

# SANTIAGO IGLESIAS AND THE 76TH CONGRESS

GONZALO F. CORDOVA

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GONZALO F. CORDOVA, quien nació en Puerto Rico, obtuvo su doctorado en historia en Georgetown University. Es profesor de historia en el Departamento de Historia de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Ha publicado numerosos artículos en revistas y libros. Es autor de "Santiago Iglesias y el Congreso de 1937" (en prensa) y "Santiago Iglesias y el Congreso de 1939" (en prensa). Su presente artículo es parte de un libro de historia que se publicará próximamente.

De los trabajos impresos en el campo cultural en este siglo han sido las exposiciones de historia y geografía, entre ellas la de 1937 en el Museo de Historia y Geografía de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. En 1937, el Dr. Sebastián González García, Dr. Federico de Oña y el premio Nobel de literatura Juan Ramón Jiménez.

El siglo XX fue un período de gran actividad intelectual en la isla. El principal movimiento intelectual fue el surgido principalmente por la República Dominicana, Cuba y de la isla de Puerto Rico. De este último país con motivo de las relaciones con la revolución castrista. Por otro lado, la guerra civil española del 1936 al 1939 tuvo un grupo de intelectuales de gran competencia intelectual.

En el Puerto Rico del siglo XX han destacado personajes de gran importancia en el campo de la agricultura, comercio, industria y educación. Desde principios de siglo se nota un gran incremento agrícola que dio paso a grandes exposiciones norteamericanas, el auge del azúcar y la explotación de las centrales azucareras en forma masiva. Esto

Don Pablo Casals fue el hijo adoptivo de Puerto Rico. Casals con sus actuaciones en el campo de la cultura y la educación, fue un gran impulsor de la cultura y la educación en Puerto Rico. En 1937, el Dr. Sebastián González García, Dr. Federico de Oña y el premio Nobel de literatura Juan Ramón Jiménez.

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GONZALO F. CORDOVA, quien nació en Ponce, Puerto Rico, obtuvo su doctorado en historia en Georgetown University. Se desempeñó como profesor en el Departamento de Historia de la Universidad Interamericana, Recinto de San Juan y al presente es Caatedrático Auxiliar en el Departamento de Historia de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras. Sus publicaciones son las siguientes: compilador de El bicentenario en San Juan (San Juan, 1977), autor de Santiago Iglesias, creador del movimiento obrero en Puerto Rico (Río Piedras, 1979) y "Santiago Iglesias y las elecciones de 1932" (en prensa). El presente artículo es parte de su tesis doctoral "Resident Commissioner Santiago Iglesias and his Times".

For the 76th Congress Santiago Iglesias asked to be reappointed to the four committees he had previously served. He was reappointed and again became a member of the committee of Insular Affairs, Agriculture, Labor and Territories.<sup>1</sup> Iglesias appeared before the Committee of Reciprocity and Trade Agreements where he opposed the reduction of the Cuban sugar tariff. Governor Blanton Winship also spoke defending the Puerto Rican economy.<sup>2</sup> The trade agreement that was finally signed with Cuba did not affect Puerto Rico. Eight bills were introduced in January 1939 by the Resident Commissioner. They dealt with: Social Security, incorporation of Puerto Rico as a territory, the amendment of section 40 of the Jones Act to allow the Legislature to make changes in the Insular courts, the amendment of section 38 of the Jones Act to allow more power to the Public Service Commission, aid for wildlife restoration, transfer of certain Federal property to the Masons, a fish-cultural project, and relief for Julia Santiago.<sup>3</sup> Iglesias lobbied consistently for these bills while dealing with the regular work

<sup>1</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Harold L. Doughton (Chairman, Ways and Means Committee), 4 January 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 6 January 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 28 January 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 6 January 1939; Statement of the Governor of Puerto Rico before the Committee for Reciprocity; information on the hearing of January 3, 1939, in connection with the negotiation for a supplemental trade agreement with Cuba, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; See *Congressional Record*, Vol. 84, p. A 107, A 234.

<sup>3</sup> See *Congressional Record*, Vol. 84, pp. 26, 27, 537; *El Mundo*, 27 February 1939, p. 1.



of advising Insular departments, associations, and people in obtaining Federal aid to improve socio-economic conditions. With Miles H. Fairbank he discussed the necessity for the continuation of Federal funds for the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration (P.R.R.A.) for permanent work and relief help. The problem here was that Interior Secretary Harold Ickes had no personal interest in the P.R.R.A. and would have been happy to get rid of the said agency. He had only taken it because Ernest Gruening had mismanaged it.<sup>4</sup> Iglesias wrote to Senator Bolívar Pagán explaining his great desire for the extension to Puerto Rico of the Social Security Act. Congressional leaders advised him that in order to accomplish this, Puerto Rico had to become an incorporated territory. This was the principal reason for the incorporation bill.<sup>5</sup> As on prior occasions there was strong criticism of this bill. Congressman Vito Marcantonio was the loudest critic of the bill and of other plans of Iglesias.<sup>6</sup> The Resident Commissioner disregarded the critics as usual. At a White House reception that Iglesias attended, he reminded the President and Mrs. Roosevelt of the needs of the Puerto Rican people.<sup>7</sup> Realizing that in Congress the most important power a member has is the right to vote, Iglesias began to look for ways to get the right to vote for all territorial delegates and the resident commissioner without amending the Constitution. This was an impossible dream to accomplish due to the fact that Puerto Rico was a colony; nevertheless, he tried.<sup>8</sup>

The power struggle between Labor Commissioner Prudencio Rivera Martínez and Pagán continued. Iglesias incessantly used all his diplomatic skills to bring together the two factions that were slowly

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 6 January 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 12 January 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 21 January 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 28 January 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 4 February 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 11 February 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 18 February 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 14 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 29 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 2 February 1939; *Ibid.*, 5 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 22 February 1939, p. 1; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, p. A 298; Harold L. Ickes, *The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes* (New York, N.Y.: Da Capo Press, 1974), vol. III, pp. 42-43.

<sup>5</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 5 January 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>6</sup> *La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico*, 3 January 1939, p. 6; *Ibid.*, 4 January 1939, p. 6; *El Mundo*, 4 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 8 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 January 1939, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 21 January 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 22 January 1939, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> *El Mundo*, 29 January 1939, p. 1; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 28 January 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Frank Murphy (Attorney General), 27 January 1939; Frank Murphy to Santiago Iglesias, 31 January 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

taking form. When Commissioner Rivera Martínez came to Washington in January 1939 Iglesias cabled Senator Pagán to come for a summit conference to arrange a reconciliation between them. Iglesias wanted to end the dangerous fight before it could develop disastrous consequences. Pagán complained that Rivera Martínez and his followers were very active and disposed to form a new party, but due to his work, Pagán was unable to fly to Washington.<sup>9</sup> By the same token Iglesias could not leave Washington to go to San Juan and intervene personally in the conflict. He planned to go in June. To find harmony in the unnecessary power struggle, Iglesias personally analyzed the problem with Rivera Martínez and wrote to Pagán explaining the need to end the futile strife.<sup>10</sup> Rivera Martínez, after conferring for five days, then agreed to reach an understanding with Pagán. The conflict, unfortunately, continued.<sup>11</sup> With the death of Rafael Alonso Torres in February, 1939, the cohesion in the Free Federation and the Socialist Party was further weakened.<sup>12</sup> Iglesias was greatly saddened by the death of Alonso Torres, as he had been his closest associate for four decades. He considered this death a "calamity" for the working classes.<sup>13</sup>

