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 CARIBBEAN: THE GOVERNORSHIP OF MIGUEL
 DE MUECAS, 1769-1776.

City University of New York, Ph.D., 1977
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1977

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY REFORMS IN THE CARIBBEAN:
THE GOVERNORSHIP OF MIGUEL DE MUESAS, 1769-1776

by

Altagracia Cortez-Squittone

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in history in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
The City University of New York
1977

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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PREFACE

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the Spanish crown came into the possession of the Bourbon dynasty. The principal objective of these rulers was to bring about political, economic and social reforms in order to strengthen an empire that showed signs of dissipation after a long period of decline in the seventeenth century. Reforms began to be introduced during the reign of Philip V and reached their culmination during the years of Charles III.

Through these reforms the Bourbon monarchs hoped to remedy the ills that beset the Hispanic Empire. In America the Spanish possessions had for decades been experiencing problems in the areas of political administration, economic development, and racial and demographic adjustment. The Caribbean Islands, a strategic part of that empire, experienced their share of these problems. But, unlike their mainland counterparts, the Spanish Antilles had been almost totally neglected by the Hapsburg monarchy in the seventeenth century. This was especially true in regard to the Islands of Puerto Rico, which consisted of the island of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, and the small surrounding islands of Mona, Culebra, and Vieques. The latter, unpopulated until the middle of the nineteenth century, was administered by the authorities in San Juan.

Although once called "the key to the Indies," Puerto Rico had been reduced to an entrepot of contraband by the eighteenth century. Misgovernment characterized the political administration of the island, and little attention was given to its economic development. It would have made the

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San Juan treasury independent from outside subsidies. Hence, there were few attempts at developing agricultural production. Most landholders only produced what they needed, and either neglected their remaining lands or used them for pasture. The government in Spain, for the most part, ignored their petitions for more laborers and tools, and did not encourage trade between Puerto Rico and the peninsula. Population growth and urban developments were slow; religious and cultural institutions were few. Spanish officials succeeded in keeping Puerto Rico within the fold of the empire, but this was due more to the weakness of the enemy expeditions that were mounted against the Plaza Militar of San Juan than to the strength of its forts and garrisons. Like the other aspects of Spanish administration, the military defenses of the island had been sorely neglected.

It was not until 1762 when the British seized Havana, that the Spanish crown began to be concerned with Puerto Rico and the other Caribbean possessions. Immediately after the British attack, Charles III sent Field Marshall Alexander O'Reilly, an Irish soldier in the service of Spain, to study the military situation in Puerto Rico. The Memoria (1765) which O'Reilly sent the king not only gave an account of the state of military affairs, but also included an enlightening report of the economy and society of Puerto Rico. On the basis of his observations, O'Reilly then drafted a series of instructions for the use of the governing authorities of Puerto Rico. These proposals were approved by the Council of the Indies, and put into operation by the governors appointed by Charles III. The most outstanding of these governors was Miguel de Moscoso, who administered the government of San Juan from 1769 to 1776.

The objective of this dissertation is to study in detail the government of Miguel de Moscoso, and the way in which the Spanish

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eighteenth-century reforms were put into effect in Puerto Rico. Although the application of the Bourbon reforms to Spanish America has been the subject of many scholarly studies, few of these works have dealt with the Caribbean region. This study hopes to advance the historiography in this area. This dissertation is also the first study of an eighteenth-century governor in Puerto Rico, and, therefore, expects to make a contribution in the area of Spanish administration in America as well.

The primary documentation for this study can be found at the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, the Archivo Histórico Nacional, and the Servicio Histórico Militar in Madrid. In the Archivo General de Indias in the Sección de la Audiencia de Santo Domingo under the Ramos de Puerto Rico, Hacienda, Guerra and Marina are contained almost all of the letters and papers of Miguel de Muesas, the royal officials of San Juan, the Bishop of Puerto Rico, the letters and petitions of the Ecclesiastical and Secular Cabildos, the accounts of the office of Contaduría and the decisions of the Fiscal in Madrid, the Expedientes del Consejo de Indias and Guerra, Testimonios, the royal orders and cédulas of Charles III, the fiscal accounts of the Cathedral and royal treasury of San Juan, and the petitions of individuals. The Archivo Histórico Nacional contains the complete Residencia de Miguel de Muesas, 1776-1784; and the fortification plans and maps drafted during the period by Thomas O'Daly, chief engineer of the San Juan Illas, and his assistants are located in the Servicio Histórico Militar.

The Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, and other published documentary collections containing materials pertaining to this period, were likewise consulted. The historical works of Francisco Xavier Gamboa and José Tello Ribera y Guzmán, two of Puerto

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contemporaries, provide excellent eye-witness accounts of the period of Muecas. General histories of the area and other secondary works were researched in an effort to understand the nature and results of eighteenth-century Spanish reforms in Latin America and particularly in the Caribbean.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to Professor Ruth Pike of Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center for her constant encouragement and excellent advice in the preparation of this dissertation. I have known Professor Pike since my days as a Hunter College student, and to her I owe my interest in Spanish American colonial history and in the Spanish archives. I would also like to give special thanks to Professors Harold Syrett of CUNY Graduate Center, Lolita Figueroa of Brooklyn College, and Edward J. Barbusey, S. J. of Fordham University for reading this manuscript and for making valuable suggestions.

The personnel of the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, *Excmo. Histórico Nacional* and *Servicio Histórico Militar* in Madrid, the Archivo General de Puerto Rico in San Juan, and the New York Public Library should be commended for their efficiency and generous help. To the John Jay College Library I am truly indebted for allowing me to make prints of the microfilms I purchased in Spain.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank Ms. Marjorie Adams and Lucy *Idro* for typing this manuscript.

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CHART OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Arroba	=	25.36 lbs. (dry) 3.32 gallons (oil) 4.26 gallons (wine)
Caballería	=	194.1 acres
Criadero (Ganado Mayor)	=	10 225/1,000 caballerías; 1,011.29 acres
Cuartillo	=	1.05 (dry quart)
Es-cua	=	0.87 acre
Hacienda	=	21,664.7 acres (approximately)

CHART OF MONETARY TERMS

Real	=	34 maravedis
Peso	=	8 reales
Ducado	=	375 maravedis
Quarto	=	4 maravedis

ABBREVIATIONS

AGI, Santo Domingo, leg.: Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, legajo, Seville, Spain.

AEN: Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Spain.

SHM: Servicio Histórico Militar, Madrid, Spain.

CHAPTER I

THE CARIBBEAN IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, 1600-1700

The seventeenth century has been referred to as the century of decline for the Spanish Empire. There is, however, much controversy among historians as to the causes of this decline, its extent, and manifestation throughout the Hispanic World. For some historians this century was not a period of decline, but merely an epoch during which the Hispanic Empire experienced great economic changes. According to this view, the center of economic power shifted from the Spanish metropolis to the silver colonies of Mexico and Peru. As the seventeenth century progressed Spain lost its dominant position in the empire. Plagued by natural catastrophies and continuous involvement in European wars, it could no longer make large investments in the American trade, or adequately protect its vast territorial possessions. The Spanish-American Empire, especially Mexico and Peru, began to consume more of its own raw materials and products, and spend more of its capital at home. The American colonies also began to take an increasingly significant role in the defense of the empire. Spain continued to develop and protect her most valuable territories, but tended to ignore those which rendered few precious metals or other basic raw materials. This strategic withdrawal has been hailed as the best course for Spain to follow, for, despite her territorial losses in the Caribbean, Spain was able to keep the

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rest of her empire intact.¹ The consequences of this policy for the Caribbean Islands, however, were disastrous.

The islands of Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico, Spain's most important possessions in the Caribbean, were the territories most affected by this neglect. They not only experienced internal economic, military, political and social problems, but also had to suffer foreign incursions against their shores and settlements. These problems were not unique to the seventeenth century. They had actually begun in the sixteenth century, but became increasingly worse during the 1700's with Spain's inability to provide the leadership needed for their solution.

Probably the worst of these internal problems were those relating to the economics of the Caribbean. During the early period of exploration, conquest and colonization, for example, Spaniards soon discovered that the Caribbean Islands did not possess large quantities of valuable mineral resources. Cuba, the largest of the Antilles, produced some 112,000 pesos in gold in 1519, but by 1535 gold production began to decline.² The total was probably about 3,000,000 pesos. Hispaniola and Puerto Rico also had short "golden eras." During the sixteenth century a total of about 4,000,000 dollars was supposedly extracted from the mines in Puerto Rico, but this figure seems to be an exaggeration.³ By 1600 whatever gold deposits there were had been exhausted.

Lack of valuable treasure led to early exploitation of the land throughout the entire Caribbean. With change to agricultural production began in the sixteenth century, and was extended into the

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seventeenth century. On the island of Hispaniola attempts were made to change the indigenous agriculture into an economy that could sustain the Spanish colony. The new lands belonged to the king of Spain, but settlers could hold them in usufruct. The native labor force was harnessed by the encomienda system, and European agricultural products and animals were introduced. These patterns in the agriculture of Hispaniola were also characteristic of the economies of Puerto Rico and Cuba.

Spanish agricultural production in Puerto Rico at first was an extension of Taino agriculture. The growth of American products, such as yuca (manioc) and maize was continued, but citrus fruits, sugar cane, ginger, plantains, coconut palms and other products were imported from Spain and Africa. Taino farmers worked the lands which had been taken away from them, and which had been distributed among the conquering Spaniards in the form of mercedes. A merced real was a concession of land granted to an individual by the Spanish crown. It had its origin in the capitulaciones or contracts that the early conquistadores made with the sovereign of Castille. A holder of a merced could reap the benefits of the lands entrusted to him only if he resided on them for a period of time. Since all the lands in America belonged to the crown, they theoretically reverted to it if the contract was ever violated, but this rarely happened in Puerto Rico.

Although the concession of lands was in the hands of royal administrators, the cabildos or municipal governments sometimes played a role in petitioning. The cabildo of San Juan was an

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exception. The crown, however, followed a dual policy with regards to this practice. On the one hand, it issued royal orders that cabildos be consulted when lands were distributed, and on the other, it sometimes ordered other administrators or audiencias to revoke titles to lands granted by cabildos. One thing seems clear, however; the cabildos did have the right to impose a tax on the concessions of land.⁴

Regardless of who dispensed the ~~merced~~, one group who benefited from the unlimited distribution of land-grants were the cattle ranchers. From the very beginning of the conquest, Spaniards who wanted an easy source of income, dedicated themselves to cattle-ranching. They set aside large tracts of land, called ~~hatos~~ ^{haciendas}, and smaller areas or criaderos as pasture for their steers or horses. By the middle of the seventeenth century Puerto Rican ranchers were making a lucrative business as the result of the local consumption of meat and the export of hides and tallow.⁵ Their wealth, however, depended on their extension of pasture lands, and many had acquired vast territories illegally.

The crown first began to deal with this problem, when in 1541 Charles V issued a royal cedula declaring the public use of pasture lands, woodlands, and water areas. The rancheros protested, but by the end of the sixteenth century the establishment of public pastures was a fact. Spanish agrarian reform was continued by Philip II, who ordered viceroys and presidents of audiencias to revoke the land grants distributed by cabildos. What for, the crown believed, concerned itself with lands which had been granted illegally.

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In 1618, however, the crown declared null and void all previous titles to lands in Puerto Rico, and required the presentation of written titles to verify existing land claims.⁶

Despite these reforms, the crown was not able to resolve the problem of land tenure in Puerto Rico until the second half of the eighteenth century. In the meantime, large cattle-ranchers continued to occupy vast territories. This, along with the introduction of ginger and the establishment of restrictive commercial policies, prevented the growth of a commercial agriculture. This was unfortunate, for Puerto Rico's soil was one of the most fertile in the Caribbean. Fray Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, a seventeenth-century traveler, commented in his Compendio y Descripción de las Indias Occidentales (1629) that the land was not only fertile but abundant. Its great mountains contained hard and valuable timber, and medicinal trees, such as the guayacan, which could be used to cure the French malaise.⁷ The Puerto Rican writer, Diego de Torres Vargas, in his Descripción de la Isla y Ciudad de Puerto Rico (1647) also noted the richness of the land. There were many different native fruits, he tells us, and the grapes, figs and pomegranates introduced from Spain were as delicious as those of Huelva and Córdoba.⁸ The principal products during his times were ginger and sugar cane, but in the sixteenth century, sugar cane had been the single most important crop.

Sugar cane was introduced into Puerto Rico during the 1520's. By 1526 there was a sugar mill in the town of San Juan, and by 1531, there were more than eleven sugar mills. According to a 1540 circular

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yearly.⁹ This expansion was achieved despite the labor and capital problems which plagued the industry since its beginnings. Toward the end of the sixteenth century sugar production began to decline. Spain, in an effort to protect Andalusian sugar planters, had prevented the importation of large quantities of sugar from the Indies. Activities of foreign interlopers also threatened the little commerce that existed.

The first decades of the seventeenth century found the sugar industry already in a state of stagnation. Eight sugar-mills were still in operation, but by 1647 only seven were left.¹⁰ The crown tried to aid the ailing industry by permitting loans to be made to sugar growers, and allowing the introduction of slaves free of duty. In 1609 it even went so far as to forbid sugar planters to grow ginger.¹¹

Ginger had been introduced into the Caribbean by the Portuguese during the sixteenth century, and had been exported to Spain in increasingly large quantities. It was easy to grow and export. No large capital investments or labor supplies were needed for its production, and so many small agriculturists began to grow it. Thus, ginger soon became a staple crop in the Puerto Rican colonial economy. It supported the inhabitants during the first half of the seventeenth century, but by 1725 ginger was on the decline. The crown had continued its restrictive policies with regards to its production, and Dominican and Brazilian growers had flooded the European market. Some Puerto Rican growers continued to cultivate ginger as matter of habit, and exported it illegally throughout

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the seventeenth century.

Ginger not only caused a decline in the production of sugar, but also affected cattle-raising. Fray Martín Vázquez de Arce, a seventeenth-century observer, estimated that out of 100,000 head of cattle which once roamed Puerto Rican pastures only about 10,000 were left.¹² In an attempt to protect the cattle industry, Governor Felipe de Braumont tried to prevent the round-up of wild cattle, and encouraged the establishment of pastures for domesticated cattle or ganado manso. But Puerto Rican hacendados found the business of growing ginger more lucrative, and continued to neglect cattle production.

Toward the middle of the seventeenth century tobacco took the lead as the most important product in Puerto Rico's agricultural economy. Like ginger, the cultivation of tobacco had been forbidden by the crown at the beginning of the century for fear it would be easily smuggled out of Puerto Rico. In 1614 Philip III decided to allow its cultivation, but those who engaged in its illegal trade would be sentenced to death or forfeit their property.

The first crop of tobacco for export was cultivated in 1627, and soon after, in 1632, the crown made the growth of tobacco a state monopoly or estanco in order to finance the public works of the city of San Juan. The costs of the construction of the walls of this city, for example, were paid out of tobacco revenues. The estanco was continued long after the walls were finished, only to become an obstacle in the expansion of this product. Influential cattle-owners eventually began to oppose actively the expansion of tobacco.

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By the end of the seventeenth century Puerto Rico's tobacco production had plunged into a decline, which became more severe with the increased competition from Virginia planters.

Although other products, such as cacao, maize, manioc, yams, legumes, and plantains were also grown, none could be grown in sufficiently large quantities to sustain the Puerto Rican economy during the seventeenth century. Sugar, ginger, and tobacco became sources of wealth for some settlers at different times throughout the century, but their cultivation was limited. Puerto Rican agricultural production, therefore, was not very significant during this period.

Agricultural production in Cuba was different. Here it became extensive enough to achieve commercial proportions. It began, as in the other Caribbean islands, with the Spaniards' adaptation to the native agriculture. Using the native population, they cultivated manioc, maize and tobacco. Soon, they introduced citrus fruit trees, wheat, rice, sugar cane, and cattle.

In time a large class of hacendados developed. Its power was derived from the usufruct of lands granted to individuals by the crown. Land tenure in Cuba was no different than in other places in America. The first governor, Diego Velázquez granted lands to the early colonizers although he did not have express authority to do so. In 1530 the crown recognized these divisions. The cabildo also assumed the right to distribute lands, but only those which were considered municipal property. By 1700 the cabildos had little available land to distribute, even though they still claimed the right to grant use of land.

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As early as 1530 some of the land distributed at the beginning of the conquest began to be used for cattle-raising. By the seventeenth century Cuba's best lands were in the hands of cattle-ranchers. This was especially true in the western provinces of Pinar del Río, Havana, and Matanzas, and the central sabana of Camaguey. By 1650 these lands had been almost completely settled by cattle-ranchers who continued to spread throughout the island as the century unfolded. In time they created small rural settlements, which played an important part in the demographic and economic development of the interior of Cuba.

The establishment of agricultural estancias (stock farms) also aided in settling the coastal and central regions of Cuba. During the first half of the sixteenth century agricultural production was concentrated mainly along the coasts. But after 1550 the need for more fertile land led sugar planters and tobacco growers or vegueros to expand their sugar and tobacco production into the interior. Within a century vegueros had reached the distant zones of Pinar del Río and Guines. By the end of the seventeenth century they had settled the plains of Río Sagua la Grande and the northern provinces of Mayarí and Tânaco.

Some of these areas were already occupied by cattle-ranchers. The struggle that ensued was inevitable. Between 1650 and 1780 vegueros and ganaderos vied for the most fertile lands which were closest to the towns and coasts. The high profits derived from tobacco and sugar production turned the tide against cattle-raising. This change in land use was particularly evident near Havana, where

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sugar plantations and mills became part of the landscape. Some of the cattle-ranchers even began to grow sugar cane or plant tobacco, while others rented lands to the vegueros.

During the seventeenth century, with virtually no opposition to their expansion, sugar and tobacco planters began to lay the foundations for the commercialization of Cuba's agriculture. Sugar cane had been introduced by the first conquistadores from the island of Hispaniola and by the year 1526 some rudimentary sugar-mills had been set up. However, the establishment of a sugar-cane industry did not begin until the first decades of the seventeenth century. It was made possible by a series of loans granted to Cuban planters by the crown from 1596 to 1600. Some seventeen hacendados benefited from such loans. In two decades they built a total of fifty sugar-mills which together produced approximately 50,000 arrobas yearly. Few mills were added later and by 1670 sugar production equalled some 80,000 arrobas.¹³ This increased production made Cuba the leading exporter of sugar cane in the Caribbean. Despite these gains, sugar planters complained throughout the seventeenth century of the need for more fertile lands near coastal export centers, the lack of adequate labor supply, and the high duties on sugar imposed by Spain.

Tobacco production also increased tremendously during the seventeenth century. Farmers from the Canary Islands who arrived in Cuba during the second half of the sixteenth century were particularly responsible for setting the foundation for large-scale production of tobacco in the next century. They spread throughout the island in

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search of good humid soils. They occupied the uncultivated lands of the interior, and thus helped colonize Cuba. They also began to use pasture lands, and came into conflict with cattle-ranchers who accused them of stealing water, setting bush fires, and killing their cattle. The cabildo of Havana sided with the cattlemen, and prohibited the expansion of tobacco production on lands near the city. The tobacco growers retaliated by shooting cattle that strayed into their fields. The battle continued until 1659 when it was decided that vegueros could retain those lands which they already occupied. By then tobacco exports had increased considerably, and it was profitable for the crown to protect it.¹⁴

The agricultural state of Santo Domingo during the seventeenth century was the most precarious of all the islands of the Spanish Caribbean. It produced little sugar, tobacco and raised few cattle.¹⁵ The problems of land, capital and labor, common to Cuba and Puerto Rico, existed here also. Foreign incursions, however, were most severe in Santo Domingo. The constant threat of French, Dutch, and English attacks prevented the development of a commercial agriculture and a successful cattle industry on the island.

