

Revised August 25, 1955

C O N F I D E N T I A L

M E M O R A N D U M*

Subject: Membership of Puerto Rico in the Inter-American Statistical Institute.

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to explore means by which Puerto Rico might become an adhering (governmental) member of the Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI), assuming that conditions are propitious to seek such membership. There are two alternative methods:

- a. Through amendment of Article II, paragraph 3 (a) of the Institute's statutes which provides for adhering membership by the addition of the underlined sentence at the end of this paragraph as follows:

"The government of any nation of the Western Hemisphere which is a member of the Organization of American States shall automatically be a member of the Institute, so long as the Project of Agreement between the Organization and the Institute is in force. The government of any nation of the Western Hemisphere not a member of the Organization of American States may become an adhering member upon its payment of dues prescribed in accordance with section 2 of Article VIII. Any government which is freely associated with a member of the Organization of American States may become an adhering member with all the rights thereof for itself and its citizenry, any provision of these statutes to the contrary notwithstanding, upon approval of its application by the Executive Committee and upon its payment of dues prescribed in accordance with section 2 of Article VIII."

* Prepared by Emil J. Sady

The phrase "with all the rights thereof for itself and its citizenry, any provision of these statutes to the contrary notwithstanding" is intended to ensure (1) that Puerto Rican statisticians who are United States citizens will not be subject to the United States allocation for constituent membership (as would be the case under Article II, paragraph 2a) but will have a separate membership allocation; and (2) that the head of the highest statistical office in the Commonwealth will be considered as an ex-officio member of the Institute, despite the limitation of such ex-officio membership in Article II, paragraph 6 to heads of the "highest statistical office in each nation."

- b. Through a decision by the Executive Committee of the IASI that, for purposes of the Institute and without prejudice to the Commonwealth status nor to the relationship which exists between the United States and the Commonwealth and its inhabitants, Puerto Rico may be regarded as a nation (i.e. a people as an organized body politic) of the Western Hemisphere which is not a member of the Organization of American States and its citizenry entitled to a constituent membership allocation separate from that of the United States. Upon reaching such a decision, the Executive Committee could forthwith recognize Puerto Rico's bid for adhering membership by setting the Commonwealth's membership dues and accepting payment thereof.
2. The amendment process is recommended for the following reasons:
 - a. It would be desirable to establish a basic formula which can be applied to other Inter-American technical bodies in order

to qualify the Commonwealth for full membership therein. As will be noted in Appendix B attached hereto, very favorable sentiment exists within the leadership of the IASI to accept the Commonwealth as an adhering member. Instead of drawing upon this good-will to obtain a questionable interpretation of the statutes, it would seem desirable to draw upon it to amend the statutes in a manner which would raise no political or legal questions and which would set a precedent for amending similarly the constitutions of such official organizations as the Pan-American Institute of History and Geography and the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences. Membership in these bodies is now restricted by their respective constitutions to the twenty-one American Republics, thus leaving no latitude whatsoever for interpretation.

- b. The procedure for amending the IASI statutes is relatively simple. The amendment can be proposed by the Executive Committee, at present composed of representatives from Canada (President), Panamá, Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Argentina. The proposed amendment would then be put to a mail vote by constituent members (all professional statisticians) and, if at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the members vote and $\frac{2}{3}$ of the votes cast are favorable, the amendment would be adopted. Through personal contacts by officers of the Institute, U. S. statistical officials, and Puerto Rican officials, it should be possible to gain the requisite votes from the 142 constituent members.

c. The amendment process would probably be more readily approved by the U. S. Department of State and would be less likely to provoke a tempest both in the Congress and in Puerto Rico. In view of the official character of the Institute, the application for Puerto Rican membership--whether made pursuant to the present statutes or the statutes revised as recommended--will require the support of the senior United States ex-officio member in the Institute (presumably Mr. Raymond Bowman, successor to Dr. Stuart Rice as Assistant Director for Statistical Standards, U. S. Bureau of the Budget) and, therefore, of the Department of State. Favorable action is inconceivable without such support. In 1952 Dr. Stuart Rice, then senior ex-officio member of the IASI, cleared the idea with the State Department of Puerto Rico becoming an adhering member--presumably without revision of the statutes. But much has happened since then. It is doubtful that the State Department would now approve of the thesis, however qualified or phrased, that Puerto Rico is a "nation", that it is not included within the U. S. membership in the OAS, and that Puerto Ricans are not U. S. citizens for purposes of constituent membership allocation. Even if State Department approval were obtained, it is unlikely that any such thesis would escape the attention of the Congress and of political leaders in Puerto Rico. It might, as a result, revive the status question in a way that would serve no useful purpose.

