florencio Mercusí**  
Student, President of the FUPI  
(Pro-Independence University  
Federation) in 1969



**Juan González**  
Minister of the  
Young Lords Party



Young Lords Party

Juan González, Gladia Pérez and Yoruba Guzmán.

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THE AUTHOR Frederic Ribes Tovar was born in Oujda, Morocco, and began his journalistic career in Casablanca, immediately after World War II. At that time, his interest was mainly focussed on North Africa and the Third World and on the process of decolonization.

Nevertheless the Americas had held a fascination for him from his earliest youth. He read and studied the history of the New World nations, cultivating their statesmen, writers, journalists and artists, and he married a Puerto Rican girl. In 1954, he wrote his first articles on Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico. He took up residence in Puerto Rico in 1956, and toured the island, town by town, in the employ of the newspaper "El Imparcial," of San Juan. For that publishing company, he wrote "El Libro de Puerto Rico" (The Book of Puerto Rico), a history with more than 900 pages.

In 1960, Ribes Tovar moved to New York with his family. In this city, he worked on the New York newspaper "La Prensa," carrying out research and studies on the Puerto Rican migrants in the area.



**IZZY SANABRIA**  
Cover Artist & Designer

Israel Sanabria better known as Izzy is recognized as being one of the most talented young men in the Puerto Rican community. Driven by his obsession to be continually creative he has undertaken every challenge offered to him, and has not stopped with his Art but instead has managed to become quite a Showbiz personality

as Dizzy Izzy the MC Comedian, through Radio, Television and personal appearances.

As an Artist his biggest successes have come from his trend setting Record Album Covers and Posters which depict the young Puerto Rican Music Culture.

Here in his first design for a Book Cover he undertook the challenge of portraying Albizu Campos, the leader of the Puerto Rican Independence Movement, who's ideas are still very much alive today. We think Izzy has certainly met the challenge... Right on!



#### ABOUT THE COVER PAINTING

The cover painting shows the spirit of Albizu Campos growing out of the land and still protecting his beloved Puerto Rico.

The Puerto Rican Nationalist flag is also shown as a spirit (transparent) because, although this flag does exist, it is not a reality until Puerto Rico can wave it, as an independent nation.

The solid or very real elements shown are the Puerto Rican landscape (not the tourist version but the poor people's Puerto Rico), Albizu Campos' head, symbol of his ideas which still live on, and the fist, which is a symbol of the struggle going on today.