Commerce was in a state of stagnation. This was not only true for Santo Domingo, but for the entire Caribbean. For, despite the agricultural expansion in Cuba and the extension of cattle in Puerto Rico, the external commerce of both these islands during the seventeenth century was the unbroken monopoly of Seville. Until 1707 Seville was the only port of destination and entry for the American

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trade. In America the only ports open to trade were those of Vera Cruz, Cartagena and Portobello. The fleets sailed from Seville at specific intervals and over clearly-defined routes. Two were equipped each year. One sailed in the spring, and headed for Vera Cruz. This fleet included the ships that made their way separately to the Caribbean islands. The other, destined for Portobello, usually sailed in August. Both fleets wintered in America; and in the spring they met at the port of Havana and sailed for Spain together. The fleet system was set up in order to protect Spanish trade from foreign attacks, but inclement weather, close schedules, delays and wintering expenses harmed the fleet system more than the attacks of pirates.

The trade to America was controlled by Spanish merchants, and strictly forbidden to foreigners. Inter-colonial trade was also limited. Foreign and American products that might compete with Spanish goods were also excluded. Although occasional ships were allowed to sail independently from the fleets, most of the trade was carefully regulated in Seville. The Casa de Contratación, a royal agency, and the consulado, the merchants' guild, regulated American trade in Spain and a score of royal officials supervised the trade in America.¹⁶

The participation of the Caribbean islands in the American trade was minimal. Cuba probably benefited most from it, and only because Havana was chosen as a port of rendezvous. Since 1520 Havana had been used as a stopover base for the early conquistadores enroute to new lands to the American continent. It had soon obtained part of the American trade route when the fleet system was

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organized in 1540. Since then, Havana was the meeting place for hundreds of travelers and traders. Only through the main port in Havana could local merchants and hacendados export their goods. This trade monopoly was advantageous to Havana's merchant class, but detrimental to other ports and cities. The commerce of cities, like Santiago de Cuba, Trinidad, and Remedios, did not develop. Whatever little trade existed in these centers was subject to double transportation costs and high export duties. Havana's merchants reaped the benefits of a large import trade as well.¹⁷

Not only was Havana important in the American trade route, but also as a Caribbean trading center. Cuban merchants, however, were more interested in trading with Vera Cruz and Cartagena than with the other islands. Through these mainland ports they could participate in the lucrative trade of the colonies of Mexico and Peru. But Seville always kept a close watch on this trade also.

The commercial and maritime traffic around Cuba led to a successful shipbuilding industry. In its shipyards were built about 75% of the vessels licensed to participate in the American trade as well as small merchant ships that brought Cuba's trade to Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Campeche. During the seventeenth century, however, the industry began to decline. The larger vessels used in the transatlantic trade required more iron, hemp, rigging, pitch, tar and nails. These materials had always been imported from Spain, but now they were scarce. There was also a shortage of lumber because sugar planters began to compete with shipbuilders for the wood. Lumber was used in the construction of ranches and military

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sugar-mills. By the end of the century Cuba's shipyards had become a repair center until the eighteenth century when the industry was revived again.

Puerto Rico was not as strategically situated in the American trade route as Cuba. Nonetheless, the port of San Juan was not completely ignored by Spain when the fleet system was first instituted. Individual ships were allowed to stop there, but they had to sail to and from Spain with the fleet of New Spain. The number of Spanish ships which actually stopped to trade in Puerto Rico, however, was small. Out of 100 ships which arrived in Puerto Rico between 1621 and 1632, about 40% were from the Margarita Islands, Caracas, or Cumaná; another 40% were from the Canary Islands, and about 10% came from New Spain. Only 10% were from Seville.¹⁸ Ships arriving at Seville from Puerto Rico were also few; most of those classified from Puerto Rico had only stopped there on their way to Spain.

The commercial and naval activity at the port of San Juan was at an all-time low during the seventeenth century. Not only were the ships few, but also small. Sometimes they did not even stop at all, and Puerto Rican exporters lost their goods. They often requested permission to transport their perishable products in smaller ships under the command of an unlicensed pilot. This request was sometimes granted, but it proved a disaster. The smaller ships were easy prey for the pirates and filibusters in the Caribbean.

The commercial relations between Puerto Rico and Spain became increasingly weaker when merchants from the Canary Islands were forbidden to trade with the Indians. The French took the Canary Islands

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and Puerto Rico had benefited mostly the exporters of hides and ginger. By ending it, Spain had unwittingly opened up the illegal trade of these and other products.

The seventeenth-century decline of industrial production in Spain also affected the trade between Seville and Puerto Rico. As a result of it, Spain was unable to meet the economic needs of the colonies.¹⁹ Trade dwindled, and often the profits derived from the commerce of a particular fleet did not cover the costs of its transportation. Other European nations were in a better economic position to supply Puerto Rico and the other colonies with their manufactures. But, Spain's exclusive commercial policies remained unchanged during this century. The British, French, and Dutch, therefore, could not legally trade with Puerto Rico or any other place in America. They did not hesitate, however, to trade clandestinely.

Whatever legal commerce existed during this period had to enter through the port of San Juan only. The other ports of the island were cut off from the commerce with Spain. Nonetheless, they carried on a successful contraband trade with foreign merchants. The interior, however, was totally isolated. Only a kind of primitive barter trade existed. This was not only due to lack of commerce, but to shortage of money as well. Some of the small farmers of the central regions took their products to San Juan. But the high export duties here, and the low prices they received in Spain, often forced them to sell their goods to contrabandists.

The economic problems in the Caribbean—the lack of a healthy and developing, profitable area for commerce and industry, the

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monoculture of sugar, tobacco, and cattle, and the monopolization of commerce--prevented Cuba, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico from becoming economically self-sufficient. In the case of Puerto Rico and Cuba, Spain had to supplement the little income they derived from taxes, duties, and the sale of offices, by sending a stipulated sum or situado to support the garrisons and construction of fortifications. The situado was established for Puerto Rico in 1589. It was supposed to arrive annually from the strong boxes or cajas reales of Mexico, but it often was delayed or lost.²⁰ In Puerto Rico, as in Cuba, the sum of the situado varied from time to time. For example, in 1607 the situado destined for Puerto Rico was raised from 8,000 to 12,000 ducados. In 1618 it was raised to 16,000, but by 1627 the situado once again was 8,000 ducados.²¹ The sum and value of the situado usually depended on the number of soldiers serving in the garrisons and on the kind of fortification under construction.

The Mexican situado was extremely important for the economy of Puerto Rico. Between 1620 and 1630 the situado amounted to about 68% of the total value of the caja real of San Juan, while the alcabala only rendered about 3% and the alcabala a little over 1%. The income derived from the sale of offices was a mere 0.70%. This was due to the low prices which office holders paid for the offices in Puerto Rico. The slave tax averaged slightly higher than the other taxes, about 5.8%. Some 20.80%, coming from the sale of bulas (papal bulls), payments on debts, and other miscellaneous ingenio made up the rest of the total of the caja real.²²

The caja real was the principal source of income for the island

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of Puerto Rico. It not only represented the soldiers' pay, but also provided the largest supply of money in the economy. Any delays or loss would immediately cause an economic crisis. During the seventeenth century this happened far too often, contributing to the stagnation of the economy of Puerto Rico. The crown tried to remedy any shortages of income by allocating extra funds, which were regularly used to pay part of the governor's salary or to supplement the ecclesiastical income if the tithe was insufficient. Although these extra sums took care of emergencies, they were never large enough to solve the problem of shortage of money in Puerto Rico.

As in Puerto Rico, the situado for Cuba was never sufficient to cover the military costs. Other sources of income, such as taxes or tariffs, were collected. There were taxes on land, sugar mills, and tobacco sales, while meats, fish, salt, soaps, beans, and flour imported from other islands and Mexico bore heavy duties.²³ Despite these taxes and tariffs, there was a shortage of money here, too.

In addition to the economic problems, the Spanish colonies of the Caribbean also faced the dangers of foreign infiltration in their own territories. The Caribbean islands were, in fact, the first Spanish-American territory to be exposed to the attacks of French, English and Dutch pirates. They were also the first lands to be invaded by these European powers. But while some settlements were pillaged and devastated, others benefited greatly from the flourishing contraband trade that often developed as a result of this encounter. For the European nations, the inadequately defended Caribbean area represented a rich source of goods and slaves to be smuggled into

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the rest of the Spanish Empire.

During the sixteenth century they usually attacked only areas that were sparsely settled or not well protected. In Puerto Rico the French attacked several times the Village of San Germán, an unfortified settlement on the southwestern part of the island. In 1591 the Spanish settlement at Yaguajay in Hispaniola was destroyed by the British. The areas of Manzanillo, Zapata, Jardín de la Reina, Salina and Camaguey in Cuba were also invaded, and Isla de Pinos became a haven for pirates.²⁴

Sometimes they attacked the larger and more important settlements. In 1585 Francis Drake's men ransacked the town of Santo Domingo, and held it for ransom. In 1595 they attempted to take over the San Juan Harbour, but were not as successful as in Hispaniola.²⁵ Three years later, another Englishman, Sir George Clifford, the Earl of Cumberland, led a privateering expedition against Puerto Rico, and succeeded in holding the city of San Juan for almost three months. However, an epidemic that had been ravaging the island, and the lack of cooperation on the part of the Puerto Rican populace, forced him to leave. Cumberland took all the sugar, ginger and hides that his ships could carry, but left the city and forts of San Juan intact.

In the seventeenth century foreigners continued their aggression on the Spanish territories, and began to settle permanently in the Lesser Antilles and other areas in America. From 1603 to 1606 they forced the western settlements in Hispaniola to be relocated.²⁶ More French raiders raided the colony of Haiti. Two van Espen's largest fortified towns during this period. In the middle of the

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century the French and English began to attack Hispaniola's interior provinces, and some of the towns, such as Santiago de los Caballeros in the area of Cibao were completely devastated.

In Puerto Rico the Dutch attempted to take over the city and fort of San Juan. In 1625, a year after their defeat at Bahia, they sailed in broad daylight into the harbour of San Juan under Captain Boudewijn Hendrikszoon. The Spaniards refused to surrender, and Hendrikszoon threatened to burn the city down. The Spanish governor, Juan de Haro, haughtily replied that if the Dutch burned the town, the inhabitants had enough timber to rebuild it again.²⁷ Hendrikszoon and his men, unable to take over the city, did burn its most important buildings to the ground.²⁸

The island of Vieques, off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico, was also contested by the European nations. Although it was uninhabited during this period, it was administered by the Spanish government in San Juan. The English under John Pinard attempted to occupy it in 1647, but failed.²⁹ Toward the end of the century the Danes and Scotch vied with each other for possession of the island. The Spaniards, however, were not willing to give it up, and from time to time sent expeditions to expel the enemy.

The island of Tortuga also became an important base for buccaneers and corsairs. Between 1637 and 1641 they stationed themselves here and captured some 400,000 pesos in booty.³⁰ Another safe port was the island of Providencia in the Archipelago of San Andrés.

Cuba was likewise frequented by the pirates, although to a lesser extent

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to Hispaniola and Puerto Rico, the foreign menace here was not as intense. The non-Hispanic nations, however, watched the Spanish activities in Cuba very closely because the island was often used as a base for expeditions against the territories they had occupied. After the British captured Jamaica, for example, they sent Captain Christopher Myngs in 1662 to destroy Santiago de Cuba to prevent the Spanish reconquest of Jamaica. The town and fortifications of Santiago were almost completely destroyed.³¹ Three years later, aided by the French, they attacked Sancti Spiritus.³²

Almost all northern European nations had visions of capturing one of the major Caribbean islands, and using it as a stepping stone for further conquests in America. Oliver Cromwell's "Great Western Design," for example, was to capture Hispaniola or Puerto Rico. The British expedition that was entrusted with his mission failed to carry it out. But Puritan and Jewish immigrants from England later settled in Jamaica. By the end of the seventeenth century the British had also acquired Nieves, Antigua, Monserrate, Barbados, Bermuda, Santa Lucia, Belice, Guayana, the Bahamas, and Santa Catalina. They had also begun to settle the east coast of the North American continent.

The French, who failed to take over the entire island of Hispaniola, successfully held its northeastern provinces. In 1697 Spain formally recognized the French rights over these territories. The French had also occupied St. Kitts, the first Spanish island to be lost to a foreign nation. They also controlled the islands of Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Christophe, and French Guyana.

By the end of the century the Dutch had also established

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themselves as one of the European powers in the Caribbean. The Virgin Islands, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, and Dutch Guayana were part of their domain in the New World. Their northern neighbors, the Danes, had only been able to acquire St. Thomas.

By 1700 the first phase of the European struggle for power in the Caribbean was at an end. Pirates and corsairs had begun the struggle in the sixteenth century by seizing Spanish treasure ships on the high seas, raiding the poorly-defended settlements, or settling in some of the lesser Antilles. This struggle was continued in the seventeenth century not only by the filibusters, but also by privateers and royal officials, whose activities often bordered on piracy. Toward the end of the century, however, the European governments began to discourage piracy in the Caribbean. It was no longer profitable for them to engage in or sanction outlaw activity. For, many Spaniards were now engaged in piracy or privateering. They had also begun to organize expeditions in order to reconquer the lost territories.³³ Moreover, the northern European merchants had already established a successful commerce in the Caribbean, and Spanish retaliation could jeopardize their interests.³⁴ The gains through trade were now greater than through piracy. The major European countries, therefore, decided in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) to end piracy. The remaining filibusters either had to settle down or move to other areas where they could continue their adventures since they were no longer needed to open up territories for their European governments. The power of these nations was firmly established in the Caribbean. Indeed, by the beginning of the eighteenth century the British, French and

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Dutch islands formed a formidable crescent in times of war, and entrepôts of contraband in times of peace.

Contraband was probably one of Spain's greatest imperial problems. Illegal trade not only undermined Spain's commerce, but also the political fabric as well. For the inhabitants of the Caribbean, however, contraband was not a question of disloyalty or flagrant disobedience of the law, but an economic necessity. Spain was unable to supply them with the goods they needed. The other European countries were ready not only to supply them with European products, but to buy their exports as well. The islands of Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico, therefore, did not hesitate to establish illegal commercial relations with most of the European countries.

As a result, a flourishing contraband trade developed in and around the Spanish Caribbean islands. Ships engaged in clandestine commerce usually called on defenseless ports, such as those of Manzanillo and Bayamo in Cuba, those of the northern provinces in Santo Domingo, and of the southern coasts in Puerto Rico. From Europe or the other Caribbean Islands, foreign merchants brought textiles, pottery, china, jewelry, and sometimes slaves. Lack of specie, forced the islanders to pay in dried meats, hides, timber and ginger.

The Spanish authorities in these islands made repeated attempts to end illicit trade during the seventeenth century.³⁵ But this proved extremely difficult, for, more often than not Spanish officials, and on occasion their towns were involved in foreign contraband. In the sixteenth century of the Spanish government were involved in

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smuggling. Governor Caspar Martínez de Andino, for example, was accused in 1689 by Bishop Fran Francisco de Padilla of tolerating Dutch contrabandists from Curacao to operate in Puerto Rico. Martínez de Andino was removed from office, imprisoned, and later exiled from the Indies, only to be replaced by Caspar de Arrendondo, who also became involved in contraband activities.³⁶

In Cuba almost the entire population of the western province of Bayamo was involved in illegal trade. In 1630 when the crown ordered Governor Pedro de Valdés to stamp out contraband in this area, it was discovered that priests, rich hacendados, and public officials, including the lieutenant governor himself openly traded with the enemy. Melchor Suárez de Posgo, an asesor letrado (legal adviser) from the Audiencia of Santo Domingo was sent by Valdés to carry out the crown's orders. He sentenced eight of the culprits to death, but only twenty were executed; the rest rebelled. They refused to let Suárez leave Bayamo, unless he released the others. The Audiencia of Santo Domingo acquiesced, and recalled Suárez.³⁷

The Spanish authorities in Santo Domingo were only slightly more successful. They were able to depopulate the northern areas of the island. Many of the settlers, however, refused to be relocated and escaped to Cuba. A member of the Audiencia of Santo Domingo, Francisco de Contreras, was sent in search of them, but many did not return until they were offered pardons.

Eradicating contrabandists or depopulating areas where they were most numerous did not eliminate contraband commerce in the Caribbean. The problem continued to plague the colonial authorities

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and the Spanish government well into the eighteenth century. It was not until after 1706, when the Caribbean ports were opened to free trade, that contraband activities finally began to disappear.

Piracy, foreign incursions, and contraband weakened Spain's hold in the Caribbean during the seventeenth century. Although Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico remained within the fold of the Spanish Empire, they were now surrounded by foreign powers. In times of war these islands were subject to attack by Spain's enemies. In times of peace they eagerly participated in a trade that was detrimental to Spanish commerce. But the colonists were forced to violate Spain's monopolistic laws in order to survive economically. Even with the illegal trade, conditions for the Caribbean inhabitants were not much better off. Only the coastal areas which were visited by foreign merchants profited; the economic situation in other areas remained critical.

The precarious insular economies, coupled with the growing foreign menace, gave rise to a Caribbean society with unique problems. Hispaniola was the first island to be settled, and the first to experience the demographic problems that characterized the social development of all the Spanish Antilles. The problems of depopulation, Hispaniola's biggest problem, began early in the sixteenth century with the decimation of the native population. That problem continued during the century as the small Spanish element that settled in the island began to emigrate to the mainland in search of better opportunities. The number of black slaves introduced was not large either.

The population at the beginning of the seventeenth century in

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Hispaniola, therefore, was small. The problem was aggravated further by the relocation of the entire population of the towns of Bayahá, Yaguajay, Puerto de Plata and Monte Cristo in the northern sector. According to the authorities, these towns were a center of piracy and contraband, and had inadequate defenses. The 1598 order to depopulate these areas and relocate the inhabitants some six or eight leagues from the city of Santo Domingo, was carried out during the years 1601 to 1608. The settlers of these towns, however, did not comply readily. They objected to the move on grounds that the enemy could occupy this unprotected territory, and that the cattle, sugar mills, and slaves would be lost in the shift. Moreover, their coastal vessels would no longer be able to protect the fleet. In 1603 some of the citizens presented their objections, but the authorities proceeded with the relocation plan. In 1605 many of the settlers affected rebelled. Some were killed and others escaped to Cuba. Governor Antonio Osorio promised to give them amnesty if they returned, but he failed to keep his promise. They were badly treated upon their arrival, and were forced to pay the costs of the return trip to Santo Domingo. Eventually, the resettled population created the towns of Monte Plata and Bayaguana.³⁸

In 1626 the crown ordered that the town of Bayahá be reoccupied. But this move came too late, for the French had begun to infiltrate the area. The depopulation of the north, therefore, marked the beginning of the seventeenth century decline in Hispaniola. In short, by the end of the sixteenth century the countryside was sparsely populated, cities were depopulated, and the cities were

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impoverished.³⁹

Puerto Rico experienced almost the same demographic problems as Hispaniola. In the first decades after its discovery, the Taíno population began to decline, and Spaniards in search of gold began to leave for Mexico and Peru. In 1526 the crown forbade the emigration of Spaniards who had settled in Puerto Rico to other parts of the empire. But in the seventeenth century they were still migrating, and this tended to create an imbalance in the male-female population. Bishop Damián Jópez de Haro noted in 1644 that there were more 4,000 men. This is an extremely high number, considering that the entire population was probably no more than 7,000 inhabitants.⁴⁰ The female population was so large that in 1646 a Carmelite convent was established by Doña Ana Ianzós to house the single women who wanted to devote themselves to a religious life or who lacked a sufficient dowry for marriage.

The problem of a male-female population was accentuated from time to time by the arrival of Spanish soldiers to man the garrisons of the Plaza Militar of San Juan. This number, which sometimes amounted to 300 or 400 men, did increase the male population. But, this increase was not sufficient to provide for an adequate defense system. Nor did it solve the problem of an inadequate labor supply. Soldiers came to serve in the garrison, not to work on the fortifications. So, there was always a shortage of non-skilled laborers in this area. Skilled workers, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, bricklayers, were equally lacking, as well. These workers were not only employed to work in the Plaza Militar, but also in the construction

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of sugar mills, and other jobs around the plantations. Agricultural workers were also few, although the hacendados tried to remedy this situation by importing black slaves.