Lino Padrón Rivera was voted vice-president of the House. It was not a simple task, however, to find a substitute to fill the seat of the late Alonso Torres. There was no controversy leaving Nicolás Noguerras Rivera as secretary-general of the Free Federation. Iglesias urged Pagán and Rivera Martínez to agree on the replacement for the House

<sup>9</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 7 January 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 7 January 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 18 January 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 19 January 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 20 January 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>10</sup> *El Mundo*, 26 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 January 1939, p. 1; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 27 January 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>11</sup> Santiago Iglesias to William D. López, 20 January 1939; William D. López to Santiago Iglesias, 23 January 1939; Santiago Iglesias to William D. López, 27 January 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 1 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 2 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 9 February 1939; Santiago Carreras to Santiago Iglesias, 10 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Santiago Carreras, 15 February 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 29 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 30 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 31 January 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 1 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 4 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 7 February 1939, p. 1; *El Imparcial*, 30 January 1939, p. 2; *Ibid.*, 7 February 1939, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 11 February 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 23 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 24 February 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 25 February 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 24 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 25 February 1939, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> *El Mundo*, 28 February 1939, p. 8.



vacancy and avoid more conflicts. Nogueras Rivera, who was in the group siding with the Commissioner of Labor, suggested three candidates: Prudencio Rivera Martínez, Cirilo Avilés, and Francisco Paz Granela.<sup>14</sup> All three worked in the Department of Labor. Other candidates were Iglesias' daughter Josefina and Ramón Barrios. Iglesias cabled Pagán that Josefina should not run and that Rivera Martínez was an excellent candidate: but if he did not accept, Nicomedes Rivera and Nicolás Nogueras Rivera were suggested as alternates. The Commissioner of Labor rejected the House seat. At the Socialist Territorial Committee meeting—which Rivera Martínez did not attend—Nicomedes Rivera was unanimously elected.<sup>15</sup> Pagán complained to Iglesias that the Commissioner of Labor was creating difficulties. Iglesias lamented this situation and suggested that Pagán should not take any action.<sup>16</sup>

Since the fall of 1938 stories had been appearing in the press of "phantom" employees in the Capitol and of payment irregularities. These irregularities came to be known as "The Capitol Racket" where Coalitionists were involved. Socialist Senator Sixto Pacheco was even arrested. The Department of Justice, which was controlled by the Liberal Party, conducted a much publicized investigation.<sup>17</sup> All these, together with his sympathies with Rivera Martínez, led Senator Epifanio Fiz Jiménez, to a vitriolic attack on Pagán, the Senate, and the Coalition government. This attack, naturally, created a most serious political crisis for the Coalition and further divided the factions of Pagán and Rivera Martínez as Fiz Jiménez was expelled from the Socialist Party.<sup>18</sup> Iglesias was completely indignant at the corruption at

<sup>14</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 24 February 1939; Nicolás Nogueras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 25 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Nogueras Rivera, 3 March 1939; Nicolás Nogueras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 6 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Imparcial*, 28 February 1939, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 11 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 13 March 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 17 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 7 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 15 March 1939, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 17 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 20 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>17</sup> Néstor Rigual, *Incidencias parlamentarias en Puerto Rico* (San Juan, P.R.: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1977), vol. II, p. 399; Ojeda Reyes, *Vito Marcantonio y Puerto Rico* (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracán, 1978), pp. 83-86; *The New York Times*, 19 October 1938, p. 11; *Ibid.*, 6 November 1938, p. 30.

<sup>18</sup> Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 399-412; 418-431; Blanca Silvestrini de Pacheco, *Los trabajadores puertorriqueños y el Partido Socialista* (Río Piedras, P.R.: Editorial Universitaria, 1979), pp. 124-125; See Epifanio Fiz Jiménez, *El racket del capitolio* (San Juan, P.R.: Editorial

the Capitol. This, however, was not the first time government funds had been misused, but it was the first time the Department of Justice had made an investigation. Previously the Legislature majority had control over the Department of Justice and, therefore, nothing had happened although more funds had been involved. Martínez Nadal also had a similar opinion of the case.<sup>19</sup> When Federal laws had been violated in the P.R.R.A., no one had been prosecuted. It appears that the Department of Justice, and the Federal Department of the Interior, which was responsible for running the Island, had two different yardsticks to measure governmental irregularities. Pagán complained that the Department of Justice took more measures against Socialists than against Republican-Unionists during the controversial investigation. The reason for this partiality was that the Liberals were looking for ways to divide the Coalition, destroy the Socialist Party, and reach an understanding with the Republican Union Party.<sup>20</sup>

Iglesias always gave the same advice to both Rivera Martínez and Pagán and constantly urged them to stop the attacks and reach a harmonious understanding. This power fight was for him simply a painful tragedy which only benefited the opponents of the Free Federation and the Socialist Party.<sup>21</sup> He was doing his best to persuade his followers of the infecundity of the current fratricidal fight.<sup>22</sup> Iglesias found it hard to accept the reasons for so much intrigue which was weakening the organizations to which he had dedicated his life.<sup>23</sup> The

Esther, 1944); *El Mundo*, 20 March 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 24 March 1939, pp. 1, 4; *El Imparcial*, 22 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 March 1939, p. 2; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 22 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 24 March 1939; Santiago Carreras to Santiago Iglesias, 25 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Santiago Carreras, 27 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>19</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 17 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 6 May 1939, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 437-444; *El Mundo*, 10 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 11 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 13 April 1939, pp. 1, 4; *Ibid.*, 14 April 1939, pp. 1, 5, 9; *Ibid.*, 15 April 1939, pp. 1, 5, 9; *Ibid.*, 24 April 1939, p. 1; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 27 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>21</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 9 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 24 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 29 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 17 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 25 April 1939, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Cristóbal del Campo, 8 February 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>23</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Juan Carreras, 5 April 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Mateo Pérez Sanjurjo, 6 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.



situation had become a torment for him because it was destroying the people involved.<sup>24</sup>

The followers of Rivera Martínez came to be known as the Socialist Opposition. This group included Blas Oliveras, Antonio Reyes Delgado, Sandalio Alonso, Nicolás Nogueras Rivera, Francisco Paz Granela, José Ferrer y Ferrer, Epifanio Fiz Jiménez, Cirilo Avilés, and others. The group met on March 18 and 19, and after a stormy session, agreed to a truce with Pagán's group until June.<sup>25</sup> Iglesias favored the truce, and he thought that Rivera Martínez would not be able to destroy the Socialist Party.<sup>26</sup>