d. An excellent opportunity has recently been afforded the Commonwealth to propose the above amendment. Mr. Oliveras received a letter dated July 15, 1955, in his capacity as ex-officio member of the Institute, from the Secretary General of the Institute inviting members to propose amendments to the Institute's statutes no later than October 15, 1955 for consideration by the Executive Committee. A revision of the statutes is being undertaken pursuant to a request made by the Institute's General Assembly in June 1955.

3. It would be desirable for one or two Commonwealth officials to go to Washington to discuss this whole matter before any formal proposal is made. This might, however, precipitate a general discussion of Commonwealth membership in international bodies. Since such a general discussion may be deemed premature, it is suggested alternatively that Mr. Oliveras, with the Governor's approval, send a letter informally to Mr. Bowman to ascertain his reaction (and indirectly that of the State Department) to the procedure recommended herein.

4. A study should be made in due course to determine: (a) the form in which the Governor should transmit the Commonwealth's application for membership, and (b) whether authorization and a special appropriation by the Commonwealth Legislature should be sought and, if so, at what stage,

Draft letter

Mr. Raymond Bowman
Assistant Director of the Budget
in Charge of Statistical Standards
Bureau of the Budget
Executive Office of the President
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bowman:

At the meeting at Ottawa in 1952, Dr. Rice suggested to Mr. Labadie that it would be possible and desirable for Puerto Rico to become an adhering (governmental) member of the Inter-American Statistical Institute. It was indicated that this proposal had been informally cleared with the Department of State. Mr. Abrisqueta wrote early in 1954 indicating that if a request for adhering membership for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico were received, it would be unanimously approved by the Executive Committee which was scheduled to meet early in March 1955. I received a letter dated July 15, 1955 and signed by John B. Rothroch, on behalf of the Institute's Secretary General, inviting me (as an ex-officio member of the Institute) to propose amendments to the statutes by October 15, 1955.

The responsible statistical and other officials here are prepared to recommend to the Governor that steps be taken to enable the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to become an adhering member of the Institute. Such membership not only would serve as a stimulus to the Commonwealth's statistical program but also, since the United States quota of constituent members has been filled for some time with persons from the States, would entitle Puerto Rican statisticians to be elected as constituent members under a separate quota. They would, as you know, benefit greatly from

association with their professional colleagues throughout the Hemisphere.

Before a definite recommendation is made to the Governor, we would like to obtain your views on the steps which might be taken to arrange for the Commonwealth's membership. Both Mr. Rice and Mr. Abrisqueta, the latter recently, have indicated that favorable action could be taken under the present statutes. We would appreciate having further details if you find that this is practicable.

From our study of the statutes, it would seem necessary to amend Article 2, paragraph 3 (a) by the addition of the following sentence at the end of this paragraph:

"Any government in the Western Hemisphere which is freely associated with a member of the Organization of American States may become an adhering member with all the rights thereof for itself and its citizenry, any provision of these statutes to the contrary notwithstanding, upon approval of its application by the Executive Committee and upon its payment of dues prescribed in accordance with section 2 of Article VIII."

The phrase "with all the rights thereof for itself and its citizenry, any provision of these statutes to the contrary notwithstanding" is intended to ensure that Puerto Rican statisticians who are United States citizens will not be subject to the United States allocation for constituent membership (as would be the case under Article II, paragraph 2 a) but will have a separate membership allocation.

I would appreciate any comments you may care to make on this matter, including suggestions on the draft amendment or the channels for transmitting such an amendment to the Institute. We would like to be assured, of course, that the proposal, if made, would be supported by United States representatives in the Institute.

Sincerely yours,

Cándido Oliveras
Chairman

Appendix B

Background Information on the Inter-American Statistical Institute and Views Expressed Relating to Puerto Rican Membership Therein.

