

MEMORIAL PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF PORTO RICO.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF PORTO RICO, TRANSMITTING
A MEMORIAL PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF
PORTO RICO.

JANUARY 22, 1902.—Referred to the Committee on Insular Affairs and ordered to be
printed.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
San Juan, P. R., January 15, 1902.

SIR: I have the honor to herewith transmit a true copy of a memo-
rial to the Senate and House of Representatives of the Congress of the
United States passed by the legislative assembly of Porto Rico, and
a proved by the governor on January 14, 1902.

Respectfully,

CHAS. HARTZELL,
Secretary.

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C.

A MEMORIAL TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Whereas by the provisions of Article VIII of the treaty of Paris,
signed December 10, 1898, Spain ceded to the United States in Porto
Rico all the buildings, wharves, barracks, forts, structures, public
highways, and other immovable property which, in conformity with
the law, belonged to the public domain, and as such belonged to the
Crown of Spain, but particularly providing in said Article VIII that
the relinquishment or cession therein referred to could not in any
respect impair the property or rights which by law belong to the
peaceful possession of property of all kinds, of provinces, municipal-
ities, public or private establishments, ecclesiastical or civic bodies,
or any other association having legal capacity to acquire and possess
property in the territory ceded; and

Whereas upon the formal surrender of the sovereignty of Porto
Rico, October 18, 1898, all buildings, wharves, barracks, forts, struc-
tures, public highways, and other immovable property, including
lands and lots then in possession of or controlled or administered by
officers of the Spanish army or navy or by civil representatives of
Spain, were turned over by the Spanish Commission to the United
States Commission appointed to receive the same, and subsequently,
by said United States Commission, to the military government estab-
lished in Porto Rico by order of the President, and by said military
government held and administered as the property of the United
States, and continue in possession of the military authorities stationed
in Porto Rico, except as conditionally turned over to the civil govern-
ment by order of the honorable Secretary of War.

Whereas the records of titles to property, files of royal decrees and orders, and accounts of expenditures of public funds prove either a legal title in or a strong equitable right to the possession of numerous buildings; parcels and lots of land transferred and held as aforesaid by the people of Porto Rico and by the several municipal corporations; and

Whereas the city of San Juan, by reason of it having been for centuries and until a very few years ago walled in, is, except on lands reserved for military use, solidly built up, leaving no space for the location of public buildings, for which there is great need, particularly for the administrative departments and for schools, and the residence sections are congested, poor tenants being crowded into small, illy ventilated, foul and filthy quarters, which constitute a standing menace to the health of the community. The only hope of relief from the dire inconveniences suffered by the public and educational interests and the dangers to public health lies in the opportunity by the insular government to dispose of the considerable tract of land adjoining the city on the east and constituting the remaining portion of the small island on which San Juan is situated: Therefore, be it

Resolved by the legislative assembly of Porto Rico, That the Congress of the United States is hereby memorialized and most earnestly solicited to speedily enact such measures as will forever settle the questions of title to and permit the enjoyment by the people of Porto Rico and by such municipal corporations as may hold title to or may show that they are entitled to the buildings, lots, and so-called public land herein referred to; and

Be it further resolved, That, in aid of the certain and early settlement of claims and causes for contention, the Congress is respectfully requested to send a special committee, or a subcommittee of the Insular Committees, to Porto Rico to inquire into the status of the question here presented and to make such recommendation for the division and allotment of the buildings, lots, and lands involved as may appear to be just and equitable.

And your memorialists will ever pray.

CHAS. HARTZELL,
President Executive Council.
MAN. F. ROSSY,
Speaker House of Delegates.

Approved January 14, 1902.

WILLIAM H. HUNT,
Governor.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, *Porto Rico.*

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of a memorial to the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States passed by the legislative assembly of Porto Rico, and approved by the governor on January 14, 1902, the original of which is on file in this office.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand at San Juan, P. R., and caused to be affixed the great seal of Porto Rico, this 14th day of January, A. D. 1902.

[SEAL.]

ARTHUR E. PARKE,
Assistant Secretary.