As these events had been evolving in Puerto Rico, the Resident Commissioner continued attending to his multiple Congressional labors in order to improve the socio-economic conditions of his numerous constituency. Governor Winship had proved most cooperative and did his best to obtain Federal grants. The Governor complained that while the New Deal appropriations for the States averaged \$222.29 per capita and those for Hawaii and the Virgin Islands averaged \$141.50 and \$282.28 respectively, Puerto Rico received only \$57.41 per capita. The economy still needed more aid and protections from Washington because of the still high unemployment rate as there were two workers for every job.<sup>27</sup> Iglesias submitted eight additional bills during February and March. These dealt with relief for Mary Rose Williams, sections II and VI of the Social Security Act, the building of a monument to the American army in Mayagüez, surveying of Punta Santiago Harbor in Fajardo, making rules governing the United States district courts, extending wildlife restoration projects, drafting an amendment to an act to reform the second deficiency bill, and drafting an amendment to modify the agricultural appropriation bill.<sup>28</sup> The bill to incorporate Puerto Rico as a territory gradually faded away as it did not get Secretary Ickes' support.<sup>29</sup> This did not discour-

<sup>24</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Antonio Reyes Delgado, 6 April 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Enrique Ramírez Moll, 24 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>25</sup> *El Mundo*, 20 March 1939, p. 5; Fiz Jiménez, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-49; Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

<sup>26</sup> *El Mundo*, 29 March 1939, p. 5; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 12 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>27</sup> *The New York Times*, 6 February 1939, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 1359, 1404, 1446, 1969, 3077, 3255; *El Mundo*, 28 February 1939, p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> *El Mundo*, 1 February 1939, p. 1.

age Iglesias from continuing to lobby for the other bills and from dealing with the numerous requests that came from Puerto Rico.<sup>30</sup> A \$12 million grant for the housing development was obtained.<sup>31</sup>

The European political situation had reached a point that by early 1939, a great war was foreseen in the immediate future. As a result of this, the strategic importance of Puerto Rico for the defense of the Panama Canal became of great importance to the Roosevelt Administration. The Island would now become a recipient of large military grants to make it a key defense post. To build a base for the Navy in San Juan a grant of \$9,300,000 was made. Iglesias considered that the defense appropriations would have a great impact on the economy because they would generate many jobs.<sup>32</sup> Secretary Ickes began making plans with the War Department to grant funds to develop the economy for defense purposes.<sup>33</sup> Governor Winship found it desirable to fortify the Island as its strategic value was of vital importance for the defense of the Hemisphere.<sup>34</sup> Defense appropriations in the coming five years would make a stronger impact in the Insular economy than the reconstruction ones of the New Deal. Wars can indeed prove beneficial for some places.

Before the defense appropriations became a reality by March 1939, the economy of Puerto Rico had become quite critical. The application of the Wage-Hour Law was considered a Damocles' sword by the business interests, while the workers favored the law. Both positions were, naturally, understandable. An Economic Congress formed by numerous business and civil groups met on March 12, 1939,

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 7 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 24 March 1939, p. 10; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 4 February 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 11 February 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 18 February 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 25 February 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 4 March 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 11 March 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 18 March 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 25 March 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 31 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. A 415, A 492, A 540, A 684, A 815, A 930, A 1026, A 1129, A 1152, A 1329, 3112-3113, 3123.

<sup>31</sup> *El Mundo*, 1 February 1939, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 11 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 March 1939, p. 1; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 25 February 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>33</sup> *El Mundo*, 10 April 1939, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> *The New York Times*, 25 April 1939, p. 43.



and discussed the difficult economic situation and the ways to improve it.<sup>35</sup> The economic crisis, together with the crucial local political situation, plus Washington's policies toward Puerto Rico, led Martínez Nadal to pronounce a celebrated speech blasting the Roosevelt Administration "Fascist control" of Puerto Rico. After a political career of three decades, he now felt "bitterness, disgust, and disillusionment."<sup>36</sup> The speech caused great excitement. Radio Berlin even used it to discredit the United States. Martínez Nadal was congratulated by almost everyone of importance in the Island, regardless of party affiliation, and backed by the Legislature.<sup>37</sup> The speech was translated into English, and Iglesias inserted it into the Congressional Record and asked for better treatment for Puerto Rico.<sup>38</sup> He wrote to Pagán stating that the speech would have no positive impact in Washington.<sup>39</sup> Martínez celebrated speech.<sup>40</sup>

Agricultural problems during 1939 were not as numerous as in previous years, but still Iglesias had to deal with them. Coffee and tobacco did not need as much help as previously.<sup>41</sup> With Commissioner of Agriculture Francisco A. López Domínguez, who had succeeded Rafael Menéndez Ramos, Iglesias kept in close contact to get Puerto Rico included in beneficial Congressional legislation. Agriculture Secretary Henry Wallace was always cooperative with Insular Agriculture.<sup>42</sup> It was sugar cane, as usual, which continued promi-

<sup>35</sup> *El Día*, 13 March 1939, p. 1; *El Mundo*, 13 March 1939, p. 1; Filipo de Hostos, ed., *Proceedings of the Economic Convention of Puerto Rico held March 12, 1939, at San Juan, Puerto Rico* (n.p., 1939), pp. 1-44.

<sup>36</sup> *El Mundo*, 25 March 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 27 March 1939, p. 8; Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 412-416.

<sup>37</sup> *El Mundo*, 26 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 March 1939, pp. 1, 10; *Ibid.*, 28 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 29 March 1939, pp. 4, 5; *Ibid.*, 30 March 1939, pp. 1, 9; *Ibid.*, 31 March 1939, pp. 1, 8; *Ibid.*, 3 April 1939, pp. 1, 6; *Ibid.*, 11 April 1939, pp. 1, 5; *Ibid.*, 13 April 1939, p. 4; *The New York Times*, 29 March 1939, p. 16; Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 416-418.

<sup>38</sup> *El Mundo*, 11 April 1939, p. 1; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 83, p. A 1376.

<sup>39</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 12 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>40</sup> *El Mundo*, 5 May 1939, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 January 1939, p. 1; Santiago Iglesias to Cordell Hull, 6 March 1939; Benjamin Summer Welles to Santiago Iglesias, 10 March 1939; Ramiro L. Colón to Santiago Iglesias, 20 May 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Ramiro L. Colón, 23 May 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>42</sup> *El Mundo*, 6 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 3 April 1939, p. 10; Francisco A. López Domínguez to Santiago Iglesias, 25 January 1939; Francisco A. López Domínguez to Santiago Iglesias, 1 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Francisco A. López Domínguez, 8 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Francisco A. López Domínguez, 1 March 1939; Francisco A. López

nently on the agriculture agenda. The new Congressional sugar legislation was to discriminate against Puerto Rico as the quota was to be lowered. Iglesias opposed this move with his usual tenacity. In the Congressional Sugar Block, Puerto Rico was represented by Delegate Samuel King of Hawaii. But in June, Iglesias was made a member. Secretary Ickes was now against the quota system. In September, 1939, President Roosevelt made a 180 degrees change and decided to eliminate the quota system which had been so detrimental to the Puerto Rican economy. The New Deal Administration was now reversing its policies of 1933-1934 which Iglesias and the Coalition had always opposed.<sup>43</sup> Iglesias' work on the Agricultural Committee was appreciated by Secretary Wallace, who wrote him a letter thanking him for working "early and late on many occasions in order to give proper consideration to the problems of the "Department of Agriculture."<sup>44</sup>