1. The Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI) was created in 1940 as a result of the Eighth American Scientific Congress. Its program is to foster statistical development in the Western Hemisphere. It is a technical, semi-official organization which is affiliated by agreement with the Organization of American States. This agreement states that the IASI "is an Inter-American Organization of recognized international authority". The IASI publishes a quarterly journal, seeks to improve and standardize national statistical information, provides statistical services, and holds general conferences every two to four years. The U. S. Congress enacted legislation in 1942 enabling the United States to become a member of the IASI and authorizing appropriations for that purpose. The Statutes of the Institute were amended in 1950 to make adhering (governmental) membership automatic for members of the Organization of American States.

2. The membership of the Institute is composed of both individuals and organizations. Individual members may be constituent (elected by constituent members for distinguished statistical attainments) or "ex-officio" (representing statistical agencies). The number of constituent members is limited to 15 from any one country. Article II, paragraph 2 (a) provides as follows for the assignment of constituent members to country allocations:

"In the case of citizens of nations in the Western Hemisphere, the country of citizenship will govern in determining membership allocation; IASI members resident in the Western Hemisphere but who are citizens of nations not in the Western Hemisphere shall not be allocated to national quotas."

This provision would seem to bring Puerto Rican statisticians who are citizens of the United States within the United States membership allocation. None of the Puerto Rican statisticians are now constituent members of the IASI and the United States quota is filled. Constituent members may retain their membership as long as they pay their dues.

3. Article II, paragraph 6 provides in part as follows with respect to ex-officio members:

"The secretary general shall ascertain from the respective governments the highest statistical office in each nation in the Western Hemisphere, and the occupant of the said office shall be considered an ex-officio member of the Institute. ...At the discretion of the Executive Committee and subject to conditions which it may stipulate, an ex-officio member may be designated by any other agency or committee working partially or wholly in the field of statistics, ..."

There are three ex-officio (non-dues paying) members listed in a 1951 Institute publication as having been designated to represent agencies in the United States, in accordance with the above provision. One is from Puerto Rico. They are listed, with dates of designation, as follows:

Dr. Stuart A. Rice, Assistant Director of the
Bureau of the Budget, in charge of Statis-
tical Standards (1942)

Mr. Roy V. Peel, Director, Bureau of the Census,
Department of Commerce (1950)

Sr. Juan Labadie Eurite, Chief, Division of Statis-
tics, Bureau of the Budget, Office of the Governor,
San Juan, Puerto Rico (1948)

The statutes provide that ex-officio members retain their membership only during their tenure in the respective offices from which their membership is obtained. Mr. Labadie was designated by the Executive Committee in 1948 to replace Mr. Roberto de Jesús whose designation dated back to 1946 when he served both as Director of the Bureau of the Budget and Acting Director of the Bureau's Division of Statistics. More recently, Mr. Cándido Oliveras was designated to replace Mr. Labadie as representative of Puerto Rico's principal statistical agency. Mr. Raymond Bowman has replaced Dr. Rice at the Bureau of the Budget and presumably as ex-officio member for the United States in the Institute.

4. Institutional members of the IASI are of three classes: adhering, affiliated, and sponsoring. The statute provisions for adhering and affiliated members are set forth in Article II, paragraph 3 (a) and (b) as follows:

"(a) The government of any nation of the Western Hemisphere which is a member of the Organization of American States shall automatically be a member of the Institute, so long as the Project of

Agreement between the Organization and the Institute is in force. The government of any nation of the Western Hemisphere not a member of the Organization of American States may become an adhering member upon its payment of dues prescribed in accordance with section 2 of article VIII."

"(b) Any official or unofficial agency, institution, organization or office in the Western Hemisphere which is engaged in statistical work or which has statistical interests may, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee of the Institute, become an affiliated member upon its payment of dues prescribed in accordance with section 3 of article VIII."

The Commonwealth Government's principal statistical office could now qualify for affiliated membership, but this would not entitle it to any greater participation than it has at present.

5. Article IV, paragraph 1, provides in part that "No more than one member of the Executive Committee shall be elected from any one nation; nor shall any member of the Executive Committee be elected from a nation which is not an adhering member of the Institute.

6. The only other pertinent provision of the statutes is Article V, paragraph 2 which states in part that "The Executive Committee shall: Serve as a direct medium of contact between the Institute and the Council of the Organization of American States and its organs, the Pan American Union, and member states of the Institute which are not members of the Organization of American States...."