The shortage of men plus the critical economic situation tended to create an unstable society in Puerto Rico. The presence of a large number of Portuguese, who were never officially recognized as vecinos (house holders) also contributed to the instability. These Portuguese, some of them conversos (descendants of Jewish converts) and judizantes (Crypto-Jews) had arrived in the sixteenth century as a result of the temporary union of the Spanish and Portuguese crowns. They usually devoted themselves to sugar cane production, and came into conflict with some of the Puerto Rican planters. The fact that the Council of the Indies did not grant them the status of vecino created a great deal of discontent among this element of the population, who probably numbered to about a thousand persons.

The rest of the population consisted of small numbers of Spanish whites, blacks, and pardos (mixed persons). The only census taken during this period was done by Bishop Fray Bartolomé García de Baeza in 1673, who estimated that there were 676 white persons living in San Juan, 543 of which were women. The slave population consisted of 445 females and 202 males. The free population also had a large percentage of females--216 women; and only 88 men.⁴¹ The total population numbered 1,791 inhabitants, but to the Bishop, the city of San Juan was like a desert.⁴²

San Juan was considered very poor by most seventeenth-century observers. In 1674 there were 100 houses, most of which were

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in 1673 only four had been added. It had only two hospitals--one for the citizens and the other for the military. Since there was a shortage of currency, the value of the coins used in Puerto Rico was less than their value in Spain. There was also a lack of foodstuffs and supplies. Fresh beef and poultry were scarce, but turtle meat was always available. Fish was plentiful, yet large-scale fishing was not pursued. White bread was a luxury, and its substitute, cassava (manioc bread), was expensive. Imported goods, such as cloths, paper and other items, were also expensive.⁴³

The city was surrounded by walls and fortresses, which expressed "in their planning and architecture, royal defiance of aggressors from afar."⁴⁴ The walls were also a symbol of the class distinctions that existed in the island. In what today is "Old San Juan" lived the Spanish element--the governor, higher clergy, well-to-do merchants and shopkeepers, and, of course, the garrison. The *acalalados*, or Puerto Rico's upper-class, lived in the best quarters, had servants and slaves, and possessed the luxuries that were available at the time. Outside the walls, the poor squattered and eked out a miserable existence.

The rural settlements of the interior and the seaboard, were also poorly developed. For their sustenance they depended on whatever harvests they reaped, such as plantains, yams, manioc, rice, maize, and tropical and citrus fruits. But those who could trade with contrabandists were able to consume flour, wine, oil, olives, cheese, ham, and opulentities (such as brandy). They usually paid for these items in hides, sugar or molasses. The exchange between

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these settlements and foreigners was probably more than with the capital. For the most part these rural towns were ignored by the San Juan government. The only town that attracted them was Camo, which possessed a thermal spring. From all over the island people came to Camo, for it was believed that the sulphuric waters could cure many illnesses.⁴⁵

The social evolution of Cuba followed the same pattern as Puerto Rico, except that Havana was much more developed than the cities of San Juan or Santo Domingo. In the sixteenth century there was little social or demographic development. After the initial years of colonization, the population began to decline, for the same reasons it declined in other islands. Many pobladores left for the continent, and others died of epidemics. Therefore, few settlements were founded.

During the seventeenth century there was a slight increase in the white population. Spaniards from Jamaica, who did not wish to live under English rule, sought refuge in Cuba. Black slaves and free blacks also increased in numbers, but the indigenous population continued to decline. The slight population increase was sufficient to create a few new settlements in the regions of Guan, Güines, Santiago de las Vegas, Colón, Matanzas, Vega de Grande, Guaycaball, and Holguín. The new settlement of Santa Clara was created when the inhabitants of Remedios were relocated to protect them from foreign attacks.

By the eighteenth century, and after, middle-class families were moving into the cities, and the rural population was declining.

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reasons for this are obvious. Havana was the only port open to the Spanish fleets. Travelers, sailors, and merchants gathered here, and while they waited for the fleet to arrive, spent considerable sums of money. This benefited, not only the hotels, taverns, stores, and restaurants, but also the agricultural farms near Havana. In addition, the city profited from the presence of a large class of military men who spent their salaries here, too.

The growth of Havana was also due to its secure position in the Caribbean. The city, like San Juan, was surrounded by walls and fortresses. It was protected by one of the largest garrisons in America and its Plaza Militar was one of the most important military outposts in the Indies. Safe from foreign incursions, the city was free to expand and develop. New buildings, streets, and communities appeared. Schools were founded, the most famous being San Francisco de Sales, a colégio for orphans. New churches were also erected, and the Convent of Santa Clara, built in 16th, gave the women of Havana a religious home.

But while Havana grew, the rest of the island remained impoverished and undeveloped as was the case in Puerto Rico. Isolated and unprotected, the population centers of the coasts and interior struggled tensely to survive. The settlers of Cuba, then, faced the same social problems that were so familiar to the inhabitants of Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo.

The Caribbean islands experienced a great many problems during the seventeenth century. According to some historians, the cause of these problems was the harmful effect of the Spanish colonies' isolation.

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nation on these territories. The foreign menace was a constant frustration to the Spanish authorities and a threat to some of the settlements. However, the policy adopted by Spain at this time also contributed to the economic and social stagnation of the Spanish Antilles. Unable to protect all of its American empire adequately, Spain concentrated on her most valuable possessions, Mexico and Peru. While the Caribbean islands languished, these colonies developed and matured economically and politically. But, their development was also limited. For, during the late sixteenth century and throughout most of the seventeenth century, Spain's European possessions and national prestige were also in jeopardy.⁴⁶ It was not until 17th, when its power in Europe was restored, and a new monarchy established, that Spain began to pursue a vigorous transatlantic policy to reform an almost forgotten empire.

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30. Morales-Carrión, Puerto Rico, p. 47.

31. Portuondo, Historia de Cuba, p. 159.

32. Fagg, Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, p. 21.

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35. To protect the islands against contraband new fortifications were erected, and old ones repaired. Companies of native soldiers were also organized in Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico. A guardacosta system was created to keep a vigil eye on coastal activities, and the Armada de Barlovento (Windward Squadron) was revived to provide protection for Caribbean commerce. Aguirre, Historia de Cuba, pp. 145-146; Mejía, Historia de Santo Domingo, vol. VI, pp. 36, 95; Portuondo, Historia de Cuba, p. 174; Figueroa, Breve historia de Puerto Rico, p. 100; Morales-Carrión, Puerto Rico, pp. 53-54; Lynch, Spain under the Hapsburgs, p. 177.

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CHAPTER II

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY REFORMS IN THE CARIBBEAN, 1700-1788

During the eighteenth century the Hispanic Empire underwent a complete overhauling, not only in the Iberian peninsula, but in its American possessions as well. For, during this period the Spanish Monarchy, after carefully examining the problems that faced the empire, made serious attempts to fortify and develop its territories. Imperial reforms had actually begun in the late seventeenth century, however, a degenerating dynasty, costly European involvements, and lack of economic development and political hegemony made it impossible for Spain to provide comprehensive solutions to the problems that beset the empire.¹ With the change in dynasty, the reform program was intensified and broadened. To the maritime and military defense projects of the Hapsburgs, were now added political and administrative changes in the Spanish colonial governments in America. There was also greater emphasis in the field of economic development. Hence, the Bourbon reformers zealously devised countless schemes to increase commercial, agricultural, and mineral production in the Spanish-American colonies. But the goal of these economic reforms was to make the empire more financially self-sufficient and militarily invulnerable to foreign aggression.

The new reform program was initiated at the very beginning of the century, during the reign of Philip August, the first of the Bourbon monarchs to rule over Spain and her territories (1700-1746). One

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of the aims of his government was to make the colonial governments in the Caribbean more efficient. This, it was believed, could be achieved by centralizing the political administration of the area. The crown, likewise, believed that military power in these areas had to be increased, since the Caribbean Islands were a bulwark of defense for the rest of the Spanish Empire in America. In Cuba, for example, the crown immediately proceeded to issue decrees to accomplish these objectives. In 1715 the governor assigned to the island of Cuba was ordered to be the highest ranking military official on the island. A new official, a teniente del rey (lieutenant governor) was to succeed the governor in case of death or temporary absence. If the teniente del rey was unable to discharge his duties, the order of succession evolved on the highest ranking military officer on duty in Havana. Thus, the crown eliminated civil officials, such as the alcalde (town magistrate), an successor to the governor in Cuba, and thereby increased the power of the military.

The crown also extended its centralization policy throughout the island by naming a capitán de guerra to administer the villages of the interior and coastal areas. To supervise the smaller settlements a teniente de guerra was appointed. More significantly, the crown ordered that the municipal government of Santiago de Cuba be subordinated to that of Havana's. This was perhaps the most important of the centralization decrees under Philip V, for, until the eighteenth century the Spanish political and military power in Cuba had been divided between these two regions. Consequently, there was often dissension between the two centers of power, Havana and Santiago de Cuba. Areas of

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jurisdiction were also not clear. Now, there was to be only one governor with full military and political control over the entire island.

In Puerto Rico the crown also attempted to increase the power of the military in order to abolish the clandestine trade that flourished on the island. By the end of the seventeenth century the Audiencia of Santo Domingo had already approved the division of the island into five territorial districts, with the governor in San Juan as the civil administrator of the island, and captain-general of the Plaza Militar or Presidio of San Juan. The new districts were to be headed by individuals appointed by the governor. These local leaders were primarily responsible for carrying out administrative functions, but as tenientes de guerra, they were also in charge of military matters. One of their duties, for example, was to organize and regulate an urban militia in their respective districts. These military units, consisting of local vecinos (householders) between the ages of sixteen and sixty, played an increasingly important role in the defense of the island. By 1700 there were some fourteen infantry companies and two cuadrillas or cavalry units, with a total of about a thousand men.² In time they came to be part of the Batallón Fijo, the regular standing army stationed in the Plaza Militar of San Juan. As the power of the militia increased throughout the eighteenth century, the military role of the tenientes de guerra became even more prominent.

Although the government of Philip V continued to support the extension of the role of the military begun by the Hapsburgs, it did little beyond providing a few subsidies to Spanish military

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administration in Puerto Rico. This was probably due to the predominant role of Puerto Rico as a plaza militar in the Caribbean. Indeed, the military importance of Puerto Rico had been recognized by the Spanish crown long before the Bourbons had come to power. The precedent that the governor be the highest ranking military officer on the island, for example, had been established as early as 1564 when the title of captain-general was added to that of governor. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the crown had also carried through a fortification program that continued to increase the military importance of Puerto Rico.

In addition to the administrative changes that were legislated by Philip V, there was also an attempt on the part of his government to deal with the land problem in Puerto Rico. In 1729 and again in 1734 Philip V dispatched royal cedulae, prohibiting the cabildos of Cuba and Puerto Rico from issuing land grants, a traditional prerogative of the local governments, which had been recognized in 1574 by Ordenanzas Municipales. Land grants or marcedes were to be granted now by specially created commissions, headed by the captain-generals of these territories. Thus, the crown severely limited one of the most extensive powers of the cabildos of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and concentrated royal power on the military representatives of the crown.

In 1735 the crown attempted to regain its power over tierras realengas (royal lands) when it requested that all those who cultivated bienes realengos obtain royal confirmation of their rights of usufruct, by receiving, within the year, an assignment for the utilization of royal land. The crown's demand for such confirmation was based on the fact that

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hacendados, the crown expected to increase agricultural production in the Caribbean, commerce with Spain, and its income. But, despite the land-titles-confirmation law and the reclamation and desolition of the hatos of Manatí Abajo and Aibonito in Puerto Rico, a successful land reform program did not become a reality in the Caribbean at this time.

Spain's attempts to centralize and increase the power of the military in possessions during the reign of Philip V were not as impressive as its program for the revival of commerce in the area. From the very beginning the emphasis of the Bourbon monarchy on economic reform was obvious, but the aim at this time was merely to increase Spain's control over the American trade. The Spanish government proposed to do this by centralizing the trade between Spain and the Caribbean. True, during the War of Succession (1700-1713) it permitted French vessels to stop freely at Puerto Rican and Cuban ports, and in 1701 it granted the American slaves trade solely to the French Company of Guinea. But, from 1700 to 1712 it strictly forbade English merchants from trading in the Spanish Caribbean ports. England's reaction was to ally itself with Spain's enemies during the War of Spanish Succession in an attempt to break the Franco-Spanish commercial monopoly that had been established in America.

The British partially succeeded in this plan, as a result of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), they acquired the right to send one vessel a year to American ports. The tonnage of the British cargo was limited to 500 tons, but this ship could stop at the busiest ports in the Caribbean, such as Havana, Santiago and La Guayana. It

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was also required to stop at Havana on its return voyage to Europe, and from there it could return directly to England as long as it sent the Spanish government an account of its cargo. The British South Sea Company was established to carry on the British American trade. Besides bringing English goods to the Spanish-American colonies, the company agreed to introduce some 144,000 slaves over a period of thirty years. The asiento was now in the hands of British merchants. In exchange for this, the Spanish crown was granted shareholding privileges in the South Sea Company. The South Sea Company, however, abused the concessions granted by the Spanish government, and actively engaged in contraband.⁵

The idea of establishing commercial companies to develop and control the trade to America was also employed by the government of Philip V. The creation of these companies was intended mainly to increase the volume of Spain's share in the American trade. But a side effect was to broaden Spanish participation in a commercial business that had almost exclusively benefited only Sevillian merchants. The capital for this new venture in Spanish commerce came from the provinces of Catalonia and the Ionian Provinces. Nevertheless, the principle of exclusive trade was still in operation since the plan called for granting a single company the trade monopoly over an area that had not been previously open to Spanish trade. The only commercial company created in the Caribbean area during the reign of Philip V was the Royal Company of Havana. It was organized in 1740 by Godó and Rivero merchants in order to control the export and import trade of Cuba. The total capital invested was 1,000,000 reales.

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pesos, 500 of which came from the Spanish merchants of Cádiz, and the rest from Spanish merchants and sugar hacendados of Havana. In exchange for its support, the crown received shares estimated at 100,000 pesos.⁴

The functions of the Havana Company were varied. Originally organized to handle Cuba's sugar, tobacco, and corambre (hides) trade to Castille, the company became involved in other projects that contributed to the increase of Spanish power in the Caribbean. The company participated in a colonization scheme to bring families from the Canary Islands to Florida. It provided building materials for Cuba's shipbuilding industry, and undertook to construct ships for the Spanish navy in Cuba. It also played an important role in the defence of the Caribbean by providing ships for the Armada de Barlovento and the guardacosta system, which consisted mainly of Caribbean privateers.

In the next twenty years the Havana Company also established a tight monopoly over Cuba's export and import trade. It exclusively controlled the island's exports to Spain, particularly the sugar, tobacco, hides and lumber trades. It also monopolized the importation of Spanish and European products, such as flour, china, and textiles, and actively participated in the slave trade to Cuba. Because of its complete control over the import trade, the Havana Company came to fix the supply and demand of these goods on the Cuban market. For example, it purposely imported and exported lesser quantities in order to create an artificial shortage of goods. It then was able to sell these products at extremely high prices. One such example was the demand for the Havana Company's sugar by the

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barrel. A barrel of flour bought in Spain for five or six pesos, was usually sold in Cuba for 35 or 36 pesos. Through this, and other capitalistic practices, the Company was able to make huge profits that benefited the Spanish investors and Havana sugar hacendados.⁵

The sugar hacendado class was the only economic sector in Cuba which profited during this period. The other Cuban growers were mercilessly exploited. The Company bought their products at very low prices; and since there were no other competitors, the small farmers had no choice but to sell to the Havana Company. Moreover, the Company tended to ignore the interior provinces, preferring to do business with habaneros. The hacendados and cabildos of these areas, especially the cabildos of Santiago de Cuba and Puerto Príncipe protested, and petitioned the crown to abolish the Havana Company.⁶ But, the Havana Company continued to control Cuba's commerce. By 1762 it also began to deal in contraband. When the British took over Havana in that year, they declared the island's ports free, and the commercial monopoly which the Havana Company had established in Cuba came to an end.

The creation of a tobacco estanco or monopoly was another of Spain's attempts to centralize Cuba's commerce. It was established in 1717 with the erection of a government factoría (warehouse) to supervise the purchase and sale of tobacco. Soon branches were set up in the tobacco centers of Bayamo, Trinidad, and Sancti Spiritus. To these outlets vegueros (tobacco growers) brought their supplies of tobacco, and sold them at prices set by the estanco. The estanco also determined the quantity of tobacco to be produced from the

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vegueros at any given time. Supplies not bought by the factoría had to be sold to estanco-designated merchants. Thus, a complete monopoly over Cuba's tobacco was ensured.⁷

Centralization of the tobacco production of Cuba was not achieved without opposition from the island's producers, most of whom were small hacendados. Indeed, soon after the factoría began to function, some five hundred of these hacendados gathered at Jesús del Monte to protest the creation of the estanco. They refused to sell their supplies to the factoría, and set up vigilante groups to prevent other grovers from breaking their boycott. The vegueros, however, did not succeed in abolishing the estanco, and were forced to sell their crops to the factoría. Relations between the vegueros and the estanco worsened when in 1720 the factoría began to pay a plazos (installment payments) instead of al contado (cash payments). Angry vegueros met again at Jesús del Monte, and in retaliation prevented cattle from entering Havana. They set fire to crops in Guantánamo and Santiago de las Vegas to punish those who did not support them. The factoría acquiesced and agreed to pay in cash.

In 1723 the factoría began to buy on time again. It also declared that some vegueros had to sell their crops to merchants, who would pay them with descuentos (price discounts). The factoría would then buy the tobacco from these individuals at the regular price. The factoría continued to buy from the vegueros also, but it paid them with a vale, a paper certificate which indicated the value to their crop.

Vegueros were then expected to sell the vale to a shopkeeper for the money they needed. This system was established in 1723, and it was at Jesús del Monte

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and objected to the practices of the factoría. They began to burn tobacco fields and threatened to invade the capital. Governor Vicente Roja, unable to control the situation, resigned. His successor, Gregorio Guez Calderón, put down the uprising by sending troops into the area. Only then, did the estanco begin to operate in Cuba.

By 1730 the power of the estanco was so complete that it was no longer necessary to maintain representatives in all of the cities throughout the island. The estanco now designated merchants or arrendatarios to purchase its quota of the available tobacco. From 1740 to 1760 the Havana Company was given the monopoly to purchase and sell Cuba's tobacco. Since the Company was never able to export more than 80,000 arrobas annually, it lost its privileges over tobacco in 1760. Government supervision over the tobacco industry was re-established. This had disastrous consequences for Cuba's tobacco industry. The estanco discouraged vegeteros from growing the product, and others from investing in tobacco mills. By 1760 only thirty tobacco mills were left. As the century progressed it became evident that the estanco had failed to increase tobacco production in Cuba.

The government of Philip V also attempted to revive the old fleet system in its efforts to increase Spanish trade with America. The crown approved the Real proyecto para galcones y flotas in 1720, and the government began to standardize the sizes of ships, crews, cargoes and duties on goods sailing to America. The government also made it mandatory for all fleets to sail on schedule and under convoy. The revival of the fleet system, however, was short-lived. By 1750 the government had given up the project of galcones and

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fleets, and was allowing single ships to sail to America independently.

The temporary suspension of the fleet system to America liberalized commerce to some extent during the last years of Philip V's reign. But progressive Spanish thinkers, such as José Campillo y Cossío, minister of war and finance for Philip V, proposed even more radical commercial reforms. In his Nuevo sistema de gobierno económico para la América, written in 1743, Campillo observed that Spain had not been able to exploit her American possessions as well as other European nations had exploited theirs. The reasons for this, he noted, lay in the rigid, exclusivist, commercial policies of the old mercantile system that had only encouraged contraband. He proposed, therefore, that commerce be liberalized completely and that customs and duties on Spanish and foreign goods be reduced in order to allow trade to flow freely between Europe and America. He also suggested that the American colonies be allowed to trade freely with one another, and that mining and farm production be encouraged in America in order to increase Spanish participation in the new trade.⁸

Campillo's ideas on free-trade were not put into effect by the government of Philip V, but most of his proposals were adopted by later Spanish ministers, or incorporated into Spanish reform programs that were enacted during the second half of the eighteenth century. Indeed, Campillo's Nuevo sistema de gobierno económico para la América, like the reign of Philip V, laid the foundation for future Bourbon reforms in the Caribbean.