During the last part of the Congressional session, Iglesias submitted an additional eight bills dealing with river surveys, promoting the merchant marine policy and its discrimination against Puerto Rico, the compensation of World War I industrial workers in Puerto Rico, statehood, elective governorship, and an additional resident commissioner. Iglesias continued his usual lobbying to have the Island included in all beneficial Congressional legislation.<sup>45</sup>

Domínguez to Santiago Iglesias, 11 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Francisco A. López Domínguez, 13 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Francisco A. López Domínguez, 29 March 1939; Francisco A. López Domínguez, 5 April 1939; Francisco A. López Domínguez to Santiago Iglesias, 1 May 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Francisco A. López Domínguez, 9 May 1939; Francisco A. López Domínguez to Santiago Iglesias, 16 May 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Francisco A. López Domínguez, 23 May 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>43</sup> *El Mundo*, 11 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 24 March 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 25 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 March 1939, p. 8; *Ibid.*, 1 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 2 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 8 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 11 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 10 September 1939, p. 1; Santiago Iglesias to Marvin Jones, 30 March 1939; Marvin Jones to Santiago Iglesias, 31 March 1939; James A. Dickey to Santiago Iglesias, 24 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Henry A. Wallace, 1 May 1939; Henry A. Wallace to Santiago Iglesias, 23 May 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Henry A. Wallace, 21 August 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 30 March 1939; Meeting of the Sugar Block, n.d., Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 3; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 3209, 3255, A 1440, A 1847.

<sup>44</sup> Henry A. Wallace to Santiago Iglesias, 18 August 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>45</sup> See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 4376, 4990, 5060, 5090, 5471, 7313, 7931, 8799, 11117, A 1577, A 1685, A 1803, A 2179, A 2345, A 2485, A 2704, A 3388; *El Mundo*, 6 April 1939, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 9 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 11 April 1939, p. 6; *Ibid.*, 18 April 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 19 April 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 23 April 1939, p. 9; *Ibid.*, 24 April 1939, p. 7; *Ibid.*, 28 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 1 May 1939, p. 14; *Ibid.*, 4 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 20 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 24 May 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 8 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 12 June 1939, p. 6; *Ibid.*, 21 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27



It was the Wage-Hour Law which kept Iglesias busiest during the Congressional session. This Law had had a strong impact in Puerto Rico as it had augmented unemployment figures by 70,000 (40,000 in the needle industry alone).<sup>46</sup> Business interests convinced Governor Winship that the Law had to be amended.<sup>47</sup> Originally Iglesias thought that this amendment would not be accepted by Congress. He added, however, that certain special exceptions could be made.<sup>48</sup> Speaker Miguel A. García Méndez cabled the Resident Commissioner stating that the needle industry would be wiped out if the Wage-Hour Law was totally applied. Iglesias told this to Elmer H. Andrews, administrator of the Wage and Hour Division of the Federal Department of Labor, who began to work for a solution.<sup>49</sup>

The Wage-Hour Law created a crisis in the Free Federation as numerous workers wanted its enforcement while the leadership realized the great unemployment problem that it would create.<sup>50</sup> The Executive Council of the Free Federation met and rejected the motion of Rivera Martínez to exempt the needle industry from the Wage-Hour Law and to allow the Legislature to approve a local law to regulate such wages and hours. Winship also met with the Council in order to change this decision.<sup>51</sup> The Governor was able to get the Free Federation and representatives from the needle industry to hold

June 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 2 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 11 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 12 July 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 6 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 4 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 9 August 1939, p. 1; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 1 April 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 8 April 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 15 April 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 22 April 1939; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias, 6 May 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>46</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 May 1939, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>48</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 February 1939, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, p. 136; *El Mundo*, 23 February 1936, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 27 February 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 7 March 1939, p. 8; Santiago Iglesias to Elmer H. Andrews, 21 February 1939; Elmer H. Andrews to Santiago Iglesias, 28 February 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>50</sup> Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 4 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 8 February 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 11 February 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 9 February 1939; Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 25 February 1939, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, p. 177; *El Mundo*, 4 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 8 March 1939, pp. 1, 8; *Ibid.*, 9 March 1939, p. 5; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 6 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 8 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

meetings in order to reach an understanding.<sup>52</sup> Andrews then recommended that Congress amend the Wage-Hour Law. This was then accepted by the Free Federation. Representative Mary T. Norton and Senator Elbert D. Thomas presented legislation to amend the law to the labor committee they chaired. Iglesias then proposed that the Legislature should have the power to regulate wages and hours. He explained to Congress the labor realities of Puerto Rico.<sup>53</sup>

All this situation caused some labor unrest from which the Nationalists, the Communists, and even Luis Muñoz Marín tried to gain some political advantage. Congressman Vito Marcantonio also got involved.<sup>54</sup> Marcantonio now belonged to the American Labor Party and favored independence instead of statehood as the final status for Puerto Rico. He opposed the amendments to the Wage-Hour Law in the House floor and attacked Governor Winship, whom he disliked intensely. Iglesias energetically answered Marcantonio stating that he was surprised at the defense of the Puerto Rican workers by the Congressman from New York. If Puerto Rico followed Marcantonio's ideas, Iglesias rebuted, more than a hundred thousand would die of hunger. The Resident Commissioner added that he wanted the Wage-Hour Law applied with flexibility to the special economic conditions of the Island.<sup>55</sup> *El Mundo* editorialized praising Iglesias' position and

<sup>52</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-138; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 11 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 13 March 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 13 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 16 March 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 17 March 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to William Green, 17 March 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Blanton Winship, 17 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 26 March 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>53</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, p. 138; *El Mundo*, 11 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 20 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 30 March 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 4 April 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 6 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 25 April 1939, p. 8; Memorandum to William Green from Boris Shishkin, 15 March 1939; Mary T. Norton to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 20 March 1939; Boris Shishkin to Santiago Iglesias, 21 March 1939; Prudencio Rivera Martínez to Santiago Iglesias, 28 March 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Prudencio Rivera Martínez, 3 April 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 14 April 1939; Santiago Iglesias to José M. Vivaldi, 17 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 3112-3113, A 1129, A 1922.