7. Puerto Rico's first participation in Institute activities was in 1951, when Mr. Labadie attended the meetings of the Institute's Committee on Improvement of National Statistics as advisor of the U. S. delegation. His attendance was by invitation of Dr. Rice, approved by the Governor. Mr. Labadie also served in the same capacity in this Committee's sessions in October 1952. During these meetings, the following conversation took place, as recorded in Mr. Labadie's memorandum dated November 13, 1952 to the Hon. Roberto Sánchez Vilella:

"Durante mi estadía en Ottawa, Canada, sitio donde se celebró la sesión de octubre, fui invitado a una reunión privada por los Sres. Francisco de Abrisqueta, Secretario General del Instituto Inter-americano de Estadísticas, y Stuart A. Rice, Jefe de la Delegación de los Estados Unidos a la sesión en curso. El motivo de la reunión fué discutir conmigo sobre las posibilidades de que Puerto Rico ingrese como miembro en el Instituto Interamericano de Estadísticas. Esta gestión partió voluntariamente de estos señores, motivada quizás, por la participación indirecta de Puerto Rico en dos sesiones consecutivas del Comité sobre el Mejoramiento de Estadísticas Nacionales. Estos señores me hicieron saber que verían con agrado una solicitud formal de Puerto Rico para que se le aceptase como miembro del Instituto Interamericano de Estadísticas.

Se discutieron las posibles objeciones que pueden surgir de hacer nosotros esta solicitud. La principal objeción parece ser el miedo que puedan tener algunos países de que la inclusión de Puerto Rico en el Instituto represente un voto más para los Estados Unidos. En contra de ésa se presentó como argumento el hecho real, que la nueva organización política de la isla la autoriza a solicitar su ingreso.

No ví yo en ese momento motivo alguno para oponerme a la idea de presentar esa solicitud formal que ellos sugerían, y por lo tanto, les comuniqué que discutiría el asunto con las personas llamadas a tomar una decisión en la isla. El Sr. Rice se comunicó con el Departamento de Estado de los Estados Unidos para notificarles de la propuesta que se me había hecho y de la posible acción favorable de parte de Puerto Rico."

The rest of the memorandum reflects the participant's views that full membership by Puerto Rico in the IASI would have the support of

other delegations and would set a precedent for similar membership in other international bodies.

8. On June 16, 1954, Mr. Abrisqueta, Secretary General of the Institute wrote to Mr. Labadie as follows:

"Hace tiempo deseaba ponerme en comunicación con usted de manera personal, para intercambiar impresiones sobre una idea que surgió y discutimos durante la II Sesión de COINS en Canadá en octubre de 1952. Me estoy refiriendo a la posibilidad de que el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico pudiera ingresar al Instituto Interamericano de Estadística como miembro gubernamental. Seguramente usted ya sabe que en 1955 tendrá lugar en Santiago la III Conferencia Interamericana de Estadística, y, al mismo tiempo, la III Asamblea General de los miembros del IASI. Con ese motivo, pienso que, de existir la posibilidad de ingreso de Puerto Rico al Instituto, sería oportuno que tal cosa ocurriera antes del año próximo, a fin de que su país participara como el Estado vigésimo tercero, entre los integrantes gubernamentales del IASI.

Yo tengo la confianza de que por parte del Instituto no solo no habría mayor dificultad legal, sino que el acceso de su país sería recibido con gran complacencia. Pienso que la solicitud de ingreso o la consulta sobre la posibilidad de ingresar, debe de partir del Gobierno del Estado de Puerto Rico. Es por eso que me dirijo a usted con ruego de que considere el asunto y si lo estima oportuno lo lleve al estudio de las autoridades puertorriqueñas que corresponda.

El Comité Ejecutivo del IASI celebrará su XI Sesión en la primera quincena de diciembre de 1954. Si para entonces el Gobierno de Puerto Rico hubiese presentado una consulta sobre la admisión o una solicitud de admisión, el Comité Ejecutivo estaría en condiciones de decidir sobre cualquiera de esos dos acercamientos.

Le adjunto los Estatutos del Instituto que en mi concepto permiten la filiación de su país."