In 1746 Fernando VI succeeded Philip V, and became the second Bourbon monarch to govern in Spain (1746-1759). His policies, however,

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Ferdinand VI devoted himself to the task of reforming the empire. But his government gave more emphasis to reforms in the peninsula than to those in the Spanish-American colonies. During this period, however, some steps were taken in the field of commercial and land reforms. In 1755, for example, the Royal Company of Barcelona was created, and authorized to trade with Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, and Margarita. Three years later the company's first ship "La Ronda Catalana" arrived in Puerto Rico. With it, arrived also a period of economic progress for the island. The Company not only brought trade to Puerto Rico, but also supplies from Cuba and the Canary Islands, who settled on the island. The increasing commercial activity of the Barcelona Company continued to liberalize commerce and undermine the commercial monopoly of Seville and Cádiz. This period of competition was very brief, for in the long-run the Barcelona Company was not able to send more than a few ships to the Caribbean. The vessels that did come often engaged in contraband activity with Jamaica, St. Thomas and Curaçao. The Barcelona Company, therefore, did not produce the results envisioned by the government of Ferdinand VI.

The Barcelona Company was not the only company involved in illegal commerce in the Caribbean during the reign of Ferdinand VI. The Havana Company and the British South Sea Company were actively engaged as well, but, the ministers of Ferdinand VI did little to abate this. The continued rise of this illegal trade led Sevillian and Cádiz merchants to petition the crown to reassert their fleet control in the Caribbean. The crown responded in 1763 by the Real Decree

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Bernardo Ward, one of Ferdinand VI's leading economic advisers, favored freedom of trade.

The government of Ferdinand VI not only continued Philip V's attempts to revive Spanish commerce by creating trade companies and controlling the Spanish American trade, but also the crown's program for land reform in America. In 1754 Ferdinand VI issued a royal cedula which up-dated the 1755 orders for the sale and composición (adjustment of titles) of lands. The new law gave viceroys and audiencias in America the right to name sub-delegados or land commissioners to confirm land titles granted since 1700. In territories distant from viceroyalities or audiencias, such as Cuba and Puerto Rico, governors were authorized to perform this function. All land titles were to be scrutinized, and only those lands which had been legally acquired were to be confirmed. Those who occupied unauthorized lands were to petition the crown for legal title to them. The royal cedula of 1754 also imposed upon landowners the obligation to cultivate their lands. If they failed to do so within a specified period of time the land automatically reverted back to the crown.

The first attempts to apply the 1754 land reform law in Puerto Rico met with opposition. Severino Xiorro, who had been named sub-delegado to Puerto Rico in 1751, presented the 1754 land law to Governor Felipe Isidoro de Estenoz. But the governor, fully aware of the opposition of Puerto Rico's hacendados to previous land reform laws, hesitated for some time. He refused to allow Xiorro to carry out his duties unless specifically ordered by the crown, and when this occurred, Xiorro de Xiorro did in effect but to comply. Therefore,

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he commissioned Pedro Vicente de la Torres and Joaquín Bavedo to distribute uncultivated lands to vecinos desacomodados (landless) who were only required to pay the usual taxes and cultivate the lands. Since the occupation of unclaimed lands did not pose a threat to large hacendados in Puerto Rico, Ramírez de Estenoz's first actions went unchallenged.

However, in order to avoid future confrontations with Puerto Rico's powerful hacendado class, he drew up a compromise plan which he submitted to the San Juan cabildo in 1757. In it he suggested that all the pasture lands in the vicinity of the area of San Juan be converted into agricultural haciendas. It was his belief that only well-to-do hacendados with their large number of slaves and capital could make these lands profitable, and increase the production of tobacco, cotton, cacao, coffee, ginger and other products. The conversion of these hatos into farm lands, in Ramírez de Estenoz's opinion, was the best and only means of increasing agricultural production in Puerto Rico.

The members of the cabildo immediately accepted his proposal, for they viewed it as an alternative plan to the royal cedula of 1754. Ramírez de Estenoz, therefore, issued instructions for the demolition of hatos in Tes Paja and Tes Alta, Bayamón, Guaynabo, Río Piedras and Congrejos. The owners of these hatos were to be given pasture lands in the interior in order to sustain their cattle. Ramírez de Estenoz exempted from demolition sugar cane fields in these areas, which had been converted to hatos, provided the hacendados in these areas raised any kind of cattle, and grazed their cattle. The

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king's hato, located in the district of Congrejos, was also exempted from demolition. The remaining hatos were to be fenced in to avoid damage to crops by cattle. Those who failed to erect fences would lose their hatos. Hato holders could use all their land for pasture, but they were free to allow squatters to cultivate plots of land for their subsistence. In the meantime, hacendados were to begin the seeding and planting of fields immediately. If they failed to do so, they would lose their right to the lands. Finally, Ramírez de Estenoz declared that other hatos throughout the island would be demolished also, and appointed Joaquín Navado y Francisco Antonio Alvarez de Poliva to carry out his orders.⁷

Despite the opposition of some of San Juan's leading hacendados, Ramírez de Estenoz's land reform plan was put into effect by his successor, Esteban Bravo de Rivero. Bravo de Rivero succeeded in demolishing the hatos of Papino; Copey; Hatillo de la Cruz, Adentro and Las Monjas in Río Piedras; and Las Cruces, Guaynabo, Pueblo Viejo, and Juan Sánchez in Bayamón and Guaynabo. Hatos in the district of Guayama were also demolished. Here lands were distributed, as well as in Río Piedras, but not all of those in Bayamón and Guaynabo were parcelled off.

During his administration Bravo de Rivero petitioned the crown to grant the right of possession to those who already occupied lands. In 1758 not only was his request granted, but the Council of the Indies removed Xiorro as sub-delegado, and agreed to exempt Puerto Rico from the royal cedula of 1754. The council's decision officially suspended the crown's land reform program in Puerto Rico. Bravo de Rivero,

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however, continued it on his initiative. In a letter dated July 19, 1759 he informed Julián de Arriaga, the minister to the Indies, that he had made attempts to settle some poor householders in the mountainous regions of Puerto Rico. Despite Bravo de Rivera's work, land reform in Puerto Rico was an unresolved issue at the end of Ferdinand VI's reign.¹⁰

Many other problems still beset the empire, and Ferdinand VI seemed to be aware that a comprehensive plan was needed to deal with them. To accomplish this, he commissioned Bernardo Ward to study the colonial systems of other European nations. After a trip throughout Europe, Ward wrote a Proyecto económico, in which he advocated freedom of trade as a remedy to the empire's commercial ills. Specifically, he recommended the reduction of import and export duties, and an opening up of more ports in Spain to the Indies trade. In writing Proyecto económico Ward seems to have been more influenced by José Campillo's ideas than by any other European economist. Indeed, Ward's work has been considered by some to be a plagiarized transcription of Campillo's Nuevo sistema económico para la America.¹¹ Nevertheless, Ward's Proyecto económico indicates that free trade was still being considered as a possible solution to Spain's commercial problems. But, the idea of free trade had to await the reign of Charles III for implementation, for Ward did not finish his work until 1762, three years after Ferdinand VI's death.

Charles III, brother of Ferdinand VI, was the third of the Bourbon monarchs to continue and expand the Spanish eighteenth-century reform program in the Caribbean (1759-1798). He came to the throne already labeled with the epithet of reform.¹² In 1763, he fully and

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Naples (1731-1759) he had surrounded himself with progressive ministers, like Bernardo Tanucci, who fostered in him a sense of commitment to improve conditions in his realms.¹³ The twenty-eight years Charles III spent on the Italian peninsula, also gave him an opportunity to develop administrative qualities that few Spanish monarchs had before they came to power. Charles's own spartan way of life and love of work enhanced his ideas on the responsibilities of kingship, and enabled him to pursue an effective program of reform in Spain as well as in America.

At first, Charles III merely continued his brother's policies, but the capture of some of the Caribbean islands by the British during the Seven Years' War caused him and his ministers hastily to turn their attention toward the American territories, and particularly toward the Caribbean possessions that remained.¹⁴ Reforms were continued in Spain. However, the main emphasis now was on America, for the Seven Years' War had clearly shown the weakness of the empire.

Although Charles III and his government recognized the need to fortify and develop the Caribbean Islands and other frontier zones as soon as possible, they did not embark on an immediate program of reform. Instead, Charles III's ministers began to carefully examine the problems which faced the American empire, and consider the best policies to follow in order to increase the military and naval might of Spain in America. To do this, the crown's revenues had to be increased. Charles III's government, therefore, devised a comprehensive program of reform which emphasized the economic development of the American colonies in the best effort to increase the crown's

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revenues and making the American possessions more independent of the royal treasury.¹⁵

To implement his reform laws Charles III needed a well organized political machinery in Spain as well as in America. In Madrid he selected his ministers and advisers from among the most enlightened and experienced men of his times. The Marquis of Squillace, Count of Aranda, Duke of Grimaldi, Count of Floridablanca and Gaspar de Jovellanos were not only his best statesmen, but progressive economic advisers who helped develop and promote his imperial reform program. They, too, believed in the revival of the empire through the centralization of the peninsular and colonial governments, the appointment of responsible administrators, the expansion of the American trade, and the advancement of the scientific and material progress of the colonies.

Charles III also created several new government agencies in order to centralize Spanish rule in America. In 1763 he formed a Junta Interministerial and ordered the ministers of the state, finance and the Indies to develop a program that would increase the crown's revenues and imperial defenses in the New World. The following year he created a Junta Técnica and charged its five specialists with the task of finding solutions to the empire's commercial problems. Later a Junta de Estado was organized. The function of this council was to convene all the ministers to resolve differences and unify policies. American affairs were still handled by the Ministry of the Indies, but during Charles III's reign the work of this agency was divided between two ministries. One minister handled all the new American

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and legal matters, while affairs of commerce, exchequer, navigation and defense were the concern of the other. Thus, the administration of colonial matters became more specialized. Indeed, the King seems never to have "asked the Marquis Squillace's advice in what did not relate to the finances, or consulted with Arriaga, except with regard to the marine."¹⁶ Each minister was consulted only on matters that pertained to his office.

In America Charles III's political reforms took the form of introducing some of the institutions which were already operating in Spain. In 1764, for example, he created the Intendancy of Havana as an experiment toward better government in America. The main function of the Havana Intendant was to supervise the collection of royal funds. This institution was later introduced to other parts of Spanish America, and was instrumental in increasing royal power as well as revenues.¹⁷

Charles III also increased the efficiency of Spanish administration in America by appointing more experienced officials to head his governments in the Antilles. Ambrosio Flores Villapando (Conde de Riba), Antonio María Bucarell, and Felice Pensdeviela (Marques de la Torre) were probably his most able administrators in Cuba. To govern Puerto Rico he appointed Ambrosio Barahona, Marcos de Vergara, Miguel de Narcaes, José Del Fresno, and Juan Dabán. The last three were probably his best governors. These appointments were not only a means of implementing the new reforms, but were part of the reform program itself.

(The following is a reproduction of the original text in a 19th-century style.)

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inspections or visitas-generales in America, and render reports on the problems of the areas visited. According to Campillo, who had originally proposed the idea, the visita-general was to be a preliminary step in the reform process. He suggested that a visitador-general be sent to each part of the empire, including one to the Caribbean area. Charles III adopted Campillo's proposal, and in 1763 ordered Alexander O'Reilly to make a visita-general of the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Alexander O'Reilly was born in Ireland in 1725, and came to Spain while still very young. He was educated in Zaragoza, and entered the Spanish military as a cadet. From 1734 to 1736, and again from 1740 to 1748 he fought in the wars in Italy. Later, he visited various European countries to study their most advanced military tactics, and when Spain occupied Portugal, O'Reilly was put in charge of one of the invading armies. His successful military campaigns in Europe earned him the titles of Brigadier-general, Ayudante General of the Spanish Infantry, and Mariscal de Campo.¹⁶

O'Reilly arrived in Havana with Conde de Riera, the new governor of Cuba, on June 30, 1763. His assignment was to inspect the state of defenses of Cuba in order to understand why the Spaniards had lost Havana to the English in 1762. To this was added the task of making a report on conditions on the entire island of Cuba. This last assignment had been originally entrusted to Conde de Riera, but he became ill, and was unable to carry it out. O'Reilly's report on Cuba showed that despite the terrific fighting, Cuba depended on the allies for much more than other provinces. The island then lacked

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an efficient judicial system, slaves and commerce. These defects, O'Reilly maintained, had caused Cuba's decline, while other problems, such as contraband trade, aggravated the situation.

Ricla, O'Reilly and others made several proposals in order to solve some of these problems. Ricla suggested the creation of an *audiencia* to handle judicial appeals in Cuba, while O'Reilly believed that the import taxes on slaves should be eliminated, and the slave trade liberalized. To increase trade between Spain and Cuba, O'Reilly proposed that ships be allowed to stop in Bayamo, Santiago de Cuba, Puerto Príncipe and Trinidad. But, of all these suggestions, none was more beneficial for the royal treasury than the creation of taxes for purposes of defence. Taxes were to be levied on land, cattle, and rented properties. Permission was also granted to distill rum in Cuba because the new sugar-cane liquor industry was expected to increase revenues, also.¹⁹

In his inspection of the garrisons of the Plaza of Havana, O'Reilly found that many soldiers were married, and held other jobs in order to support their families. Some were handicapped. O'Reilly dismissed some of these soldiers, keeping only the able-bodied men, who were given new quarters and uniforms. He also discovered that some of the officers had embezzled some 20,000 pesos from the military funds. He ordered their salaries garnished until their debt was paid. After he completed his military reorganization of the standing army, he proceeded to reorganize the Cuban militia. He created two Infantry Battalions and one Cavalry company in Havana, one Infantry Battalion and one Cavalry company in Santiago de Cuba,

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and Bayamo, Puerto Príncipe, and Cuatro Villas. Three Compañías de Morenos, consisting of free blacks, were created--two in Havana and one for Santiago and Bayamo. The militia troops were then given new regulations and uniforms. Before O'Reilly left, he also created a company of young cadets to train Cuba's youth in the art of warfare.²⁰

Richa and O'Reilly were also entrusted by Charles III with a new plan of defense which called for the improvement of fortifications in Cuba. After some modifications by a Junta General in Havana, the plan was put into operation. The fort of El Morro was strengthened, and the construction of two new ones, Caballito and Atarés, was begun.

On September 26, 1764 O'Reilly was commissioned by Charles III to inspect the military garrisons, fortifications and ports of Puerto Rico as he had done in Cuba. The following year he arrived with three assistants to help him carry out his mission. Although it was expected that O'Reilly would mainly study the military situation, the Memoria of 1765 which he sent to Charles III after a two-month stay on the island, included observations on all aspects of eighteenth-century life in Puerto Rico.²¹ To illustrate his main points, he added at the end of his report a statement on the royal exchequer in Puerto Rico; a list of all the products introduced by the Barcelona Company during the year 1763; a population census according to sex, age, and status; an account of the number of cattle and other domestic animals on the island; a list of the prices of contraband goods that were bought and sold in the coastal towns; and a census of the number of clergy and members of the religious orders in Puerto Rico.²²

This 1765 Memoria not only described the state of the Kingdom

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was principally concerned with the economic conditions of the island. O'Reilly also noted that Spain had poured a great deal of money and sent many people to the island, but this investment had not paid off. He points out that the annual income of 10,804 pesos and 3 reales derived from the tithe, papal bulls, alcabala, eguardiente and almojarifazgo still had to be supplemented by a Mexican situado of 80,000 pesos, a sum which probably had to be increased in the future.

O'Reilly found Puerto Rico's lack of revenues incompressible. According to the island's population, which he estimated to be about 31,846 (white persons), taxes should have been larger. Moreover, the island also had many heavy-flowing rivers, and abundant waters in the sierras. It also had plenty of fish; its fields were full of corn, rice, tobacco, and other fruits, some of which had two or three crops a year. There was an almost 80% yield on all products. The sugar cane was "the thickest, lightest, juiciest, and sweetest in America."²³ Other products, such as cotton, indigo, coffee, tobacco (red pepper), cacao, nuez moscada (hickory nut), and vanilla were also of good quality. In the mountains could be found palo de Mora, a yellow-dye tree that was much in demand. There were also a good deal of timber which could be used for the construction of buildings, sugar mills, and small vessels. The medicinal herbs, roots, and resins also showed some commercial possibilities. O'Reilly did not discuss the mineral resources of Puerto Rico, but he did note that there were some salt mines near Guayama, which could be used for domestic consumption.

Finally, O'Reilly found that the agricultural crops of the island

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Rico. Here was a land that was fertile, with plenty of water and natural vegetation. Why, then, had the island not developed and become self-sufficient. According to O'Reilly, Puerto Rico's economic stagnation was due to the lack of a good government that would be conducive to its development. O'Reilly did not define the kind of political order that he envisioned, but he did add that from the beginning the island had been settled by soldiers who were too used to military life to dedicate themselves to agricultural production. Other settlers, such as sailors and pollizones (cast-offs), who had deserted Spanish ships which stopped at the San Juan harbour and escaped to the mountains, were not productive either. To O'Reilly they were an indolent lot, who were content to live in poor huts, eating a meager diet of plantains, a little meat, and some wild fruits and vegetables. O'Reilly believed that the good climate, fertile soil, and abundant fruits also encouraged the present inhabitants to be lazy. He lamented that "with only five days of work, a family had enough plantains for the whole year."²⁴ For sleeping, they used hammocks made from the majagua tree and acquired the few clothes that they wore by selling cows, horses, coffee, tobacco, and lumber to foreigners.

Illicit trade, according to O'Reilly, had been beneficial for the island, even though it had harmed Spanish commerce. It had caused an increase in native products, and made the people of Puerto Rico more industrious. It was usually conducted quite openly on the southern and western coasts on the island with Dutch, British, and English merchants who came from the Caribbean Sea. The Dutch

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mainly came for tobacco, the Danes for cattle, and English for lumber.

Contraband did increase commercial activity in Puerto Rico, but there was, at least from O'Reilly's point of view, very little social development. There were only two schools in the entire island. Consequently, illiteracy was high, foreign languages unheard of, and most people kept track of time by referring to a particular governor, hurricane, bishop, fleet, or sitio. Likewise, they judged distances according to their traveling time. There were few social distractions, for towns were almost deserted, except for a priest. However, whites and blacks mixed freely without any prejudice.

O'Reilly pointed out that past governors had sought to resolve the economic and social problems of Puerto Rico by distributing lands to the poor, but in his opinion the land reform program in Puerto Rico had made matters worse. Many individuals such as those from Aguada, where land redistribution had taken place, moved away from their lands. This made it difficult for them to attend church, school or assume the responsibility of defending the island. Moreover, the land redistribution program did not increase production nor commerce in Puerto Rico.

In contrast, he noted, the Island of St. Croix had profited greatly by the creation of a commercial company which encouraged its development since 1734. When the Danish Company was unable to continue its investments, the crown took over the administration of the colony. Since then, the commerce and duties of St. Croix had greatly increased because of the prudent policies followed by the crown, which included a free slave trade, high tariffs on foreign goods and the abolition of the slave trade. St. Croix had developed despite the fact that it was

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smaller than Puerto Rico, and did not have the plentiful water supplies that Puerto Rico had.

In the case of Puerto Rico, the Spanish government had to encourage the settlement of inventors, artisans and workers, and demand the production of goods that were most needed in Spain, reclaim lands that were not settled or cultivated, and devise a new reglamento to regulate duties and commerce in Puerto Rico. He also recommended that the government invest in the establishment of a sugar-mill in order to spur development.²⁹

O'Reilly did not mention the state of the military in his Memoria. But in two separate reports to the Marquis of Grimaldi and the Marquis of Squillac he sent a full account of the state of the garrisons and militia. He informed them that the standing army was very undisciplined, and noted that many soldiers were married, and lived with their families. The soldiers who came to aid those already in the Plaza during the Seven Years' War did not live in the fort, either. Some lived with a casera, usually a black woman who took care of them and their homes. Some of the officers, he added, kept their men in debt, by advancing them their salaries at high interest rates. The troops were poorly dressed, and had neglected not only their duties, but also their drill. The militia was in the same condition. It had no criteria for selection, so anyone who enlisted was accepted. It also lacked experienced officers, uniforms, and arms. The defense of the island was in such jeopardy that O'Reilly immediately initiated a series of reforms to remedy the situation.³⁰

To begin with, O'Reilly carefully directed the militia.