<sup>54</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-142; *La Democracia*, 3 May 1939, p. 3; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 13 March 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 15 April 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 18 April 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 22 April 1939; Nicolás Noguerras Rivera, 30 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>55</sup> See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 5471, 5476, A 2179; *El Mundo*, 12 May 1939, p. 3;



congratulated him for now favoring flexibility toward the Wage-Hour Law and not its total enforcement as he had previously wanted. If he had done this before, Puerto Rico's economic crisis would not have become so critical.<sup>56</sup>

The amendments to the Wage-Hour Law continued to be studied in Congress but chances of approval during that 1st session became more difficult because a consensus by all interested groups was difficult to achieve.<sup>57</sup> Thus no decision was to be taken during 1939. Iglesias, nevertheless, continued working with the complex and controversial law, looking for a solution to the problem.<sup>58</sup> The conflict was solved later in 1940.<sup>59</sup>

During the January-August 1st session of the 76th Congress, Iglesias had submitted twenty-four bills and three petitions, debated five times, and made twenty-four extensions and remarks. Other members of Congress had also presented legislation affecting Puerto Rico. There were fourteen bills presented in the Senate and twenty bills presented in the House. None of Iglesias' bills were approved, however; it sometimes took more than one Congressional session to have a bill approved. The bills beneficial to the Island submitted by other Congressmen and backed by Iglesias provided some \$65 millions. These were the following: sections V and VI of the Social Security Act (maternal and child health and rural health services), \$500,000; agricultural extension laws, \$400,000; roads and bridges, \$1,000,000; New Deal reconstruction programs, \$1,000,000; P.R.R.A. funds, \$7,000,000; housing, \$14,030,000; education, \$400,000; harbor improvements, \$2,500,000; San Juan drydock, \$1,300,000; defense construction program, \$25,300,000; relief funds to be used by the governor, \$10,000,000; and electrification, \$3,000,000. There was also some minor legislation.<sup>60</sup>

Nicolás Nogueras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 13 May 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>56</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 May 1939, p. 8.

<sup>57</sup> *El Mundo*, 3 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 June 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 6 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 9 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 12 August 1939, p. 1; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Nogueras Rivera, 3 August 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 29 July 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, n.d. but early August 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>58</sup> *El Mundo*, 4 October 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Nogueras Rivera, 24 October 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>59</sup> Silvestrini de Pacheco, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.

<sup>60</sup> *El Mundo*, 16 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 16 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 August 1939, p. 8; See

Simultaneous with this Congressional session, other developments were taking place. Criticism against Governor Winship — Marcantonio was the leading critic — had influenced President Roosevelt to remove him. The President had never been able to develop a good relationship with the Governor, so he favored a change. Defense plans also played an important part. Ickes wanted the change as he did not get along with Winship. Gruening was not in agreement with making the change because he knew that Winship was quite popular in Puerto Rico, regardless of what separatists thought of him.<sup>61</sup>

Ickes erroneously believed that Martínez Nadal, whom he disliked intensely, was the one who controlled Puerto Rico and that Winship just followed the policies of the Senate President. It was the executives of the White House and the Interior Department the ones who pulled the principal strings that really controlled the Island.<sup>62</sup> As rumors circulated about Winship's removal, messages of support for the Governor began to arrive at the White House. Martínez Nadal, García Méndez, and the Free Federation backed him.<sup>63</sup> Iglesias wrote to President Roosevelt supporting Winship which he considered "Puerto Rico's greatest Governor."<sup>64</sup> The President answered (in a letter drafted by Ickes) that the change was to take place and that Admiral William D. Leahy would "serve the people of Puerto Rico with ability and understanding."<sup>65</sup> The Chief Executive had made his decision. He was also planning to replace Attorney General Eugenio Fernández García with a Continental.<sup>66</sup> Winship went to the White

*Congressional Record*, vol. 84, p. A 4143. In the Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán there are also documents with the notifications of the approval of this legislation.

<sup>61</sup> Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 599; Ernest Gruening, *Many Battles* (New York, N.Y.: Liverright, 1973), pp. 278-279; Félix Ojeda Reyes, *Vito Marcantonio y Puerto Rico*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-48, 58-94; *El Mundo*, 14 April 1939, p. 9; *Ibid.*, 4 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 15 May 1939, p. 18; *The New York Times*, 5 May 1939, p. 8; *Ibid.*, 27 June 1939, p. 22.

<sup>62</sup> Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 599; *El Mundo*, 6 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 17 May 1939, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> *El Mundo*, 4 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 5 May 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 5 May 1939, p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Franklin D. Roosevelt, 4 May 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>65</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt to Santiago Iglesias, 12 May 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 15 May 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 14 May 1939, p. 3. The original draft of the letter is in the Harold L. Ickes Papers, Secretary of the Interior File-Puerto Rico, Container 256, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

<sup>66</sup> draft of the letter is in the Harold L. Ickes Papers, Secretary of the Interior, File Puerto Rico, Franklin D. Roosevelt to Harold L. Ickes, 6 May 1939; Harold L. Ickes Papers, Secretary of the Interior, Puerto Rico, Container 256, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.



House trying to retain his job but was not successful.<sup>67</sup> President Roosevelt officially announced on May 12, that Admiral Leahy was to be the next governor of Puerto Rico.<sup>68</sup>

Winship served in La Fortaleza until the end of June. During his five years in Puerto Rico he had set a record of ninety-three trips to Washington to deal with the complex Insular problems. The Legislature passed a concurrent resolution declaring Winship adopted son of Puerto Rico as a token of his public service and popularity.<sup>69</sup>

Admiral William D. Leahy was born in Hampton, Iowa, on May 6, 1875. He graduated from the Annapolis Naval Academy (1897) and fought in the naval battle of Santiago de Cuba in 1898. He served in the Philippine campaign, in Panama, and in World War I. In the Navy he rose to the rank of Admiral in 1936. The following year Admiral Leahy had been appointed Chief of Naval Operations, a position he held until May 1939 when he retired. Because Puerto Rico was being turned into the "Gibraltar of the Caribbean" and the "Hawaii of the Atlantic," his appointment was considered primarily to strengthen the United States defense for the war that was brewing in Europe. The strategic location of the Island had become paramount again as in previous periods.<sup>70</sup> The appointment was generally well received. Two complaints, however, came from the American Civil Liberties Union and Oswald Garrison Villard, chairman of a small group called Committee for Fair Play for Puerto Rico. They wanted a civilian for governor.<sup>71</sup>

Due to the change of governors, to the legislation Iglesias had submitted in Congress, and to other matters, Martínez Nadal, Pagán, and others went to Washington in June and met with Leahy and members of the Roosevelt Administration. Iglesias congratulated Leahy for his nomination and offered to cooperate with him. There were however

<sup>67</sup> *El Mundo*, 5 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 9 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 7 June 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 5 May 1939, p. 9; Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 627-628.

<sup>68</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 May 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 13 May 1939, p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 May 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 21 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 7 June 1939, p. 1; *The Washington Post*, 28 May 1939, p. 7; *The New York Times*, 26 June 1939, p. 3; *Ibid.*, 27 June 1939, p. 22; Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 445; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 6847, 6848, A 4152.

<sup>70</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 14 May 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 13 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 14 May 1939, pp. 3, 42; *Ibid.*, 15 May 1939, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> *El Mundo*, 15 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 21 May 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 15 May 1939, p. 4; *The Washington Post*, 28 May 1939, p. 7.

rumors that Leahy might be named to another post instead of the one of governor. This prompted some labor leaders to ask that Iglesias or Rivera Martínez be then appointed to the governorship. Such an appointment became unnecessary as Leahy was confirmed as governor of Puerto Rico by the Senate on June 13, 1939. Iglesias again congratulated the new Governor and offered his cooperation.<sup>72</sup> Leahy would assume his post in September.