9. Mr. Labadie sent Undersecretary of State Morales Carrión a letter on September 7, 1954 transmitting a copy of Mr. Abrisqueta's letter and stated the following:

"Pasé por Washington el pasado mes de julio, y al visitar al Instituto me volvieron a hablar del asunto. Hay un gran interés en que Puerto Rico participe como miembro gubernamental, ya que su Constitución actual así lo permite. Los miembros del Comité Ejecutivo del Instituto han hecho saber que de recibirse nuestra solicitud votarán a favor unánimemente. En la otra ocasión en Canadá el delegado de los Estados Unidos consultó con el Departamento de Estado sobre la conveniencia de nuestra participación individual en la organización. Al recibir una respuesta afirmativa, él y Abrisqueta me hicieron la invitación original.

Queda de nuestra parte aceptar o no esta invitación. Te someto de nuevo el asunto oficialmente para tu decisión. Si te es posible hacerlo, te agradeceré le comuniqués al Secretario General del Instituto que la invitación está en nuestro Departamento de Estado ante consideración oficial. Con esto se satisface lo solicitado en el segundo párrafo de la carta del Sr. Abrisqueta."

10. Mr. Sammons, Chief of the Division of Statistics, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Puerto Rico Planning Board, replied on September 30, 1954 to a letter from Mr. Abrisqueta asking him to prepare a paper for the next statistical conference. Mr. Sammons' letter stated in part: "Our mutual friend, Juan Labadie, mentioned something to me about the possibility of Puerto Rico becoming a member of the Institute in its own right. I would appreciate it if you would send me any information on this that you may have." Mr. Abrisqueta replied on November 24 by reference to his correspondence with Mr. Labadie and stating the following:

"The Executive Committee will meet in Washington during the first half of March 1955. If by that time we shall have received a request for admission from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Executive Committee will be in a position, in March, to act upon it."

He noted earlier in the letter that he had advised Mr. Labadie "how it could be of interest to the Government of Puerto Rico to request admission to the Institute prior to June 1955, at which time the Third General Assembly of the IASI members and the III Inter-American Statistical Conference will both be held, so as to be able (si) to participate in the Assembly and the Conference with due representation."

11. Mr. Cándido Oliveras received a letter dated July 15, 1955 in his capacity as ex-officio member of the Institute, from the Secretary-General of the Institute stating in part as follows:

"El nuevo Comité Ejecutivo en su primera sesión, celebrada en Quitandinha el 23 de junio de 1955, decidió que, de conformidad con la solicitud presentada en la III Asamblea General de los Miembros del IASI, verificada el 9 de junio de 1955, se llevará a efecto una revisión de los Estatutos. En virtud de que esta carta tiene también por objeto obtener de usted cualquier sugestión o proyecto de enmienda a los Estatutos referidos, mucho sabríamos agradecer que cualquier iniciativa suya sobre este particular nos la hiciera conocer a más tardar el 15 de octubre próximo, dirigida a "Inter American Statistical Institute, Pan American Union, Washington 6, D. C., U. S. A." El Comité Ejecutivo desea contar con el mayor número posible de sugestiones sobre este punto, a fin de poner en práctica la decisión de III Asamblea General de los Miembros del IASI. La presente solicitud no implica que los miembros no tengan derecho para someter en cualquier momento sugestiones o proposiciones sobre enmiendas. Pero en este último caso deben llevar la firma, por lo menos, de 10 de los miembros del IASI."

12. If the time is propitious to seek membership for the Commonwealth in any international organization, the IASI would be a good place to start, not only because the leadership of the Institute is favorably disposed toward the idea but also because of the technical nature of the organization. The special and general conferences sponsored by the Institute, wherein members vote by national delegations, make recommendations to governments but none of them are binding on governments. Nor

does the Institute recommend treaties or conventions for ratifications. Some recommendations are on matters which, insofar as the U. S. is concerned, lie exclusively within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government to implement (e.g. relating to national population census), some primarily within the Commonwealth's jurisdiction (e.g. relating to cost of living), and others in which there is a joint responsibility (e.g. relating to agriculture). Unlike United Nations specialized agencies, the Institute is made up of technical rather than diplomatic representatives. There are no political issues involved in the subject matter or in the handling of organizational matters in which disagreement between the Federal and Commonwealth representatives might prove embarrassing to the United States. The issues are technical and scientific in which friendly disagreement between these representatives could only enhance the respect of other nations for both.