



ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF A NEW
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
CONCERNING THE CAMPO DEL MORRO AREA
SEPTEMBER 29, 1976

TODAY, MR. EVERHARDT, THE DIRECTOR
OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND I HAVE SIGNED
A NEW COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT COVERING THE
PLANNING, ADMINISTRATION, AND CONTROL OF THE
AREA KNOWN AS FORT BROOKE AND CAMPO DEL MORRO.
I HAVE ALSO SIGNED TWO AMENDATORY AND CORRECTIVE
QUITCLAIM DEEDS WHICH WERE SIGNED BY SECRETARY
OF THE INTERIOR KLEPPE LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON.
THESE TWO DEEDS, ORIGINALLY SIGNED IN 1967,
TRANSFERRED A LARGE PORTION OF THE CAMPO DEL MORRO
AREA TO THE COMMONWEALTH AND TODAY ARE BEING
TECHNICALLY CORRECTED.

WITH THE SIGNING OF THESE DOCUMENTS THE
COMMONWEALTH AND THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
FORMALLY CONCLUDE A SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS

INITIATED WHEN I WROTE TO THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR IN SEPTEMBER OF 1974 REQUESTING THAT HE DESIGNATE A REPRESENTATIVE TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH US CONCERNING THE FORT BROOKE AREA.

SECRETARY MORTON NAMED JOHN COOKE, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, TO HEAD UP A TEAM OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR IN NOVEMBER OF THE SAME YEAR, AND THE INITIAL DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD HERE IN LA FORTALEZA AT THE END OF JANUARY OF 1975. SINCE THAT TIME THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL MEETINGS HELD TO CONSIDER THE DETAILS OF THE NEW COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AND THE TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE CORRECTIVE DEEDS.

THE NEED FOR A NEW AGREEMENT, I THINK,

BECAME CLEAR TO ALL THOSE INVOLVED AFTER THE FIRST MEETINGS. FOR ALMOST SEVEN YEARS FROM THE SIGNING OF THE ORIGINAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT IN MARCH OF 1967, IT HAD NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE THE COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA. THE OLD AGREEMENT WAS STRUCTURED IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE PARK SERVICE COULD NOT MOVE AHEAD UNTIL THE COMMONWEALTH APPROVED, AND WE COULD NOT PROCEED UNLESS THE PARK SERVICE APPROVED.

THE NEW AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR A CLEAR DELINEATION OF RESPONSIBILITY NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF PLANNING BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL. IT WILL GOVERN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENTIRE EL MORRO AREA. THE AREAS TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE PARK SERVICE AND THE COMMONWEALTH AREA CLEAR. EACH SIDE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PLANNING, ADMINISTRATION

AND CONTROL OF CERTAIN AREAS. THE COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENTIRE AREA IN CONCERT WITH ITS HISTORIC AND CULTURAL NATURE IS ASSURED BY THE GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY WRITTEN INTO THE NEW AGREEMENT WHICH REQUIRES CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION, BUT LEAVES THE BASIC PLANNING FOR EACH AREA TO THE ENTITY WHICH WILL BE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL. THIS WILL ENABLE THE PARK SERVICE TO INTERPRET THE OPEN AREA IMMEDIATELY IN FRONT OF THE FORTRESS EL MORRO IN A MANNER APPROPRIATELY IN TUNE WITH THE FORTRESS. I AM HAPPY TO SAY, BY THE WAY, THAT THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME MOVEMENT IN CONGRESS TO PROVIDE THE PARK SERVICE WITH THE FUNDS NECESSARY TO BEGIN RESTORATION OF THE FORTRESS WALLS EXPOSED TO THE OCEAN.

THE COMMONWEALTH, IN THE TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT, WILL BE FREE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH ITS PLANS TO RESTORE MANY OF THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN THE AREA AND TO DEVELOP THE EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL COMPLEX WHICH SAN JUAN NEEDS AND WHICH WILL MAINTAIN THE HISTORIC CHARACTER WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT TO PUERTO RICO.

I HOPE THAT THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE NOT HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR STAY HERE TO SEE THE RESTORATION OF THE MANICOMIO, WHICH EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN AREAS HAS BEEN COMPLETED. IT IS NOW FUNCTIONING AS THE SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE INSTITUTE OF PUERTO RICAN CULTURE.

IT IS OUR INTENTION TO PROCEED, AS RAPIDLY AS THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS PERMITS, WITH RESTORATION OF

CASA ROSA, AND TWO BUILDINGS LOCATED IN THE AREA,
KNOWN AS BALLAJA OR THE RODRIGUEZ ARMY HOSPITAL
AND BENEFICENCIA. THESE LAST TWO BUILDINGS REPRESENT
PERHAPS THE LARGEST SINGLE RESTORATION PROJECTS
WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN HERE IN PUERTO RICO. WE HAVE
ALREADY BEGUN WORK ON THE PARK AREA WHICH EXTENDS
FROM CASA ROSA ALONG THE WALLS TO THE AREA CONTAINING
EL POLVORIN, WHICH IS BEING CONVERTED INTO A CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM. EVENTUALLY, IN COORDINATION WITH THE
PARK SERVICE, WE HOPE TO PROVIDE FOR A JOINT VISITORS
CENTER AND A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR THE AREA
WHICH WILL SERVE THE FORTRESS AS WELL AS THE PARK
AND THE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX.

I SHOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
ESPECIALLY MENTION SOME OF THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE

WITH THEIR PERSEVERANCE AND DEDICATION MADE THE
SIGNING OF THE NEW ACCORDS POSSIBLE. MR. RAYMOND
COULTER, REGIONAL SOLICITOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR, AND MR. JAMES SCHWEITZER OF OUR OFFICE IN
WASHINGTON, ABLY APPLIED THEIR TALENTS TO WORKING
OUT SOLUTIONS TO THE LEGAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN
THE ACCORDS AND THE DEEDS. MR. DAVID THOMPSON,
REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WAS,
I UNDERSTAND, MOST HELPFUL IN HIS EFFORTS TO REACH
AN AMICABLE AGREEMENT. ALL OF YOU PRESENT IN ONE
WAY OR ANOTHER CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO
DEVELOPMENT OF THESE ACCORDS.

IN CLOSING, THERE IS ONE FINAL POINT I WOULD
LIKE TO MAKE. THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT IN THESE NEW ACCORDS HAVE RECOGNIZED

THAT EACH HAS RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH EACH WILL FULFILL.

THAT RECOGNITION IS SOMETHING WHICH TAKES PLACE IN A

MATURE RELATIONSHIP WHERE THE PARTIES TREAT EACH

OTHER AS CO-EQUALS. THIS AGREEMENT IS WORKABLE

BECAUSE OF THE RECOGNITION. IT IS MY HOPE THAT

THE JOINT EFFORT WHICH THIS AGREEMENT REFLECTS

CONTINUES IN THE SAME SPIRIT IN WHICH IT WAS FORGED.

THANK YOU.