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of the soldiers stationed in the Plaza Militar of San Juan, but at the same time he ordered them to obey the Reglamento para la tropa veterana. Issued on April 27, 1765 these orders imposed upon the officers the obligation of visiting the governor's palace daily to receive the orders of the day. They were to convene their troops in the Plaza Mayor for roll call every afternoon, and on Saturdays for inspection. The officers were also responsible for maintaining discipline and subordination among the troops. The soldiers were expected to live in military quarters, observe curfews, dress in uniform, and man their posts diligently. O'Reilly also reprimanded the officers for their larceny, and when they offered to pay an indemnization fee to their troops, he readily accepted the money to buy uniforms for the troops.²⁷

O'Reilly also reorganized the garrison of the Plaza Militar. He formed five new companies of the Regimiento Fijo, and a Compañía de inválidos to which he retired all those who were unfit to serve because of age or physical handicaps. He lowered the pension of those who were no longer in active military service, and ordered all unmarried men of the batalión to live in military quarters. The sergeant major of the Plaza was named as interim-commander of the Spanish troops in Puerto Rico until a permanent one was appointed. An arsenal was created to guard the arms of the existing troops, and more weapons were requested. After a tally of the artillery of the Plaza, O'Reilly requested 3,000 rifles and bayonets, 300 swords, and other military supplies.

After reorganizing the military forces of Puerto Rico, O'Reilly

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conducted a census of the population of the island. Once completed, O'Reilly created 19 infantry companies, consisting of 100 soldiers, and 5 caballerías of 60 men. Following the census, he assigned two to San Juan, and two to Arecibo, Añasco, San Germán, Ponce, and Guayama. Others were created in Ton Alto, Ton Raja, Manatí, Aguada, and Mayagüez. A last one was organized by the citizens of Bayamón, Guaynabo, and Río Piedras. To head these Milicias Disciplinadas, O'Reilly named Andrés Viscarrondo, a sergeant major from the Spanish garrison, as commander-in-chief. He also appointed three assistants, who were responsible for the inspection of the militia troops of each town. New uniforms were designed for both divisions. The urban militia, which served more as a courier for the governors than as a military unit, was also reorganized.

While in Puerto Rico, O'Reilly, with the aid of Thomas O'Daly, chief engineer of fortifications, also designed a plan to improve the defense of the Plaza Militar of San Juan. His plan called for improvements in El Morro, the oldest fort, and for the creation of a new one, the fort of San Cristóbal. O'Reilly also proposed an extension of the walls surrounding the presidio, and the building of two new batteries and ravelins. O'Daly was placed in charge of executing the fortification plan. But, the repairs and construction of new fortifications in the Caribbean required additional funds. To provide for these the government of Charles III embarked upon an economic program that differed from those of his predecessors in its intensity, even if not in purpose.

The economic program that Charles III implemented for his

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insular possessions in the Caribbean was geared toward the eradication of contraband, the improvement of commercial relations between Spain and the islands, and the increase of trade with Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico. By enacting this program of reform the crown expected, not only to increase its revenues and the profits of Spanish investors, but to spur the economic prosperity of these territories so they could assume a more active part in the defense of the empire in America. The emphasis of the new economic reform program was on trade, but attempts were also made to resolve the lingering problems of land tenure and agricultural development, to provide for new sources of revenues, and to improve financial administration in the Caribbean.

The first problem that came to the attention of Charles III was the problem of contraband. England, according to a 1761 report, was the nation most involved in illegal trade in the Caribbean. Its merchants carried on a trade valued at £2,000,000 a year. The report also pointed out that the success of the British was due to the privileges that Spain had granted to England in past treaties.²⁸ British ships, for example, had been given the right of free entry. This not only encouraged the illegal trade of British goods, but the export of Spanish bullion from the American colonies as well. Tariffs on British goods were also considerably lower than on other imports. In view of this situation, Charles III decided to abrogate Spain's commercial treaties with England. This he did in 1761 when war broke out between Spain and England. Failure to win the war, however, forced him to renew the treaties with England, and contraband continued to flourish in the Caribbean. Consequently, Charles III continued to

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combat illegal trade. First, he denied British mail boats the right to stop at La Coruña. Inter he ordered the search of foreign merchant vessels for possible contraband, and forbade the unloading of foreign linens in Spanish ports. In 1770 he even banned cotton manufactures, including Manchester goods. In addition to this, he ordered the seizure of the profits of known Spanish middle men who handled British investments in Spain.²⁹

Even though Charles III was unable to eliminate the British from the Indies trade, his government began to pursue a series of commercial policies that eventually increased Spain's own participation in that trade. The program began with an attempt to increase commercial relations between Spain and the Caribbean. Charles III's government set out to achieve this, when in 1764 it created a monthly maritime mail service between La Coruña and Havana. The pilots of these mail boats were authorized to carry goods from Spain and bring American products on their return voyage, but were instructed to guard against contraband.

The following year Charles III granted a concession to an association of Cadiz merchants to introduce slaves from the west coasts of Africa to various parts in the Caribbean. This Spanish slave trade company, represented in Madrid by Miguel de Utrera, one of its associates, was authorized to bring an annual supply of 1,500 black slaves to provinces of Cartagena and Portobelo, 400 to Honduras and Campeche, 1,000 to Cuba, and 600 to Cusana, Santo Domingo, Trinidad, Margarita, San Juan Puerto, and Puerto Rico. The company's ships were to call first Cadiz, and could then, at any time, come, of its own volition

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Spanish products to West African ports in order to purchase the required number of slaves. The slaves were to be brought directly to Puerto Rico, which was designated as the company's slave trade center in the Caribbean. Here, the company was to establish quarters and a hospital for the slaves, and a warehouse for the flour and other products needed for their sustenance. In addition, the company was to cultivate some lands in Puerto Rico in order to provide enough food supplies for the slaves during their period of stay in the port of San Juan. From San Juan unsold slaves were to be taken to the other parts, and sold at prices, ranging from \$20 to \$30 pesos. In payment for the slaves, the company was to accept the native products of the area.⁵⁹

These concessions were granted to Miguel de Uriarte's company for a period of ten years, but by 1770 the company showed signs of decline. In an effort to maintain their control over the Caribbean slave trade, the members of the company submitted to Charles III a series of petitions between the years 1770 and 1773. In 1773 the crown renewed the company's contract, but since its major investors now were Francisco de Aguirre and Lorenzo de Arístegui, the company became known as the Aguirre-Arístegui Company. Almost all of the privileges which had been granted in 1765 were granted to the company once again. However, there were some significant changes. First, the company could send its ships from either Havana or Santiago de Cuba to Africa or foreign Caribbean parts to acquire slaves and supplies. Secondly, Havana was designated as the new slave center. In addition, the price of slaves sold in Puerto Rico and in some of the other islands was slightly reduced. Finally, the company was

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allowed to use cash in its transactions with the foreign slave traders, and bring in three barrels of flour for each slave introduced.³¹

As a result of these changes the company was able to continue its slave trade in the Caribbean. For the next years slaves were introduced in larger numbers and with greater regularity. The flour trade also increased. In Puerto Rico the company created two haciendas--Puerto Nuevo and Las Manjitas--which had a total investment of 20,000 pesos. But, this was a short interlude of success, for, in the long run the company was unable to overcome the odds against it. The company, for example, could not break the monopoly which the British, French, and Portuguese had over the west African and Caribbean slave trades. It, therefore, had to pay the high prices that were charged by foreign slave traders. The Spanish authorities in the Caribbean also placed some obstacles in the way of the company's development. From time to time the governors of Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, and Guadalupe appropriated the company's ships and cargo. In 1763 the company lost two of its ships carrying flour from Philadelphia to the San Juan authorities, who accused the company of contraband activities. The governors of Puerto Rico also forced the company to pay for any inspection or protection that was provided by the Spanish garrison in San Juan. These, and other problems, prevented the company from meeting the labor needs of the Puerto Rican hacendados who continued to complain of slave shortages throughout most of this period.³²

In 1765 Charles Ogle transferred the entire assets of all of his Caribbean slave trading companies to the United States which, in turn, transferred

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the participation of the Spanish provinces in the American trade. This law permitted Spanish merchants to use the ports of Cádiz, Seville, Alicante, Cartagena, Málaga, Barcelona, Santander, La Coruña, and Gijón to trade with Cuba, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, Margarita, and Trinidad. Merchants were still required to obtain a license, pay a duty of 6%, and keep an account of their commercial transactions in order to prevent contraband, but all other restrictions and duties were abolished. These privileges were later extended to other ports in America. By 1789 the most important ports in Spain were free to trade with those in America, including the major ports of Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico.³³ The fleet system and the commercial monopoly of Seville and Cádiz, thus came to an end.

The establishment of free trade, however, did not guarantee an automatic increase in the volume of merchant trade, nor a rise in government revenues. The government of Charles III, therefore, also encouraged the development of the economies of the Caribbean Islands. In Puerto Rico it attempted to resolve the land issue in order to increase the land's agricultural production. In 1767 the Audiencia of Santo Domingo appointed Juan Allende as jefe sub-delegado in an attempt to execute the 1754 land reform law. But the cabildo of San Juan opposed Allende's appointment, arguing that Puerto Rico had been exempted in 1758 from the 1754 eximia by the crown.³⁴ Although the Spanish government failed to redistribute lands throughout the entire island at this time, cattle hatos in the area of San Germán and Guayama were successfully abolished a few years later. General gabelas were also created, and the soldiers devoted a portion of their time to

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Charles III's government continued to try to resolve the land problem in Puerto Rico. In 1774 O'Reilly suggested that a land reform tax be imposed on Puerto Rico's lands to cover the costs of maintaining a native militia. The San Juan cabildo and governor Miguel de Moscoso accepted the offer, and in 1775 the crown agreed to O'Reilly's proposal. The issue of land tenure and use, however, had yet to be resolved. Puerto Rican hacendados continued to request titles to their lands, and in 1778 a royal cedula granted them this boon, but with certain conditions. They were to pay the prescribed land taxes, develop agriculture, and raise cattle, otherwise they forfeited their legal rights to the lands. A commission was to be set up in order to study the land problem further. In the distribution of baldíos or unclaimed lands, ^{desacomodados} were to be given first preference, but some of these lands were also to be set aside for Don Luis de Bulbes de Barton, the Duke of Crillon, a French nobleman who had distinguished himself in the Spanish military.⁵⁵ The cedula of 1778 also permitted the immigration of foreign cultivators as a means of increasing the production of sugar cane, calagusta (allspice), indigo, cotton, achote (annatto), coffee, tobacco, and cacao. The only stipulations were that they be Catholic, and swear allegiance to the king of Spain.

The commission stipulated in the cedula of 1778 was created in 1779 by Governor José Bufores, who gave it careful instructions in order to expedite its work. Despite this, the commission was unable to survey the lands in Puerto Rico, except those of Río Piedras. On July 30, 1781, the commission was approved. The war with England cut down on the Spanish government's land policy, and land claims in Puerto

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Rico was not continued until 1785. At this time the crown requested an account of the situation. The new governor, Juan Dabán, rendered a pessimistic report, pointing out that the inhabitants were unable to pay their land taxes because of the general poverty of the island, and that land redistribution was an impossible task unless expert surveyors and a juez repartidor, empowered to handle disputes, be assigned to Puerto Rico to solve the land problem.³⁶ He recommended the fiscal of Santo Domingo, Julián Díaz de Saravia, as juez repartidor. The crown accepted his recommendations, and in 1785 Díaz de Saravia, accompanied by a surveyor and an escribano (notary) arrived in Puerto Rico to carry out the crown's plan for land redistribution in the island. Díaz de Saravia encountered the same problems as the 1770 commission. In 1787 he informed José de Gálvez, Marquis of Sonora, the new minister, that the topography of the island made a survey almost impossible. Many did not have titles to their lands because they were too poor to incur the expenses required to obtain them. Most hatos were located in wastelands, which could not support ganado mayor. On the basis of this, Díaz de Saravia suggested that the repartimiento of lands in Puerto Rico be suspended.³⁷ Díaz de Saravia did succeed in distributing lands in Humacao, Fajardo, and Loíza. But, when he departed in 1787, land reform in Puerto Rico came to a standstill. Charles III, like his predecessors, only partially succeeded in solving the problem of latifundismo in the Caribbean.

Although the Bourbon monarchs were unable to resolve all of the problems which confronted the islands during the eighteenth century, the repartimiento reform program which they initiated for the islands

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Caribbean islands resulted in better political administration and greater economic and social progress. Economic gains were particularly noticeable. The trade between Spain and the Antilles, especially with Cuba, increased tremendously. Whereas only five or six vessels were used in the trade between Cuba and Spain in 1760, more than 200 were operating in 1778. With increased shipping and imports, the aduana or customs duties increased also. Between 1771 and 1776 the aduana in Cuba brought in about half-a-million pesos annually. In Puerto Rico the aduana had increased from 782 pesos in 1765 to 16,000 pesos in 1778. The alcabala also brought in more revenues.³⁸

There was significant agricultural development in all the islands. The increased production of sugar, tobacco, and timber renewed the Caribbean agricultural economy. The production of tobacco continued to expand, and sugar cane became an important crop in the Mediterranean Spanish market once again.³⁹ In Cuba lumber production re-established the importance of Havana's shipping industry. The export of hides, however, declined. Caribbean coffee became a good cash product in Europe, but only toward the end of the century.

The improvement of the Caribbean economy brought about increased revenues for the crown. In Puerto Rico there was an increase in the rentas del estado (royal treasury) from 6,885 pesos in 1758 to 47,500 pesos in 1778.⁴⁰ The sum probably would have been greater if the crown had been able to eliminate contraband in the area. But, despite all of the commercial reforms, the legal trade between Puerto Rico and Spain had not increased greatly. Even Felipe Massé y Tamarit, who had been appointed by the king of Spain to investigate the commerce of the

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state of the island of Puerto Rico, informed the Spanish minister that the few exports--coffee, malagueta, hides--to Spain amounted to about 10,000 pesos annually. The few products imported from Spain--oil, wine, flour, textiles, and other luxuries--were unloaded in the San Juan harbour, and were not distributed throughout the island. Thus, illicit trade continued to flourish, and, in the opinion of Abbad, prevented the island's economy from developing. He, therefore, recommended that further legislation be enacted to eliminate the contraband trade in the Caribbean, and that two new ports, and more communication between the capital and the interior be established in order to increase Spanish trade.⁴¹

The social developments were less spectacular, and like the economic progress, uneven. There were, nonetheless, great increases in the populations of Puerto Rico and Cuba. In Puerto Rico, for example, O'Reilly's census placed the population about 46,000 persons; Abbad's 1775 census put the figure at more than 70,000 inhabitants.⁴² By the end of the century the population had tripled, and thirty-four new towns had been founded. This population increase was mainly due to natural causes, but immigrants entering the island also contributed to the increase in numbers. Cuba's population also increased. Havana alone reached a total of more than 30,000 persons.⁴³ The new towns of Nueva Filipina, Pinar de Río, Guines, Júcaro, and others came into being. In Santo Domingo, new settlements were also created. Among them were Bajabán, Macoris, Baní, San Miguel de la Atalaya, San Rafael, and Las Caobas. On the whole, the demographic development of Spanish America during the eighteenth century, as well as the economic

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and political evolution, was not as impressive as that of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

With the increase in population, there came an increase in the number of religious establishments. New ermitas (chapels), churches, and convents were created in all the Caribbean islands. At the same time the control of the Spanish church over education continued to grow. As a result of the expulsion of the Jesuits by Charles III in 1767, the Seminario de San Carlos and San Ambrosio was opened in 1773 in Cuba to substitute the recently defunct Jesuit college. The University of Havana continued to flourish, also. But, in Puerto Rico the state of education was lamentable. There existed only a few schools, and a petition to found a university was ignored by the crown. This was not unusual for the times. The aim of the Bourbon reform program was, after all, to increase the military and economic power of Spain in the Antilles, not to improve the social condition of the Caribbean peoples. Nevertheless, the Spanish eighteenth-century reforms in the Caribbean brought on an increased economic activity in the area, which encouraged further developments in the nineteenth century.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

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3. Vera Lee Brown, "The South Sea Company and Contraband Trade," American Historical Review, vol. XXXI, No. 4 (July, 1926), pp. 662-675.
4. Aguirre, Historia de Cuba, p. 163.
5. Ibid., pp. 164-165.
6. Portuondo, Historia de Cuba, p. 188; Aguirre, Historia de Cuba, p. 165.
7. La Riverendá, Historia económica de Cuba, p. 148; Aguirre, Historia de Cuba, p. 169.
8. Miguel Artola, "Campillo y las reformas de Carlos III," Revista de Indias, XII (Oct.-Dec. 1942), No. 50, pp. 605-714. Campillo, however, was against the introduction and development of industries in the Spanish American colonies. See Eduardo Arcila Farías, El siglo ilustrado en América; reformas económicas de siglo XVIII en Nueva España (Caracas: Ediciones del Ministerio de Educación, 1955), p. 12.
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10. Ibid., pp. 252-253.
11. Lynch, Spanish Colonial Administration, p. 13.
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13. Sir Charles Alexander Petrie, King Charles III of Spain, an Enlightened Despot (London: Constable, 1971), p. 43.
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20. Ibid., pp. 31-46.
21. Memoria de D. Alexandro O'Reilly sobre la Isla de Puerto Rico (1765) in Tapia, Biblioteca, pp. 624-635.
22. Ibid., pp. 636-649.
23. Ibid., p. 625.
24. Ibid., p. 626.
25. Ibid., p. 634.
26. Letter from O'Reilly to Grimaldi, on Board "El Aguila," June 20, 1765 in Tapia, Biblioteca, pp. 654-661; Revista de la Tropa Regular de Puerto Rico, June 24, 1765 in Bibiano Torres Ramirez, La Isla de Puerto Rico, 1765-1898 (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1968), pp. 299-325.
27. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2325, Alexander O'Reilly, Reglamento para la Tropa Veterana de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, April 27, 1765; see also Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 295-299.
28. Allan Christelow, "Contraband Trade Between Jamaica and the Spanish Main, and the Free Port Act of 1766," Hispanic American Historical Review, vol. XXII (May, 1942), p. 315.
29. Lynch, Spanish Colonial Administration, pp. 14-15; Vera Iza Brown, "Studies in the History of Spain in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century," Smith College Studies in History, vol. XV (Oct. 1929-Jan. 1930), Nos. 1-2, pp. 52-53, 57-58.
30. Bibiano Torres Ramirez, La Compañia Gaditana de Negros (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1973), pp. 38-41.
31. Ibid., p. 39. In Puerto Rico the number of barrels to be kept in storage was reduced from 2,000 to 600. See Luis Díaz Soler, Historia de la esclavitud negra en Puerto Rico (Río Piedras: Editorial Universitaria, 1970), p. 89.
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34. Gilbert Baker, Reportes históricos de legislaciones en Puerto Rico, p. 224.

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35. Ibid., p. 276.36. Ibid., pp. 285-286.37. Ibid., p. 287.

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42. O'Reilly, Historia de la Isla, Biblioteca, p. 234; Abbad, Historia, p. 170.

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CHAPTER III

DON MIGUEL DE MUEZAS AND THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR AND
CAPTAIN-GENERAL OF PUERTO RICO, 1769-1776

The success of Spain's eighteenth-century reforms depended in great measure on the effectiveness and loyalty of the officials appointed by the crown to head the colonial governments in America. During the reigns of Philip V and Ferdinand VI most of the officials sent to administer the Caribbean islands were inexperienced and opportunistic. Charles III, however, was determined to make his reform program a success. He, therefore, selected capable and dedicated administrators, who worked earnestly to put his legislative plan into effect. Among them were the governors and captain-generals of the island the presidio of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico. Indeed, the governors and captain-generals appointed by Charles III were among the most noteworthy in Puerto Rico's eighteenth-century history, and Miguel de Muezas was probably the most outstanding.