The new strategic importance of Puerto Rico for the United States initiated a new statehood drive. Even in the Liberal Party a movement was developing to put statehood in the Party's platform. The Legislature approved a resolution expressing satisfaction that the Island had been included in the defense plans and this, together with the Coalition electoral majority, was regarded as a step toward statehood. A committee which drafted amendments to the Organic Act was named to prepare the way for statehood. Martínez Nadal, Pagán, Iglesias, and other Coalition leaders met in Washington and lobbied for statehood. This was the reason for Iglesias' bills for statehood and other political reforms that had already been mentioned. Senator Ernest W. Gibson, Vermont Republican, supported the admission of Puerto Rico as a state.<sup>73</sup> The Roosevelt Administration was interested in defense, and satisfied with the existing colonial status. There was no interest in statehood; thus nothing much was accomplished.

The relationship between Secretary Ickes and the Coalition had never been good. By 1939, the situation reached one of its lowest points. The Interior Secretary came to consider Martínez Nadal an "s.o.b."<sup>74</sup> and García Méndez a "little better than a gangster."<sup>75</sup> What Ickes thought of Iglesias is not known. The Resident Commissioner is not even mentioned once in his published diary. The cause of the

<sup>72</sup> *El Mundo*, 1 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 2 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 4 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 5 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 8 June 1939, p. 10; *Ibid.*, 9 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 14 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 15 June 1939, p. 1; 16 June 1939, p. 1; Santiago Iglesias to William D. Leahy, 13 June 1939; William D. Leahy to Santiago Iglesias, 14 June 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>73</sup> *El Mundo*, 27 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 1 June 1939, pp. 1, 10; *Ibid.*, 3 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 5 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 7 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 8 June 1939, pp. 1, 3; *Ibid.*, 11 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 15 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 21 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 June 1939, p. 5; *The New York Times*, 17 May 1939, p. 17; *Ibid.*, 22 May 1939, p. 2; *Ibid.*, 20 May 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 5 June 1939, p. 3; *Ibid.*, 6 June 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 27 June 1939, p. 15; Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 445-446.

<sup>74</sup> Teófilo Maldonado, *Hombres de primera plana* (San Juan, P.R.: Editorial Campos, 1958), p. 168.

<sup>75</sup> Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 392.



enmity between the Secretary of the Interior and the Coalition was that Ickes wanted the Coalition to follow his policies. The Coalition leadership wanted Ickes to recognize that they were the electoral majority in Puerto Rico and should not be treated as colonial puppets, as had been the case on numerous occasions. Martínez Nadal, who was not as patient as Iglesias, went so far as to declare that he would not visit Ickes so that he (Martínez Nadal) would not lose his patience.<sup>76</sup> The statehood leader of Puerto Rico was not afraid of expressing his views on the dictatorial style sometimes used by Ickes when dealing with the Island.<sup>77</sup> It was Ickes' insistence on the passing of legislation creating the Water Resources Authority (the electric utility) that made the Interior Secretary dislike the Senate President intensely. Martínez Nadal defeated the legislation in Puerto Rico and would succeed in defeating it in Congress too (July 1939). Iglesias also participated in opposing this Legislation. *El Mundo*, whose editorials greatly criticized Iglesias and the Coalition numerous times, praised the defeat of the Water Resources Authority bill.<sup>78</sup>

In the middle of this electric bill controversy, Iglesias had had a forty-five minute interview with Ickes, at the Secretary's request on July 11. The Interior Secretary was in a "bad mood" and complained that Martínez Nadal had not been present when Iglesias and other Coalition leaders had visited him four weeks before. The Senate President had returned to Puerto Rico and made statements to *El País* attacking Ickes. The paper also published editorials in the same vein. Secretary Ickes considered these attacks "unjust and disrespectful." He added that he would "never do anything with" Martínez Nadal and would "remain aloof of any action regarding Puerto Rico in view of the treatment and response that he received" for "his sincere actions."

Iglesias then told Ickes that there was "a misunderstanding in all this affair" that was "very regrettable, but that the people of Puerto Rico as a whole" were "not in any way responsible for the views that any individual" could "express and give away in any newspaper."

<sup>76</sup> *El Mundo*, 10 October 1938, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 25 October 1938, p. 5.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 March 1939, p. 1; *The Washington Post*, 28 May 1939, p. 7.

<sup>78</sup> *El Mundo*, 23 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 24 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 25 April 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 2 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 11 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 24 July 1939, p. 8; *Ibid.*, 26 July 1939, pp. 1, 8; *The New York Times*, 1 May 1938, p. 24; Rigual, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 345-350; Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias on visit to Harold L. Ickes, 11 July 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

Puerto Rico should in no way "suffer" from this situation. The Resident Commissioner urged the Secretary "to continue to give the Island the benefits of all his activities and actions and good recommendations in order that the people and Puerto Rico itself" would "not be deprived of any of the good things that his Department could do as it" had "been doing in the past." Iglesias also stated that neither Congress nor the Interior Department should ever use "a big stick against the Government and the Legislature of Puerto Rico" to compel them to do what they rightly or wrongly did nor wanted them to do "whenever there is a difference of opinion." Ickes answered that he did not want to do that and that Congress and the Roosevelt Administration would "never do anything to compel the Legislature of Puerto Rico" to do what it did not want.<sup>79</sup> Historical facts, however, show this was not true. A few weeks later, Ickes denied that he was trying to eliminate Martínez Nadal; but the Senate President was warned to be more careful with his actions.<sup>80</sup>

The New York World's Fair had opened on April 30, 1939. There Puerto Rico had a pavillion with an exhibit on the Island and its products. On July 25 Iglesias delivered a brief speech to commemorate Puerto Rico's Day at the Fair. Two days later he had it included in the *Congressional Record*.<sup>81</sup>

As had been previously mentioned, the independence ideal had begun to decline in the Liberal Party after the 1936 elections. Under the leadership of Senator José Ramírez Santibáñez, Antonio Barceló's successor, the pro-American sympathies of the Liberals began to grow. This development led numerous followers to leave the Party and join Muñoz Marín's rapidly growing Popular Democratic Party. This pro-Americanism of Ramírez Santibáñez would ultimately lead the Liberals to become a statehood party in 1940. As the Liberal leader saw his followers decrease in numbers, it became imperative to look for an understanding with political leaders in other parties. Senator Ramírez Santibáñez made contacts with the Socialists, but most especially, with the Republican Union Party. Martínez Nadal's declining health and

<sup>79</sup> Memorandum by Santiago Iglesias on visit by Harold L. Ickes, 11 July 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>80</sup> *El Mundo*, 16 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 August 1939, p. 5.

