

PUERTO RICO STATUS

HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H.R. 856

A BILL TO PROVIDE A PROCESS LEADING TO FULL SELF-
GOVERNMENT FOR PUERTO RICO

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commonwealth being presented in the ballot as the old commonwealth, because the old commonwealth is not the new commonwealth.

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. I invite you to read carefully the definition I am proposing today. And as I said, that was approved back in 1990.

Mr. SERRANO. All right. Then again, Mr. Chairman, one last point, any time a system of relationships allows me to run for Congress but doesn't allow my American citizen cousins in Mayaguez to run for Congress, that is not a fair relationship. I shouldn't see that on the ballot. Any time a system allows me to institute agreements with foreign countries but doesn't allow you the sovereignty to institute agreements with foreign countries, meaning you are not a State, and you are also not independent, then I can't see that as a fair relationship.

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. The solution to your concern is on paragraph C of the definition.

Mr. SERRANO. Which is not the actual status, is what I am trying to get at.

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. Yes.

Mr. SERRANO. What you—

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. I am going to—

Mr. SERRANO.—doesn't exist right now.

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. I am going to repeat my statement. So far I have been talking about the historic precedent that clearly showed that the assumptions under which this bill has been drafted are wrong. Now is the time to talk about the future.

Mr. SERRANO. OK.

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. And I am proposing a new commonwealth which is the definition that was approved by this Committee and the House back in 1990.

Mr. SERRANO. I respect that, and I won't badger you anymore. I do respect you. I respect what you stand for. I respect what your party stands for. I think the tragedy here is that Congress may be ready to stop lying and some people can't accept that Congress will finally stop lying. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. One last question before we finish. If the Congress were to, both the House and the Senate, and the White House were to take a look at this suggestion that you have for the new commonwealth and accept everything but including the citizenship and the bill were adopted, passed as a law into law as to the new commonwealth as you define it, but without the U.S. citizenship, what would your party do?

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. It would be unacceptable for us, you know.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. So what would your party do? Would you vote, wouldn't vote?

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. We would have to decide at the time, but that definition wouldn't be acceptable for us.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. So you wouldn't participate?

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. That would be another way to tilt the process in favor of statehood.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. So you would not vote?

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. You know that statehooders and commonwealth in Puerto Rico, we are proud of our U.S. citizenship, so by