But, the office which Muezas was to hold was one of the lowest-ranking and least-honored offices in the hierarchy of Spanish administration in America. Puerto Rico, after all, was not one of Spain's most valuable possessions. The office of governor and captain-general was also one of the lowest paid positions. Consequently, those who sought and received the office often used it as a stepping stone for more important and lucrative posts. While they occupied this "transitory" position, however, they were considered almost absolute

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powers and vast privileges. For, they were entrusted with the entire political, economic, judicial administration of the islands of Puerto Rico, and the total supervision of the Plaza Militar of San Juan.

Candidates for this office were usually selected from among alfereses (second-lieutenants), captains in the infantry, cavalry or navy, guards of the convoys, sergeant majors, or other military officials. Few were chosen from the higher ranks, and none had the prestigious title of captain-general in the Spanish army or navy, but, obviously, the most important factor in the selection process for a new governor and captain-general was long-term military or naval experience in the service of Spain.¹

A specific age requirement was not an important factor in the selection of a new governor and captain-general. Most were usually in their forties, fifties, or sixties. Their ancestry was not in itself significant either. Some came from illustrious families or were nobles, but most were not. What was important about their lineage in the eighteenth century, however, was that it could verify their limpieza de sangre. Formal education was also not a considering factor, but some were able to render valuable informes or memorias to the crown.²

Although there do not seem to be too many variables in the criteria for selecting a governor and captain-general for Puerto Rico, one objective seems clear--that he be loyal to the monarch of Castile. This was not only expected of crown officials assigned to Puerto Rico, but of all officials sent to the Far World. Thus, many governors were chosen from the service of the city or town which were closest to it,

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such as León or Extremadura. Needless to add, that none was a native of Puerto Rico.

At the beginning, appointment to this office was by the crown with the advice of the Council of the Indies and the Junta de Guerra. After examining the military records of all possible candidates, and considering the personal petitions of friends and relatives, these advisors presented to the king the names of those they recommended for the office. Later, when this office was put up for sale, like many others in America, the practice of consulting the members of the Council and the Junta was continued. But, now the title of governor and captain-general was granted to the highest bidder, who of course, had the military experience required. Rarely was the title given to an interim governor or as a future concession.³

The governor and captain-general was appointed for a specified period of time--usually for five years. As soon as the individual was named to the post, he was given two months traveling time to reach Puerto Rico. An unaccounted-for delay might cost him his title. Upon arrival, he immediately assumed the responsibilities of his office, and was expected to stay in Puerto Rico until his successor relieved him.

The swearing-in ceremony took place before the highest authority on the island, usually the outgoing governor. The municipal council, the leading citizens of the city of San Juan, and the military garrison of the Plaza were also present. The public was notified of this solemn occasion by public criers; and in the presence of all invited persons, the new governor and captain-general took the oath of

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office, and posted the abonadas, special bonds which financially backed his administration.⁴ Only then was he ready to exercise his power, carry out his functions, and enjoy the honors and privileges of his office.

The power of the office of governor and captain-general was quite extensive. He was the supreme authority of the land, and was accountable only to the king in Spain. The distance between Puerto Rico and Spain increased this power, and since, all that Spain needed to require was that the military defenses on the island be in good standing, he was fairly free to exercise it as he saw fit.⁵

The crown did little to limit the governor's authority. In fact it entrusted to the person in office a myriad of functions to perform--all of which ensured complete control over the island. As governor he was required to carry out civil duties involving matters of government, justice and royal exchequer, and the religious responsibilities inherent in the vice-patrono. As captain-general he was responsible for the military and naval defense of the islands of Puerto Rico.

His executive functions were more administrative than legislative. Among these was the power to designate persons to vacant posts in the various departments of his office and council, and appoint local magistrates and constables. He could also name councilmen and members to the cabildos. More importantly, he was responsible for the assignment and supervision of the tenientes de guerra who were in charge of the local districts of the island.

The governor also acted as president of the San Juan Council,

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and presented all royal orders and laws to this body. After presentation, he put the documents in an arca (chest) for safe-keeping, and, as was expected, executed the law. To ensure that the laws were being obeyed, he had to make official visits throughout the territory, either personally or through a commissioner. The results of his visitas, as well as reports on the state of affairs of all the facets of his administration, were to be sent regularly to the Council of the Indies.

His power to issue ordinances was limited, but he could issue temporary orders to handle emergency situations. These, and any other action taken by the governor had to be sanctioned by the Council of the Indies, especially in cases where foreign powers were involved.

The governor of Puerto Rico was also juez superior in cases of appeal involving civil and criminal matters. In addition, he was authorized to conduct juicios (hearings) and informaciones (inquiries). With the advice of an asesor letrado who aided in the interpretation of the law, the governor was empowered to try cases of first instance, including those involving his person. He could render sentences, punish crimes against public order, impose fines, and exile "undesirables" who disturbed the peace. His decisions were final, but they could be reviewed by the Audiencia of Santo Domingo, the Council of the Indies, and by his Jefe de Residencia at the end of his administration. During the first decades of the seventeenth century the Audiencia participated more directly in the legal process of Puerto Rico by sending agente de capitán to carry out specific tasks on behalf of the court in Santo Domingo or the Council in Spain. As the

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went on even this practice was discontinued, and the governor of Puerto Rico became the final legal authority on the island.⁶

Besides administrating the executive and judicial branches of the government the governor also supervised the office of the royal exchequer. In most places the intervention of the governor in the area of finances was limited to the inspection of funds in the cajas reales and the calling of juntas to discuss matters of economic administration. In the case of Puerto Rico, a Plaza Militar where the governor was also in charge of military funds, the participation was more direct and more extensive. He was in charge of the allocation of the situado for military and civil purposes, and was responsible for the collection of debts to the royal treasury, and the payments of those incurred by the royal exchequer. He was also entrusted with the safe-keeping of the 300,000 pesos, which were sent from Guatemala for emergency situations. If there was ever a shortage of currency, he could issue paper notes. The activity of the contrabandists also increased the governor's participation in the area of financial administration, especially when he could keep a share of the goods confiscated.

The governor also intervened in the affairs of the church in Puerto Rico. However, his power of religious patronage was limited in that he had to act jointly with the bishop in charge. Together they were responsible for the supervision of clerics, erection of religious institutions, and collection of tithes. They were also required to make periodic visits to the churches, hospitals, and rural districts to oversee the carrying out of programs for the drainage of swamps

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Rico. But, the governor was granted some slight authority over the bishop. He administered the bishop's oath of allegiance to the crown; he authorized his departure; and could delay his ex-communication procedures until the Council approved the bishop's actions. This overlapping of authority often led to conflicts between the temporal and spiritual authorities.⁷

The governor's functions as supreme judge, supervisor of the royal exchequer and regio-patrono were important in maintaining Spain's control over the island; but more important in accomplishing this task were his functions as captain-general. As such, he was head of the naval forces, the regular military garrison, and local militia. He supervised the repair and construction of the works of fortification through an appointed agent, the sobrestante (overseer). In addition, he had original jurisdiction over military cases. His control over all aspects of colonial life, thus, was complete.

The governor's efforts in carrying out his functions were not adequately recompensed financially. Until the eighteenth century his salary was one of the lowest paid to an official of his capacity. But, on January 1st, 1766 the salary was raised to 6,000 pesos. The payment was made in three parts, and the first of these was used for repayment of the media anata, a fee which all those who held office had to pay the crown. Some of the governors protested that their salary was too low; others resorted to illegal activities to augment their incomes. However, next to the bishop's, the governor's salary was the highest on the Island of Puerto Rico.⁸

Besides salary, the governor was also given "payable income"

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of honors and privileges. For example, he was allowed to bring a stipulated number of personal effects free of duty. Among these were works of art, jewelry, money, and slaves. He resided at the palace of La Fortaleza, and was addressed as "my magnifico señor." He presided over the cabildo, juntas, and religious or civil ceremonies. In the king's name he received persons of high rank or with special commission. He reviewed the latter's papers, licenses, or titles. He was present at the swearing-in ceremonies of all the royal officials and councilmen of Puerto Rico. For his personal protection he could carry arms or have a personal bodyguard. Sometimes he received financial rewards in addition to his salary, or was transferred to a more lucrative post at the end of his governorship.

Finally, the office of governor and captain-general was circumscribed by some specific prohibitions. The governor was forbidden to absent himself from the island, or he would lose his pay. He could only do so with royal dispensation, which does not seem to have ever been granted. In case of absence, illness, or death he was to be succeeded by the lieutenant-governor.¹ He was forbidden to marry a native woman, or have business dealings with anyone on the island. His subordinates were also excluded from trade or other commercial activities. The governor could not acquire a house of his own, either through bequest or sale. The aim of these prohibitions was to prevent a conflict of interests--the royal vs. the personal. These prohibitions were implicit in the office, and not stipulated in the title or by law. Needless to add, not all governors obeyed them. Many, as was shown earlier, merely appear to be the standard bearer

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that flourished in and around the island of Puerto Rico.

These were some of the characteristics of the office of governor and captain-general that Charles III entrusted to Miguel de Nuevas on February 24, 1769. The appointment to the office of governor and captain-general was probably of no surprise to Nuevas, for he had earlier petitioned the crown for a change of post, and a promotion.¹⁰ In all of his petitions for promotion, Nuevas briefly noted his qualifications, but his military record delineates these more thoroughly.¹¹ Born in Extremadura in 1715, he started his military career at the age of twenty, when he was made a cadet in the Regimiento de Infantería de Granada. After six and a half years of apprenticeship, he was promoted to second-lieutenant and assigned to the regimiento de Aragón. With one of the companies of this regiment, the Compañía de Saboya, he was sent to serve in the wars in Italy in 1742. There he carried out all of his military assignments, including those of aide-de-camp to General Francesco Bissatelli. In a letter of recommendation which Bissatelli wrote on behalf of this young officer, he noted that Nuevas served him diligently and efficiently, and exhibited a dedication for royal service.¹²

In 1746 Nuevas was promoted to the rank of captain, and transferred to the Regiment of Sicily. He continued to participate in military activities in the cities of Genoa and Naples until 1753, when he returned to Spain. On June 1, 1756 he was made lieutenant-colonel, and five days later he was given the post of Castellano del Morro (castle warden) of the Plaza of Cuba, a position which he held for ten and a half years.¹³ Even at military assignments, thus,

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quite extensive, and he was more than prepared to assume the military responsibilities involved in the office of captain-general in Puerto Rico.

His experience in civil and administrative matters was more limited, but for two years he served as lieutenant governor of the Plaza of Cuba, an office which he acquired on November 26, 1766. This office was not one of the most important posts in America. Nevertheless, while Muesas occupied it, he conscientiously exercised the political and military government of that jurisdiction, and received special recognition for this by the crown.¹⁴

The crown obviously was satisfied with Muesas' performances in America, but Muesas was an ambitious man. He soon requested a promotion to one of the vacant governorships that would correspond with his rank. His petition was supported by Antonio María Bucarelli, governor of Cuba at the time.¹⁵ On February 24, 1769 he was granted this request, and was appointed governor and captain-general of the Island of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico. Soon after, the Council of the Indies was instructed by the crown to recognize Muesas' new position, and dispatch the appropriate papers.

The most important of these documents was the title of governor and captain-general, which was issued on March 19, 1769. The format of the title was not unique. It followed that of previous titles. It first explained why the crown selected Muesas, and then proceeded to specify the term of office. Although it was understood that Muesas was to serve for five years, like his predecessors, the new appointment did not follow the tradition of his peers. It was

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to rule in all the cities, villages, and places that were already settled or would be settled in the future.

According to this document the sergeant major was ordered to swear in the new governor with all the solemnity due his office; and the existing authorities in Spain and the New World were to recognize Muesas as the legitimate governor and captain-general of Puerto Rico. It was their duty to assist him with their persons and arms in times of war and peace. The title also specified Muesas' salary (4,000 pesos), and ordered him to pay the sum of 2,000 pesos for the real cota.¹⁶

Muesas gratefully accepted his appointment, and assured Charles III that he would faithfully carry out his duties.¹⁷ On May 27, 1769 he left Cuba for Puerto Rico, accompanied by his wife, sons, and servants.¹⁸ After a stormy voyage of some fifty-seven days, the ship landed in Aguada, a town on the western part of the island. Muesas then proceeded overland to San Juan in order to acquaint himself with the land and its people.

He arrived in the city of San Juan July 29, and the next day he took the oath of office before the highest authorities on the island. The swearing-in ceremony took place at the Real Fortaleza de Santa Catalina, the governor's palace. Muesas promised to carry out all of the crown's mandates, administer its justice, and prevent illicit commerce.¹⁹ The following month Antonio de Córdova, Francisco Xorrín, and Manuel Díaz de Barrios, three of San Juan's leading citizens, declared themselves Muesas' alcaides (homage). They posted 4,000 deudos, and officially supported his administration. They were

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to pay any debts or damages incurred by Muesas during his period of governorship.²⁰ The media anata which amounted to 5,900 pesos was paid by Muesas himself. The honorary and financial obligations having been fulfilled, the new governor and captain-general was now ready to assume command of the government of the island and Plaza Military of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico.

To help him discharge his new responsibilities, Muesas appointed Fernando Miyares Gonzalez, a young Cuban officer, as secretario de gobierno. During his stay in Puerto Rico, Miyares González not only became Muesas secretary, but a chronicler of Puerto Rico's history as well. His Noticias Particulares de la Isla y Plaza de San Juan, written in 1775, attempted to give a broad survey of the island's history, and particularly noted the military, economic and religious progress that Puerto Rico experienced during Muesas's period of governorship.²¹

Miguel de Muesas began the administration of the islands of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico by making a reconocimiento or survey of its military, civil, and economic conditions. This was not an easy task since he was not acquainted with Puerto Rico or its problems. Indeed, three weeks after he took office he informed Julian de Arriaga, Charles III's Minister to the Indies, that it would take some time before he could render a report on the state of the fortifications, the agricultural progress of the island, and other matters.²²

To expedite his survey of the island, Muesas appointed several persons, who were acquainted with the island of Puerto Rico, to investigate various aspects of his administration. He ordered Thomas O'Leary, the Plaza's chief engineer, to inspect the fortification, and inform him of the progress made in the repair and construction

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of the forts in San Juan. Muesas also commissioned Antonio de la Cruz, a sergeant in the Compañía de Morenos of the Milicias Disciplinadas, to make a secret investigation of the contraband traffic between Puerto Rico and the neighboring islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix. More importantly, he instructed Andrés Viscarrondo, the commanding officer of the Milicias Disciplinadas, to visit the partidos of the island of Puerto Rico, and submit an account of the state of the military, and of anything else he considered relevant for the better administration of the island.

Muesas, himself, conducted the official review of the Spanish troops stationed in the Plaza Militar of San Juan. The military unit under his command during this period was the Regimiento de Toledo, which had replaced that of León on April 16, 1769. Muesas' military report of January, 1770 to the Ministry of War showed that the total number of soldiers on active duty was 4,277. No desertions had occurred. However, the unit was not complete. Some 745 men were unable to serve because of illness, and 77 had died. According to Muesas' report a total of 704 soldiers were needed to complete the regiment. A number of posts were also vacant.²³ Muesas made no reference to the garrisons' quarters, dress, or discipline. The implementation of O'Reilly's Reglamento para la tropa veterana probably had eliminated most of those problems by the time Muesas took over as captain-general of the Plaza Militar of San Juan.

Besides rendering a report on the state of the regular troops, Muesas also passed on to the Ministry of War an account of the military administration of San Juan. It found the military troops to be

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well-disciplined; but, to make them as effective as the other military units, the militia had to be instructed in the use of arms. Muesas, therefore, requested rifles, carbines, ammunition and other supplies to equip the Milicias Disciplinadas with an arsenal of weapons.²⁴

The account of the progress that had been made on the fortifications was prepared by O'Daly on October 30, 1769. In his report O'Daly noted that the northern escarpments surrounding the Plaza Militar had been completed. These newly created slopes would not only give more support to the natural terrain, but to the wall that was being planned for this part of the fortification. The redoubt in the Plaza de Armas of San Cristóbal and well-ventilated corridors underneath the Plaza had also been completed. However, land was still being cleared in front of the new ravelin. O'Daly had also ordered the repair of part of the rampart of the fort of San Cristóbal, which had collapsed the previous month due to poor soil conditions. He expected the repairs to be completed by February of 1770.²⁵ The works of fortification, therefore, were far from finished when Muesas took over. From the very beginning of his administration, Muesas paid close attention to their development, and sometimes conducted personal inspections to stimulate the workers.

No special study of the civil administration of the island of Puerto Rico appears to have been requested by Muesas. But, he did remit three relaciones on the civil and criminal cases pending or which had been resolved by November of 1769. These case lists do not give much information on the administration of justice during any of each period of governorship, but they do shed some light

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on the kinds of legal controversies and crimes that came to trial at this time. Most of the civil cases dealt with the collection of debts, rights of heredity, redemption of property, land and boundary disputes, and property damages. Among the criminal cases there were two dealing with mal tratamiento de palabras (verbal abuse) of women by two men, two dealing with incest, several with robbery and murder, and one with sedition. Most of these cases had already been resolved by the time Maesss' actual administration of justice in the island of Puerto Rico began.²⁶

A report on casos de comiso was also submitted by Maesss. These cases usually involved contraband goods seized and confiscated during official inspections or raids. According to Juan José Centero, who prepared the report, six cases of contraband had been recently concluded. One referred to the apprehension and confiscation of three horses which were being shipped from the port of Sagua without license. Another consisted of three slaves and some dry goods from a shipwrecked English vessel that had engaged in illicit trade in Puerto Rico's coastal waters. Two dealt with other shipwrecked vessels--one French, the other Spanish. A fifth case, involving the arrival of an English vessel with two fugitives and some stolen meat from the island of Dominica, was also settled. Finally, there was the case of three contraband slaves and goods seized at the port of Sagua.²⁷ The report did not specify in what manner these cases had been settled, but in subsequent ones full detailed testimonies were prepared, usually on board orders. It should also be pointed out that the number of contraband cases fell in threefold in 1801, probably due to the fact that

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of office. For, Muesas used the de comisco or seizure of contraband goods as a means of eliminating contraband.

At this time contraband trade was still one of the biggest problems for the Spanish authorities in the Caribbean, and especially in Puerto Rico. In a letter to Andrés Viceroy dated November 14, 1769, Muesas described the illicit commerce as he had come to know it in the short period he had been there. He wrote:

There is no doubt that a continuous illicit trade exists in all the lesser ports and calas (keys) of this island. Ships arrive, not only Spanish vessels but foreign ones as well, under the false pretence that they need firewood or water, and they remain anchored as long as they desire in order to carry away cattle and other animals, which the vecinos sell to them. Because of this deeply rooted illicit commerce they (the vecinos), are disloyal to his majesty, his royal decrees, (and) disobey the repeated orders of the capitanía-general. . . .²⁸

In another letter to Arriaga dated November 16, 1769, Muesas noted that the illicit extraction of cattle was so great that it kept the port of San Juan in a state of depletion. Meat was scarce here, while in the non-Hispanic islands, where cattle were not usually raised, it was abundant.²⁹ There was flourishing slave trade, also.

As soon as Muesas took office he began to take steps to abolish this illicit commerce. Among these measures was the appointment of special secret agents to investigate the means and routes used by contrabandists, the kind of goods they imported and exported, and who, among the islanders and foreigners, was involved in the trade. One of these contraband spies was Antonio de la Cruz, a sergeant in the Compañía de Arceros, who was commissioned by Muesas to investigate the illicit commerce that took place in the harbor.