<sup>81</sup> *El Mundo*, 15 May 1939, p. 8; *Ibid.*, 26 July 1939, p. 1; *La Prensa*, 25 July 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 14 May 1939, p. 42; *Ibid.*, 26 July 1939, p. 14; Frank Monahan (Director of Research and Official Historian of the Fair) to Santiago Iglesias, 28 July 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, p. A 3617.



the confusing political atmosphere led the Republican Union forces to lose some of their cohesion. Yet, most Republican-Unionists favored the renewal of the Coalition as a deal with the Liberals brought back the bitter memories of the 1924 Alliance. Some Republican-Unionists, however, favored Rivera Martínez over Pagán.<sup>82</sup>

When Martínez Nadal and Pagán had been in Washington in June, Ramírez Santibáñez, Rivera Martínez, and García Méndez had allegedly made a tripartite agreement to form a new political entity. Ramírez Santibáñez was to be Resident Commissioner, Rivera Martínez Speaker, and García Méndez President of the Senate. This new development, together with García Méndez's 4th of July speech, created a severe crisis in the Republican Union Party. The Territorial Committee met and party unity was apparently restored as Martínez Nadal did not have sufficient power to expel García Méndez. The Coalition was also to be kept.<sup>83</sup>

The truce made in March between Rivera Martínez and Pagán, as can be deduced, had not resolved the power struggle inside the Socialist Party. A break had taken place. Iglesias was well aware that the truce had not been a success. In an interview on July 3, he declared that he would return to Puerto Rico after the adjournment of Congress in July to definitely solve the power struggle in the Socialist Party. The Coalition would be renewed for the 1940 elections. There had been errors, but the economic and political lives of the people had been transformed. During his life time, he had detested internal fights and would not support such type of sterile polemics. His objective had been, and would continue being, the socio-economic improvement of the people.<sup>84</sup>

Rivera Martínez and his followers of the Socialist Opposition were very active by the middle of June. Pagán and his group were worried

<sup>82</sup> Bolívar Pagán, *Historia de los partidos políticos puertorriqueños (1898-1956)*. (San Juan, P.R.: Librería Campos, 1959), vol. II, pp. 139-140; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 27 April 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 6 May 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 20 May 1939; Nicolás Noguera Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 30 September 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Imparcial*, 15 July 1940, pp. 1, 3; *El Mundo*, 15 July 1940, p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 20 July 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 29 July 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 5 July 1939, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 6 July 1939, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 19 July 1939, pp. 1, 5; *Ibid.*, 25 July 1939, p. 5; Angel R. Torregrosa, *Miguel A. García Méndez, su vida y su obra* (San Juan, P.R.: Imprenta Puerto Rico, Inc., 1939), pp. 198-243; Pagán, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 144-145.

<sup>84</sup> *El Mundo*, 4 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 6 June 1939, p. 5.

about the strong influence Socialist Opposition had over the Free Federation and its relationship with Ramírez Santibáñez and García Méndez. The talks between Ramírez Santibáñez, García Méndez, and Rivera Martínez came to be known as Tripartism. Rivera Martínez, however, declared that the truce continued and that a convention should be called with Iglesias present to solve the controversy.<sup>85</sup>

From Washington Iglesias declared that Pagán had worked well.<sup>86</sup> Rivera Martínez considered this statement as a mere personal opinion and added that the truce continued.<sup>87</sup> When Pagán returned from Washington on July 10, he reported that Iglesias would not come to deal with the Party's controversy as the Socialist leadership would itself solve it.<sup>88</sup> Stories began to circulate that the creation of a new party (i.e., Tripartism) was gathering strength and that Washington authorities looked favorably upon it.<sup>89</sup> Rivera Martínez now declared that it was too late for Iglesias to come to Puerto Rico to settle the Socialist power struggle.<sup>90</sup> The Commissioner of Labor had crossed the Rubicon. The break with the Socialist Party had been taken.

Pagán now closed ranks with Martínez Nadal, who was having similar problems, to defend the Coalition from Tripartism.<sup>91</sup> Both Pagán and Rivera Martínez began to organize their supporters as the fight between both groups escalated. The Liberals were working closely with Rivera Martínez.<sup>92</sup>

As a result of these developments, and considering the continuation of the congressional session until August, Iglesias decided to postpone his trip, but backed the celebration of a Socialist convention to take official action finally regarding the conflict between Rivera Mar-

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 June 1939, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 20 June 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 June 1939, p. 4; *Ibid.*, 28 June 1939, p. 1.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 June 1939, p. 4.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 July 1939, p. 1.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 July 1939, p. 5.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 July 1939, p. 1.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 July 1939, p. 4.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 July 1939, p. 1.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 July 1939, pp. 1, 4, 5; *Ibid.*, 18 July 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 1 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 5 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 19 August 1939, p. 1; *La Prensa*, 22 July 1939, p. 2; *El País*, 31 July 1939, p. 1; *La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico*, 31 July 1939, p. 1; *El Imparcial*, 5 August 1939, p. 5; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 20 July 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 29 July 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; Pagán, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 140, 145.



tínez and Pagán.<sup>93</sup> The Socialist Convention met on August 20, but Rivera Martínez—who had gone to New York—and his followers did not attend. The Commissioner of Labor was unanimously expelled from the party. Pagán now reorganized the Socialist hierarchy and achieved complete control of the Executive Territorial Committee.<sup>94</sup> Iglesias backed the decisions of the convention and praised Pagán's "sincerity, intelligence, and dynamism."<sup>95</sup>

As this had been taking place, stories began to circulate that Secretary Ickes was fomenting Tripartism. Iglesias furiously denied that the Interior Department was involved in Island politics.<sup>96</sup> There was even a story that Iglesias would become Speaker and García Méndez Resident Commissioner in order to reconcile the Coalition with the Interior Department.<sup>97</sup> Ickes categorically declared that he had no intention in the formation of a new party and denied he wanted to eliminate Martínez Nadal.<sup>98</sup> This was not true; Ickes was fomenting the Tripartist movement in order to destroy Martínez Nadal and the Coalition.<sup>99</sup>

It was under these political circumstances that Governor Leahy began to govern Puerto Rico on September 11, 1939. George Malcolm, who had served as a judge in the Supreme Court of the Philippines, replaced Fernández García as attorney general. Martínez Nadal offered to cooperate with Leahy. The Governor, however, would just closely follow the advice of Secretary Ickes. Thus the fight between Martínez Nadal and Ickes continued; while in September Gruening

<sup>93</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, n.d. but of early August 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 3 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 5 August 1939, pp. 1, 5; *Ibid.*, 7 August 1939, pp. 1, 10; *Ibid.*, 8 August 1939, pp. 6, 9; *Ibid.*, 9 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 10 August 1939, p. 5; Pagán, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 141.

<sup>94</sup> Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán, "Convención general extraordinaria del Partido Socialista, San Juan, Puerto Rico, agosto 20, 1939," pp. 1-87; *El Mundo*, 21 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 24 August 1939, p. 1; *El País*, 21 August 1939, p. 1; Santiago Carreras to Santiago Iglesias, 23 August 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Santiago Carreras, 29 August 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 24 August 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; Pagán, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 141-144, 145.