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and the islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix. De la Cruz left San Juan on September 8, 1770 for Fajardo, a port on the eastern part of the island of Puerto Rico where a large illicit trade was suspected. From there he was instructed to go to St. Thomas and then to St. Croix to find out if there were any ships that were engaged in illegal trade with the vecinos of Puerto Rico. Unable to find passage to these islands from the coasts of Fajardo or Guayama, De la Cruz returned to San Juan, where Muesas gave him a piragua (small-boat) to get to St. Thomas. Upon his arrival there, De la Cruz observed the arrival of two Danish vessels that unloaded goods from Puerto Rico and then sailed away with intentions of returning with more contraband. Other ships then came to St. Thomas, and filled up their stores with many of these goods, including black slaves. He also learned that on November 23 two boats had sailed for Puerto Rico from St. Thomas, but he did not know for which coast or port they were headed. Other ships were ready to sail from St. Croix, also. One was supposed to leave for Fajardo on the 28th of November to get cattle from Puerto Rico. De la Cruz immediately informed the captain of the Milicias Disciplinadas in Fajardo, José Otero, to be on the lookout for the contrabandists. Once De la Cruz completed his mission he sent Muesas an account of these events.³⁰ This report and those of other officials gave Muesas a better picture of the illegal commerce in and around the island of San Juan Bautista at the beginning of his administration.

During his first year in office Muesas also examined agricultural production in Puerto Rico. His first report on tobacco to the Archdeacon of Santa Barbara, the sample of tobacco that he had submitted

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eighteenth-century accounts of the problems encountered in the cultivation of this product in Puerto Rico. This report, entitled Puntos que desean saber para el mejor servicio del rey y del público, was an answer to a seven-point questionnaire, drawn up by Vicente de Herrera, an attorney general for the Audiencia of Santo Domingo. To begin with Muesas addressed himself as to why there was a lack of cultivation of tobacco in Puerto Rico. After pointing out that few growers applied themselves to the production of tobacco, Muesas speculated that perhaps this was due to the lack of strength or the general laziness of the natives. It was not because of poor soil conditions. As Muesas pointed out, not only was Puerto Rico's land rich and plentiful, but it was, in fact, better than Cuba's, and therefore could be dedicated to the cultivation of any type of native product. Despite this, Puerto Rico's tobacco was very much inferior to Cuba's. The difference, Muesas judged, was due more to bad methods of cultivation and early harvesting, than to the quality of the soil. If tobacco was cultivated in the same manner it was in Havana, the aroma, color, and taste of the tobacco in Puerto Rico would increase greatly. Puerto Rican tobacco would then be better than Cuba's in every respect.

According to Muesas, contraband was probably responsible for the decline of whatever tobacco trade existed in Puerto Rico. But, the application of Charles III's new reforms would discourage illegal trade around the coasts of the island, and stimulate the legal export of this product. Puerto Rican agriculturists, however, would have to be encouraged to grow tobacco, for, Muesas found that the general lack of men was afflicted with sloth, idleness and drunkenness, and

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lived in the misery and poverty they had been subjected to and their customs. Besides if the crown supplied them with the tools they would be able to produce tobacco production, and that they could benefit from the tobacco grown, but they would not neglect the sugarcane as well. Muesas suggested that the crown either the growers to make repayments in kind since the land was capable of producing large quantities of good native products, such as sugar cane, cotton, malagfeta, tobacco and annatto seeds. The royal treasurer could collect these products, ship and sell them abroad, and also cash in on the export duties that were imposed on them. Muesas added that this export trade had to correspond to the capital needed in Puerto Rico to increase tobacco production. Even after making this proposal for guaranteed payments, in case the crown decided to finance the importation of slaves, Muesas warned that the collection of payments of slaves sold on credit would still cause some inconvenience, delays, and losses, and far from bringing benefits to the royal exchequer, might weaken it.³¹

Finally, Muesas was asked to estimate the quality of tobacco that would be extracted if the crown decided to aid the Puerto Rican growers with whatever they needed. Muesas was unable to answer this question in his report, explaining that because tobacco production had been so sporadic, and the producers had so often hidden from the authorities the total amount produced so they could make illegal exports, it was difficult to ascertain the total production of tobacco.³² However, in a letter to Arriaga, dated December 18, 1763, he explained that the tobacco production for 1763 had been 100,000 arrobas of 25 lb.

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also gave the total for the production of malagueta (25,000 arrobas) and for coffee (25,396 arrobas).³³

Muesas' report was submitted to the Council of the Indies, but there is no record that any action was taken on it. Herrera's questionnaire, however, showed that there was some interest on the part of Charles III's government to find ways of developing Puerto Rico's agricultural economy. Muesas' detailed answers also revealed his concern for the development of tobacco production on the island. More significantly, the report indicated that the expansion of tobacco production in Puerto Rico was a potential way of increasing the crown's revenues. The product had good soil to grow on and a ready market in Europe. All that was needed was to motivate and give financial aid to Puerto Rican producers, and close off the avenues to contraband.

Direct aid to the tobacco industry in Puerto Rico did not come during Muesas' administration; but Luesen, his successor, intensified the Spanish campaign against contraband. On March 19, 1770 he commissioned Andrés Vizcarrondo to inspect the Milicias Disciplinadas of all the districts of the island. In his inspection he was to note the methods used by the commanders of each district in their attempts to prevent the introduction and extraction of illicit goods. In his letter of commission Luesen confided to Vizcarrondo that he thought his most important mission as governor and captain-general was to eliminate contraband, and increase the agricultural production of the island. He, therefore, entrusted to Vizcarrondo orders requiring the tenientes de guerra and the inhabitants of the island to aid in their common duty. The tenientes de guerra were individually responsible

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for rendering reports of whatever transpired in their districts.³⁴

Before Vizcarrondo left San Juan, Muecas held a junta with the agents of the Real Compañia del Asiento de Negros, at which it was agreed that Alejandro Noboa, one of the two factores (agents) of the company would accompany Vizcarrondo in his journey.³⁵ The reasons for Noboa's visit to the partidos were not made clear in Muecas' instructions to Vizcarrondo. But, the Informe de visita a varios partidos de la Isla prepared by Vizcarrondo on April 25, 1770 clearly showed the purpose of Noboa's mission. He was to make contracts with coffee growers for specified quantities at fixed prices. All of these contratos were discussed by Vizcarrondo in his Informe.

The Informe de Visita of Vizcarrondo, therefore, is more than a military account of the Milicias Disciplinadas of Puerto Rico, or a report on anti-smuggling tactics. It is, in fact, a general economic survey, that placed a great deal of emphasis on the production of coffee for obvious reasons. It consists of brief reports of Vizcarrondo's visits to each of the island's towns. The first vignette is on the town of Río Piedras, which was located just south of San Juan. Vizcarrondo noted that the principal road of this district which linked the capital with the rest of the island was impenetrable, and this had caused many inconveniences for the inhabitants of the island. Vizcarrondo suggested that it be repaired, but Antonio de Matos, Río Piedras' teniente de guerra, was opposed to this idea. This teniente used another road to reach the capital, and, therefore, had no need for this one. Vizcarrondo criticized Matos' attitude, asserting that in performing his duty to conduct all business in his

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jurisdiction.

The district of Bayasón and Guaynabo was discussed next. In this partido Vizcarrondo recommended that lands be redistributed to accommodate some of the vecinos, especially the milicianos disciplinados, who had no lands. The lands, located between the Bayasón and Guaynabo rivers, were neither hatos nor criaderos. But, some of the vecinos, particularly Jorge García, would oppose the redistribution. García, for example, had held large tracts of lands, without cultivating them for many years. Therefore, these lands were virtually a no man's land.

Large land holdings were also found in the district of Ponce, and many were desiring that they be redistributed among the landless who could be settled in the areas of Cana, Capitanejo, Quebrada Ilmon, Bucanas, and Portugués, without causing any inconveniences to the other hacendados. The distribution of these lands was bound to reduce the number of vagabonds or idlers in Vizcarrondo's opinion.

In Mayagüez there were about 200 vecinos who had no lands of their own to cultivate. They requested lands in the Hato del Bercejal, which were being used by the Martínez family for pasture. The desacomodados claimed that this family had overestimated the number of cattle they owned in order to keep these lands. But, they did not have enough animals to even start the number imposed by the San Juan government on cattle. Surprisingly, Vizcarrondo made no suggestions about land redistribution in this district. He also failed to discuss the lands of land in other districts.

The following table shows the number of cattle owned by the people

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de Negros recorded by Vizcarrondo was made in the district of Toa Alta. He informed Muesas that Domingo Maisonart, the captain of the Milicias Disciplinadas of this district, Pablo de Rivera, the sergeant major of the Milicias Urbanas, and Juan Ortiz, the captain of the reformadas--all hacendados of this partido--met with the teniente de guerra, Tomás de Rivera, and agreed to sell their coffee to the Real Compañia at fifteen reales per arroba. On March 3, 1770 Hobon and the hacendados signed the contract. The total production of coffee in this district, however, was one of the lowest in the island--only fifty arrobas at the time of Vizcarrondo's visit.

The harvest in the town of Coamo yielded much more coffee. Its production was one of the highest in Puerto Rico--about 10,000 arrobas yearly. The hacendados of Coamo, likewise, agreed to sell their crops to the Real Compañia at fourteen reales per arroba. Contracts were also made with the hacendados of Guayama, Ponce, Villa de San Germán, Mayaguez, Añasco, Aguada, Turis, and Aracibo. However, no deals were made in Yauco, Manatí, Las Vegas, and Toa Baja because coffee production was extremely low in these areas. Vizcarrondo encouraged coffee planters in these towns to increase their crops in the future.³⁶

In his Informe Vizcarrondo gave little information on other products under cultivation, except to note that Hobon had agreed to buy malagdata from the agricultural producers in Guayama, that Yauco's best crop was red pepper, and that besides coffee Aguada and Turis also produced tobacco. However, he concluded his report with a list of the production of coffee, tobacco, malagdata, and cotton

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by Partidos or districts. This chart was the first complete record ever made of Puerto Rico's agricultural production:

TABLE 1
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN PUERTO RICO, 1770
(expressed in arrobas)

Partidos	Mules	Coffee	Tobacco	Malagueta	Cotton
Río Piedras	35	35	6	no --	25
Bayamon	3	192	4	no --	6
Guaynabo	5	20	3	no --	3
Toa Alto	10	50	20	no --	22
Coamo	100	10,000	18	no --	300
Guayama	70	8,000	1,600	3,000	no --
Ponce	30	5,000	4,000	no --	300
Yanco	no --	14	14,000	no --	300
La Villa	200	2,500	18,000	no --	300
Mayaguez	100	250	1,500	no --	80
Aflaco	100	300	7,000	no --	30
Aguada	125	1,600	7,000	no --	100
Tuna	50	300	10,000	no --	300
Arecibo	400	500	150	no --	150
Manatí	200	150	4,000	no --	80
La Vega	25	60	1,000	no --	100
Toa Baja	150	150	100	no --	40

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Informe de visita a varios partidos de la Isla, Puerto Rico, April 5, 1770.

It is interesting to note that throughout his report Vizcarrondo makes no mention of the state of the Milicias Disciplinadas, which was the object of his mission. But, he did record the progress that some districts had been taking in the erection of headquarters and arsenals for the militia. In Guayama, he observed, there were no officers' quarters or storage for the armaments. He, therefore, recommended that the tenientes de guerra be entrusted with the construction of such buildings in accordance with O'Reilly's Reglamentos.

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Vizcarrondo also informed Mueas that the sums for the construction of the officers' quarters and arsenal in Ponce were insufficient, and another 300 pesos were probably needed to supplement the original 524 pesos. He also suggested that the quarters in the Villa of San Germán and Mayagüez be enlarged in order to comfortably accommodate the officers of the militia in these partidos. In some towns (Añasco, Aguada, and Arecibo) the construction schedule had been delayed, and extra time had to be allotted. To speed up the progress in Arecibo, Vizcarrondo exhorted the teniente de guerra and the sergeant major of the Milicias Disciplinadas of this area to attend regularly the construction site. This, he believed, would prevent the vecinos from absenting themselves.

Vizcarrondo also failed to make observations on the civil state of the island of Puerto Rico. But, he did note the performance of some of the tenientes de guerra. He found none, such as the ones in Río Piedras and Yauco, to be derelict in their duties. Yauco's teniente de guerra, Isidoro de Quiñonez, for example, was slack in carrying out his duties. Consequently, there were many anacebados (free riders) and contrabandists in the area. In other districts, however, the tenientes de guerra were loyal and efficient. The progress made in the districts of Aguada and Turis was purely due to the zealousness and positive activity of the tenientes de guerra. In both districts more lands had been cleared and the number of estancias had increased.

During the first month of 1810, Antonio Vizcarrondo sent letters to the tenientes de guerra of the districts of Mayagüez, Ponce, and San Juan. In his letter to the teniente de guerra of Mayagüez, he informed him that the

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final observations. Conditions on the island, he assured Muesas, were better than they had been in previous years. Illicit commerce, for example, had declined considerably. In Viscarrondo's opinion the progress which the island had made thus far was due solely to the wise measures undertaken by Muesas, and if the new governor continued these, he was certain to succeed in his endeavors of making the island of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico one of Charles III's most flourishing possessions.

Viscarrondo's Informe de visita was favorably received by Muesas, who immediately forwarded it to Arriaga. The Viscarrondo-Tobacco Mission, Muesas remarked in his May 13, 1760 letter Arriaga, had been very fruitful, for, contracts for coffee had been arranged between Puerto Rico's coffee planters and the Real Compañia de Negros. But, Muesas informed Arriaga that the company had refused to buy the island's tobacco. Therefore, Muesas again offered some suggestions in order to better the quality of tobacco, and make it an exportable product. He was convinced that if better methods of cultivation and harvesting were applied the quality of the product would improve. He recommended that Cuban tobacco growers be recruited in Puerto Rico to teach Puerto Rican tobacco producers new methods of production.³⁷ This proposal probably would have remedied the tobacco situation during Muesas' administration, but there is no record that Charles III's government ever approved it.

Muesas was also interested in social developments in Puerto Rico. He, therefore, inquired into the number of religious establishments, hospitals, orphanatories, church schools, and educational societies.

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The Noticia or demographic census that was prepared for Muesas in 1769 is one of the most detailed population accounts of eighteenth-century society in Puerto Rico and perhaps in the entire Caribbean. It was attached to a Plano (map) of the Island of San Juan Bautista, which was probably prepared in the same year. To this Noticia and Plano Muesas attached another census in 1776, showing the increase in the number of towns and persons during his administration. The 1769 census showed that when Muesas took over the office of governor and captain-general there were twenty-two pueblos or settlements, and a total of 7,362 persons. These figures were only slightly higher than those recorded by O'Reilly, during Muesas' years the increase in the number of towns and inhabitants was to be much greater.³⁸

The appointment of Miguel de Muesas by Charles III to head the government of the island of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico was significant, not only for the history of Spain in America but for Puerto Rico's as well. His administration marked the beginning of a type of new governor who was more responsive to the needs of the crown, and therefore, more responsible and efficient in his administration of the island. This change gave the office of governor and captain-general of Puerto Rico a new historical perspective. In executing Charles III's reform program in Puerto Rico, which sought the total development of the island, Muesas contributed to an increase in the civil functions of the governorship of Puerto Rico. The military duties, however, were not neglected. By carrying out other reforms as well, his office contributed to the economic and social development of the island. The military, economy, and social functions

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which Muesas requested during his first year in office, were only the beginning of this new type of administration in eighteenth-century Puerto Rico.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Sebastián González García, "Notas sobre el gobierno y los gobernadores de Puerto Rico en el siglo XVII," *Historia*, vol. I, No. 2 (San Juan: Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1962), pp. 25-26.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 34-36, 39-40.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
5. Gordon K. Lewis, *Puerto Rico: Freedom and Power in the Caribbean* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 30-31.
6. Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Historia de los gobernadores del siglo XVII* (Seville: University of Seville Ph.D. Dissertation, 1971), Chapter 1.
7. *Ibid.*
8. González, "Notas," pp. 16-18; Fernando Miyares González, *Noticias particulares de la Isla y Plaza de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico* (San Juan: Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1957), p. 47.
9. Ricardo Zorraquín Becú, "Los distintos tipos de gobernador en el derecho Indiano," *Actas y Estudios del III Congreso del Instituto Internacional de Historia del Derecho Indiano* (Madrid: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Jurídicos, 1973), p. 576.
10. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Muzas Lo Arriaga, Santiago de Cuba, October 26, 1768.
11. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2301, Hoja de servicios del gobernador Muzas, May 31, 1776.
12. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Francisco Plantell de Aymerich, Versailles, September 18, 1750.
13. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2301, Hoja de servicios. Muzas arrived in Cuba with his wife, Doña Josefa Barasa y Ferrer, a woman 35 years old, "tall, thin, of white complexion, and black hair. . . ." They were accompanied by their two sons, Baltasar and Vicente, and two servants, Esteban Fareda and his wife Damiana de Estrada. See Pío López Martínez, *Historia de Cayey* (Cayey: Colegio Universitario, 1972), p. 57.
14. *Ibid.*
15. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2301, Antonio Barón de Santillana to the King, Havana, January 11, 1777.

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16. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2294, Título del gobernador y capitán Miguel de Muesas, March 19, 1769.

17. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Muesas to Arriaga, Santiago de Cuba, May 20, 1769.

18. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2306, Muesas to Juan Gregorio Rodríguez, Puerto Rico, July 31, 1769.

19. Testimonio de Martín Campderros, Puerto Rico, July 31, 1769, Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, 1767-1771 (San Juan: Municipio de San Juan, 1965), Book IV, p. 113.

20. Fianza del Señor gobernador Don Miguel de Muesas, Puerto Rico, August 31, 1769, Actas, Book IV, p. 117.

21. For a detailed biography of Miyares and analysis of Reticias, see Eugenio Fernández Méndez, Historia cultural de Puerto Rico, 1493-1961 (San Juan: El Comí Editions, 1970), pp. 179-197.

22. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 26, 1769.

23. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, Estado del Regimiento de Toledo, January 1, 1770; Pedro Tomás Cordova, Memorias geográficas, históricas, económicas y estadísticas de la Isla de Puerto Rico, 6 vols. (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1968), vol. III, p. 34.

24. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, Informe de Muesas al Ministerio de Guerra, Puerto Rico, August 8, 1769.

25. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, O'Daly to Muesas, Puerto Rico, October 30, 1769.

26. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2341, Relación de las causas pendientes, Puerto Rico, July 31, 1769 and Noticia de causas pendientes, Puerto Rico, August 2, 1769.

27. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2341, Testimonio de Juan José Centero, Puerto Rico, November 7, 1769.

28. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2340, Muesas to Vizcarrondo, Puerto Rico, November 14, 1769.

29. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2350, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, November 16, 1769.

30. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2309, Relación del Sargento Antonio de la Cruz, Puerto Rico, December 27, 1769.

31. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2377, Real cédula de Muesas para el servicio de la Cruz y el Pueblo, Puerto Rico, December 29, 1769.

32. Ibid.

33. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Muecas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico,
December 29, 1769.

34. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Comisión y Vizcarrondo, Puerto
Rico, March 19, 1770.

35. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Vizcarrondo to Muecas, Puerto
Rico, May 7, 1770.

36. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Informe de visita a varios
partidos de la Isla, Ruiz Saco, Puerto Rico, April 5, 1770.

37. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Muecas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico,
May 13, 1770.

38. AGI, Santo Domingo, Mapa y Planos, 3671, Plano de la Isla de
San Juan de Puerto Rico con la division de sus partidos y noticia del
numero de habitantes y demas que contiene en cuyo estado se hallaba al
tiempo que el actual gobernador y capitán general Don Miguel de Muecas
tomo posesión de este mando en el año 1769.

CHAPTER IV

MIGUEL DE MUEZAS' MILITARY AND POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION
OF THE ISLANDS OF PUERTO RICO, 1769-1776

Miguel de Muezas governed the Island and Plaza Militar of San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico from 1769 to 1776. During these years Muezas not only carried out the traditional functions of his office, but conscientiously implemented Charles III's military and administrative reforms in the island. As captain-general of the Plaza Militar he put into effect O'Reilly's new military reform plan, and as civil governor he attempted to make the island's government more efficient. The successful application of these reforms in Puerto Rico made Muezas' administration one of the most effective in the island's eighteenth-century history.