<sup>95</sup> *El Mundo*, 13 September 1939, p. 7.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 8 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 10 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 14 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 16 August 1939, p. 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 August 1939, p. 1.

<sup>98</sup> *El Mundo*, 18 August 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 August 1939, p. 5.

<sup>99</sup> Interview with Miguel A. García Méndez, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 8 July 1981; Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 349.

had been made governor of Alaska.<sup>100</sup>

Right in the middle of September, Martínez Nadal got so seriously ill that Extreme Unction was administered as the doctors thought he had died. Suprisingly, the statehood leader revived and began to slowly improve until he was taken to Johns Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore late in October. There he underwent surgery and by December he was feeling much better. Iglesias visited his close friend at the Hospital.<sup>101</sup> From the Baltimore bed, Martínez Nadal kept in touch with Insular developments. He wrote to Governor Leahy complaining he was appointing persons that were not Coalitionists to posts that should go to Socialists or Republican-Unionists.<sup>102</sup> Also a strong attack condemning Tripartism was issued.<sup>103</sup>

When Congress finally adjourned at the end of August, Iglesias and his wife took a short vacation to New England and made a brief trip to New York City to see Leahy leave for Puerto Rico. Rivera Martínez went to Washington to talk to Iglesias, but he was then out of town.<sup>104</sup> In Washington the Resident Commissioner attended to routine office work before a special session of Congress began at the end of September.<sup>105</sup> He was greatly disgusted with the Party fight, but never lost

<sup>100</sup> *El Mundo*, 4 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 5 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 12 September 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 10 September 1939, sec. IV, p. 2; *Ibid.*, 12 September 1939, p. 17; *Ibid.*, 21 September 1939, p. 17; *Ibid.*, 21 September 1939, p. 6; Ickes, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 641-711; Gruening, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-284; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 2 September 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>101</sup> *El Mundo*, 15 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 16 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 17 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 18 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 19 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 20 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 21 September 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 October 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 12 November 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 30 November 1939, p. 1; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 15 September 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 15 September 1939; Bolívar Pagán to Santiago Iglesias, 28 September 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 25 October 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 26 October 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>102</sup> Rafael Martínez Nadal to William D. Leahy, 20 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 20 November 1939, p. 1.

<sup>103</sup> *El Mundo*, 4 December 1939, p. 1; Reece B. Bothwell, ed., *Puerto Rico: cien años de lucha política* (Río Piedras, P.R.: Editorial Universitaria, 1979), vol. III, p. 214.

<sup>104</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 5 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>105</sup> R. González Requena (Acting Assistant Commissioner of the Interior) to Santiago Iglesias, 9 September 1939; Santiago Iglesias to R. González Requena, 11 September 1939; Santiago Iglesias to R. González Requena, 20 September 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Gilberto M. Font (Executive Director of San Juan Housing Authority) 7 October 1939; William Lemke (Representative of North Dakota) to Santiago Iglesias, 23 September 1939; Santiago Iglesias to William Lemke, 26 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 20 November 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 23 November 1939, p. 1.



his optimism. To Nogueras Rivera Iglesias wrote that "fratricide fights" were "suicidal and contrary to the goals for the defense" of the working classes.<sup>106</sup> He believed that his fights had always been against the exploiters of the workers and not against his comrades.<sup>107</sup>

Free Federation Secretary-General Nogueras Rivera kept Iglesias informed of the developments in the labor movement. The Conciliation and Mediation Commission had intervened in sixteen strikes involving 15,000 workers during 1939, as opposed to forty-five strikes and 30,982 workers in the previous year. The opponents of the Free Federation had been less active and the Communists even backed the extension of Social Security to Puerto Rico. During the year, 120 new unions were chartered for a total of 458, as opposed to 378 in 1938 and 195 in 1937. A teachers' and a musicians' union were organized for the first time. Collective agreements were made with practically all the shipping companies. This was important, because due to the 1938 dock strike, no agreements had been signed and the work was being done under the provisions made by the Arbitration Board. The Free Federation was strong and growing. The Congress of Industrial Organizations had not been able to expand and had only one union chartered.<sup>108</sup>

The Free Federation asked Iglesias to be the delegate to the American Federation of Labor convention to be held this time in Cincinnati, October 2-13, 1939. He submitted the annual report that dealt with the controversial Wage-Hour Law and the work done by the Free Federation.<sup>109</sup> The most important thing Iglesias did at the

<sup>106</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Nicolás Nogueras Rivera, 13 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 20 November 1939, p. 5.

<sup>107</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Juan Cándido Rivera, 13 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán.

<sup>108</sup> Government of Puerto Rico, *Thirty-Ninth Annual Report of the Governor of Puerto Rico* (San Juan, P.R.: Bureau of Supplies, Printing and Transportation, 1939), pp. 62-63; Government of Puerto Rico, *Fortieth Annual Report of the Governor of Puerto Rico* (San Juan, P.R.: Bureau of Supplies, Printing and Transportation, 1940), p. 39; Nicolás Nogueras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 13 March 1939; Nicolás Nogueras Rivera to Santiago Iglesias, 15 April 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; American Federation of Labor, *Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (Washington, D.C.: Judd and Detweiler, Inc., 1939), pp. 288-289.

<sup>109</sup> *El Mundo*, 15 August 1939, p. 5; *Ibid.*, 27 November 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 10 October 1939, p. 4; Santiago Iglesias to William Green, 10 August 1939; Frank Morrison to Santiago Iglesias, 26 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; American Federation of Labor, *Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor*, pp. 30, 224, 678-679.

convention was to start reorganizing the Pan-American Federation of Labor. Together with William Green, Luis Morones, the vice-president, and others the plans were made. Iglesias was to go to Mexico and other Latin American countries to start the reorganization, as he was the secretary.<sup>110</sup> When Iglesias returned to Washington, he delivered a speech in Congress on the importance of the Pan-American Federation of Labor.<sup>111</sup>

Back on Capitol Hill, the Resident Commissioner continued attending to his work. He went to Baltimore to visit his ailing friend Martínez Nadal. Iglesias had now decided to return to Puerto Rico by boat with Martínez Nadal, after the latter had undergone surgery. On this voyage—at the end of November or the beginning of December—the Socialist leader planned to discuss political problems with Martínez Nadal and look for their solutions.<sup>112</sup> This voyage of the Coalition leaders was not to take place. A victim of malaria, contracted in Mexico, Santiago Iglesias died unexpectedly in Washington on December 5, 1939.

<sup>110</sup> *El Mundo*, 11 October 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 23 October 1939, p. 1; *The New York Times*, 11 October 1939, p. 21; American Federation of Labor, *Report of the Proceedings of the Forty-Ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor*, pp. 30, 224, 678-679.

<sup>111</sup> See *Congressional Record*, vol. 85, p. A 397.

<sup>112</sup> Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 25 October 1939; Santiago Iglesias to Bolívar Pagán, 26 October 1939; William Green to Santiago Iglesias, 6 November 1939, Archive of Igualdad Iglesias de Pagán; *El Mundo*, 26 October 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 27 October 1939, p. 1; *Ibid.*, 10 November 1939, p. 4.