The Spanish military reforms in Puerto Rico, initiated by O'Reilly in 1765 and continued by Muezas in 1769, were based on three decrees: the Reglamento para la Tropa Veterana de Puerto Rico, the Reglamento para las Milicias de Puerto Rico, and the Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico drawn up by O'Reilly in 1765. These new military regulations for the improved discipline of the Spanish and native troops were accompanied by a detailed plan for the reconstruction of the fortifications in San Juan. Together, the reglamentos and the fortification plan of O'Reilly set the guidelines that Muezas was to follow in the supervision and strengthening of the Plaza Militar of San Juan.

The Reglamento para la Tropa Veterana, prepared in Puerto Rico on April 12, 1769, consolidated the laws and regulations for the

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Spanish garrison stationed in San Juan. They were to be executed by all the military officers, and especially by the governor and captain-general.¹ The Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico was completed eight months later. In some twenty-two articles O'Reilly instructed the governors of Puerto Rico, and hence, Kiosas, on the best ways of handling the Spanish garrison, which consisted of a Batallón Fijo of regular troops permanently stationed in San Juan, and of the Tropas Veteranas, which were from time to time sent from Spain to supplement the standing army already there. Although the emphasis of the Instrucción was clearly on the military administration of the Plaza Militar of San Juan, the document also contained eleven articles on the establishment of a more efficient political economy in Puerto Rico.²

In the Reglamento and Instrucción the new governor and captain-general of the Plaza Militar of Puerto Rico was given specific orders to follow. First of all, the Reglamento ordered him to meet daily with the officers at an appointed hour at the Fortaleza, the governor's palace, and issue them the day's orders. The companies were to convene and drill in the plaza mayor every afternoon. Kiosas' presence was not required during these routine exercises, but the Instrucción stipulated that he make periodic inspections of the troops.³

Troop review was one of Kiosas' most important military functions, and he executed it promptly and efficiently. Every month he sent reports of his revista de tropas to the Council of War. His report of the review of the Regimiento of Toledo prepared in February of 1770 is typical. The Toledo Regiment had arrived the previous year with a total of 1,257 men. Kiosas noted that since 13 had died, 2 had deserted, 86 were sick and more 23 soldiers were wounded for. These total reports were included

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any other information, but in separate accounts Muesas regularly informed the Spanish ministers of the officers whom he judged worthy of promotion, the availability of vacant posts in the Plaza Militar, the number of officers and soldiers who were to return to Spain after service in Puerto Rico, and of the condition of artillery and uniforms of the troops.⁵

The Reglamento and the Instrucción also instructed Muesas to be specifically solicitous in his treatment of the soldiers in the Plaza Militar, and to follow all the military orders and royal ordinances to the letter. This, O'Reilly maintained, was the only way of preventing insubordination and disorders in the ranks. Any violation of a military order, however, was to be quickly punished.⁶

Imposing penalties was probably not an extremely difficult task for Muesas, except when his soldiers sought asylum in religious establishments. One such case occurred toward the end of his administration when twelve soldiers of the Victoria Regiment took refuge in the San Juan Cathedral. Some of these soldiers had been serving light sentences for abandoning their posts, but others were serving capital punishments. Muesas requested the Bishop of Puerto Rico, Fray Manuel Jiménez Pérez, to release the soldiers in order to put them to work on the fortifications. He argued that not to do so would set a very bad precedent for the rest of the troops. The Bishop immediately called a junta of theologians, which was attended by Francisco Rafael de Monserrate, the governor's military advisor. But, despite Monserrate's pleas, the junta decided not to surrender the prisoners.

Later, however, Bishop Jiménez Pérez was forced to reconsider the junta's decision. The clergy could not afford to support all the soldiers, and the soldiers were to be put to work on the fortifications.

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tions on the condition that their immunity be guaranteed there. Muesas accepted this, but made it clear that if the prisoners attempted to escape again, they would lose their immunity.⁷ The extension of asylum to places and areas outside the church contravened the Papal Bull of 1772 which limited asylum to the inside of the church and its adjacent buildings and grounds. Therefore, although the crown approved the transfer of these prisoners from the San Juan Cathedral to the fortification site, the authorities in Puerto Rico were again reminded of the limits of asylum.⁸

The quartering of troops was, likewise, specified in the Reglamento. All soldiers with the exception of married men of the fixed battalion were to be quartered in the military compound. Before O'Reilly left Puerto Rico he had ordered the erection of new quarters, but during Muesas' period no new barracks were built. Adequate housing of troops, therefore, continued to be a problem. According to Abbad, many officers and soldiers had to be lodged in private homes for lack of military quarters.

Officers of the troops were to pay particular attention to the soldiers' conduct and appearance in the streets and other public places. Soldiers were to be dressed in full uniform, which consisted of a casaca (dress coat), a chupa (sleeved undercoat), a shirt, a pair of pants made of Brabant linen, tie, hat, and a pair of shoes and socks.⁹ This part of the Reglamento appears to have either been carried out or ignored by Muesas' subordinates, for, no evidence of the violations of the dress code were recorded.

The rules governing guard duty were probably the most important articles of the Reglamento, especially for sentinels. Muesas and his subordinates were responsible for both officers and soldier duties. Heavy

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man had to be in a state of readiness at all times. No talking or sleeping on the job was allowed and they had to keep their rifles with armed bayonets at all times. Finally, no soldier was to abandon his post unless given permission by a superior officer. Sentinel duty was required of all the soldiers of the garrison, and there were some dangers in carrying it out. During Muesas' years several guards lost their lives when their cañotes or shelters were struck by lightning during frequent tropical storms.

The exemptions and privileges granted to the Frona Veterana were not enumerated in the new regulations, except for the land rights extended to the retiring soldiers of the Companias of España, Aragón, and Navarra that had been created by O'Reilly in 1765 to temporarily supplement the regular troops in the San Juan Plaza. According to article fifteen of the Instrucción the soldiers of these companies had the option of returning to Spain to be reassigned, or of settling down on the island of Puerto Rico. If they chose to stay in Puerto Rico, they would be given lands in the central regions of the Sierra of Cayey. But, the soldiers had to agree to establish a town, modelled after those in Spain, with wide and straight avenues. During Muesas' administration the town of Cayey was created and chartered, and began to develop as an agricultural community; but, it is not known how many of the settlers were from among the Spanish troops.

Neither the Reglamento nor the Instrucción specified the number of soldiers that were needed for an adequate defense of the Plaza Militar of San Juan. Usually only one infantry battalion and one artillery company were sent to aid the standing army stationed in Puerto Rico. Although the length of service of these troops was not specified until

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1783, the regiments assigned to Puerto Rico served anywhere from two to five years.¹¹ For example, the Regiment of Toledo, that arrived in April of 1769 served until June 2, 1771. This regiment was replaced by the Regiment of Victoria that had arrived earlier the same year, and served until 1776, when it was relieved of its duties by the Bruselas Regiment. On September 27, 1775 Charles III increased the military force in Puerto Rico when he ordered another two infantry battalions and one artillery company to re-enforce the Spanish garrison already in the island.¹² He also increased the salaries of the officers from 574 pesos to 1,200 pesos. This, of course, increased the importance of the Plaza Militar of San Juan even more.

During Masenas' period of administration, however, the Plaza of San Juan experienced some shortages in manpower. In the past the crown had met this need by sending more troops, or permitting men banished to San Juan for desertion to join the military forces.¹³ Masenas, on the other hand, attempted to deal with this problem by bringing to the capital some of the native militia companies of the island. On January 17, 1771 he informed Arriaga that a great number of men from the Toledo and Victoria Regiments had taken ill, and 95 men from the Victoria Regiment had failed to arrive with the rest of the troops. He, therefore, ordered 1,000 men from the Infanteria de Milicias Disciplinadas of the most distant districts to come and work on the fortifications, and be instructed in the maneuvers of the Plaza to counteract British activities in the area.¹⁴ O'Reilly, who after his visit to Puerto Rico was consulted on almost all military questions involving the Plaza Militar of San Juan, thought Masenas' move was wise. "Masenas was no distant danger, and therefore, the militia should not have been introduced in the Plaza. Everything

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more, the increased number of soldiers placed an added burden on the food supplies of the Plaza and on the royal treasury. If diplomatic relations broke down or if war was declared, then Muesas could order the militia to prepare for the defense of the island. In such cases, the milicianos were to be paid by the day up to forty days, but they were not to be brought into the Plaza of San Juan unless the enemy was at the city's gates. In the meantime, they were to remain in their own districts and care for their haciendas.¹⁵

On November 12 O'Reilly's decision was approved by the Council of the Indies and forwarded to Muesas, with the warning that if additional troops were ever needed, they were to be brought first from the districts near the capital, and then from those more distant.¹⁶ Muesas immediately complied with the Council's decision and withdrew the troops.¹⁷ Although the use of the militia to supplement the regular troops in San Juan was discouraged during Muesas' administration by the Madrid authorities, as the century wore on, more and more Puerto Ricans were allowed to join the regular troops and the militia troops became part of the island's garrison.¹⁸

The Milicias Disciplinadas had their origin in the seventeenth century when native male citizens of Puerto Rico were drafted by the captain-generals to maintain or increase the number of soldiers needed to man the Plaza of San Juan. For example, in 1655 when an epidemic broke out in San Juan, governor Fernando Rivera Aguero, replaced many of the soldiers who had fallen ill with Puerto Ricans. In 1681 Governor Juan de Abiles also recruited Puerto Ricans for the Plaza's garrison. In 1692 the native militia was formally organized as the Milicia Disciplinada. It was later divided into two parts: the Milicia and the Milicia Disciplinada. The Milicia was composed of native soldiers who

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O'Reilly created the Milicias Disciplinadas that supplemented the Spanish troops on the island during the second half of the eighteenth-century.

Besides reorganizing the militia, O'Reilly also drafted a body of rules which constituted the new Reglamento para las Milicias Disciplinadas de Puerto Rico. This Reglamento, dated May 17, 1765 was an addendum to the Reglamento that governed the militia of the island of Cuba. The governor and captain-general of Puerto Rico, who was considered the titular head of the Milicias Disciplinadas of Puerto Rico, was ordered to execute the Reglamento as if it were a direct order of the king.¹⁹ He was also designated the Chief Inspector of the troops, and entrusted with the task of rendering reports on the state of the militia in Puerto Rico to the government in Madrid. Muesas faithfully submitted these reports every month, but they were usually prepared by Andrés Vizcarrondo, who was the actual commander of the militia.²⁰ In these accounts Vizcarrondo carefully summarized the reviews of the militia officers of the twelve districts that had infantry companies, and of the five districts that had cavalry units, as well as his own reviews of the militia troops and supplies. The Reglamento instructed him to pay particular attention to the number of vacant posts among the officers, and the state of troops, arms, munitions, and uniforms. Vizcarrondo's reports showed that the Milicias Disciplinadas continued to develop as a significant military corps under Muesas' administration. Despite this growth, Muesas thought the number of militia companies inadequate, and suggested in his last year in office that two new companies be created. But, O'Reilly opposed his plan, and the crown never approved it.²¹

The lack of discipline among the militia troops had been a constant problem to O'Reilly. In 1765 he wrote the king the account of a militia

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militia lay in an effective disciplinary program. He, therefore, made provisions for this not only in the Reglamento para las Milicias Disciplinadas but also in the Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico. According to his instructions, both the governor and the commander-in-chief of the militia were responsible for the general discipline of the troops, and particularly for the performance of the officers in charge of the militia companies throughout the island's districts. The Instrucción expected the governor to be strict in matters of pardons, excuses from drill, extension of privileges, and slackness in imposing punishments, whereas the Reglamento ordered the commander of the troops to maintain a watchful vigil over the militia and resolve any of the problems the officers encountered.

To aid the inspector and the commander in maintaining discipline in the militia, O'Reilly proposed that the various districts be divided among three assistants. These assistants and all the captains, lieutenants, and sergeants of the native militia were to be selected from among the most outstanding sergeants of the Spanish regiment. In time a system of promotion enabled Puerto Ricans to hold these posts.²² The officers were expected to stay single because their salaries were not sufficient to support a family. They were also forbidden to hold jobs that would prevent them from carrying out their duties. The officers were compensated by receiving a parcel of land, which served as their quarters and as an arsenal and stockade, and a caballería (a horseman's grant of approximately 194.1 acres) of land for their sustenance. The house and land which were to be provided by the officials of the various districts, however, did not always come from the same source. In the case of the militia, the land was provided by the crown. In the case of the militia, the land was provided by the crown. In the case of the militia, the land was provided by the crown.

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in the towns of Guayama, Ponce, San Germán, Mayagüez, Añasco, Aguada, and Arecibo as yet had not been completed. He exhorted the local military leaders of these districts to aid in the construction of the houses, or to enlarge or repair those which had already been constructed.

The militia officers were expected to maintain order and discipline among the milicianos, and also to help resolve conflicts quickly and judiciously. They were to encourage their men to work zealously and industriously, but they were not to compete with the local authorities or disturb the peace in the towns. Judging by the reports the Viscarrondo presented to Macías, the officers of the Milicias Disciplinadas seemed to have maintained a high degree of discipline among their troops.

The troops consisted of the able-bodied men of the different districts. Once they joined the militia, they became distinguished citizens, and were often exempt from many of the civic duties imposed upon the natives of the island. They were exempt, for example, from serving as prison guards or postmen. Milicianos also received other privileges, among these the right to acquire the best lands in areas where land redistribution took place. But these lands were only granted to those militia men who had carried out all their military duties and had dedicated themselves to the service of the king and the defense of the islands of Puerto Rico.²³

Indeed, the most important function of the entire militia was to guard the islands of Puerto Rico against foreign attacks and contraband. For, during Macías' period of administration, illegal commerce was still a lucrative business for a good number of the inhabitants of the island, especially those living near the southern coastal towns. The troops could also be used to protect the houses of the king, but, as officials

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stipulated, only in cases of dire emergency.

Throughout most of the eighteenth century the funding of the Milicias Disciplinadas posed a problem for the military authorities in San Juan and in Madrid. O'Reilly's reorganization increased the need for more funds because his new military orders for the militia specified that all men should wear uniforms and be fully equipped with arms. The new uniform for the infantry was to consist of a casaca of Brebant linen, bronze buttons, red cuffs and trimmings, a white, short waistcoat, linen trousers, and a gold trimmed hat. The uniform for the cavalry was to be the same, except that the solapas or cloaks were to be red and trimmed with blue. Unlike the milicianos in Cuba, who were provided with uniforms and weapons by the crown, the militia of Puerto Rico was to pay for its new uniforms and supplies. In his Reglamento O'Reilly did not suggest how they were to raise the funds for this; he merely exhorted the officers to encourage the native soldiers to get their uniforms as soon as possible.²⁴

In 1774, however, Governor Bucacas and the San Juan cabildo proposed a land tax in order to meet the costs of maintaining a militia in Puerto Rico. O'Reilly and the Council of the Indies approved of this idea, and on January 10, 1775 Charles III ordered the collection of a real and a cuartillo (1/4 of a real) for each acre of farm land and three cuartillos for each acre of pasture land. Don Antonio O'Reilly was instructed to make an account of the needs of the militia. Therefore, on August 30, 1775 he submitted an exact account of the number of officers and soldiers that comprised the militia in Puerto Rico, and a detailed description of the uniforms for each class of militiaman. He also informed Antonio Bucacas of the results of the tax collection and the

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the new tax, and sent the revenues to the royal treasury of San Juan. The following year the uniforms and weapons for the militia of Puerto Rico were ordered from the city of Cádiz, but they did not arrive until 1777. However, the fact that they were ordered by the crown during Masanes' period of governorship, symbolizes to some extent the growth and development of the Milicias Disciplinadas under his administration.²⁵

Besides the Milicias Disciplinadas, there existed the Milicias Urbanas (town militia), which consisted of all the male vecinos, between the ages of fifteen and sixty, who were not members of the Milicias Disciplinadas. These were responsible for the defense of the towns, and during emergencies were at the disposal of the tenientes de guerra. From them, the commander of the Milicias Disciplinadas was empowered to draw recruits for the regular militia. During Masanes' period of governorship the Milicias Urbanas continued to function, but without uniforms and weapons. Its sole function was to replenish the Milicias Disciplinadas when the number of milicianos fell below par.

Between 1769 and 1776 the defense of the islands of Puerto Rico was carried out by these civilian units, as well as by the Spanish garrison in San Juan. During his administration Masanes continued the military reforms begun by O'Reilly, and initiated some of his own. Although Charles III's government did not approve all of his actions, Masanes did much to strengthen the military defense of Puerto Rico. Under his leadership the native and Spanish troops became more disciplined and better prepared to protect the island. The defense provided by the Milicias Disciplinadas was particularly significant during this period. It may have been one of their strengths at the beginning of the administration, and had been one of their weaknesses at the end of the militia organization.

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to supplement the San Juan garrison. Throughout his administration Mucos continued to hold the militia and its officers in high esteem. On several occasions he assigned some of the most important officers to carry out special commissions for him. Most of these assignments dealt with contraband activities. The Milicias Disciplinadas, therefore, were to some degree instrumental in protecting the island's commerce from Spain's enemies.

During Mucos' administration the military fortifications of the Plaza Militar of San Juan were also strengthened. The fortifications were among the oldest in America, and consisted of various forts, ramparts, an imposing wall, and four gates which allowed entrance into the presidio. The first of these forts to be erected was the Fortaleza of San Juan. It was begun in 1533 and completed in 1782. At the beginning it consisted of a small stone-tower, which served as the sole bastion of defense of the new colony. It soon became the residence of the alcaide mayor (commander of the fort). When this office was joined to that of governor and captain-general, the Fortaleza became the governor's palace. This change did not cause the Fortaleza to lose its military character. But, with the construction of bigger and better forts, the Real Fortaleza de Santa Catalina assumed a secondary role in the defense of the Plaza.

Until the eighteenth century the principal fort of San Juan Plaza was the impressive castle of San Felipe del Morro. Its construction was begun in 1539, when the crown became convinced of the inadequate state of the defenses of the island. In the next forty-five years a series of batteries and platforms were erected in or out of a rocky promontory facing the Atlantic Ocean. In 1740 a military academy was founded in it, and two years later an hospital was opened in the same neighborhood. The

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Mexican treasury to support and maintain the new fort. By 1584 the fort of San Felipe, reminiscent of the castles of Medieval Spain, was ready to increase Puerto Rico's share of the Spanish defenses in the Caribbean.

During the last quarter of the sixteenth-century the fort was expanded and strengthened, but the attacks of Francis Drake (1595) and George Clifford, Count of Cumberland (1597) showed that the fort needed further amplifications. In the first three decades of the seventeenth century a new tower was added and new walls and platforms were erected. Hendrickson's attack (1625) again showed the weakness of the fortification, and it was resolved to surround the entire fort with a thick wall. This was completed in 1639. The interior quarters and offices were completed under the governorship of José Nevea y Moscoso (1655-1660). After this few innovations took place.³⁰ With O'Reilly's visit, however, a new period of reconstruction and expansion began. In his 1765 Relación to Charles III on the state of the military fortifications of San Juan, O'Reilly pointed out the major defects of the old fortress, and proposed new repairs. The northern wall that faced the Atlantic, for example, was too narrow to hold any kind of artillery. A wider and stronger one was needed. The one that overlooked the land side was acceptable, but it needed to be re-enforced with more cannons. The most severe problem, in O'Reilly's opinion, was the great distance which existed between the batteries. He suggested that the number of batteries be reduced to two; one to face land; the other the sea. An aljibe or cistern to store water for the troops, or be used in case of fires was also necessary.²⁶

O'Reilly likewise improved the fort on San Cristóbal. In 1765 this was not just a small fortification, which only contained a few

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cannons, an aljibe, and an arsenal. Since its only protection was a short wall on the northern side, O'Reilly recommended that it be repaired and expanded. In addition, O'Reilly proposed the creation of two new, smaller forts.

The defense of the Plaza Militar of San Juan was of paramount importance for O'Reilly. A strong presidio would not only protect Spanish commerce in the area, but serve as a base for rescue expeditions in case of attack against Santo Domingo, Cuba, Caracas, Cartagena, Campeche, or other territories. It was imperative to safeguard the Plaza of San Juan for still another reason. If the island were captured, it could readily serve as a year-round station for the maintenance of ships and troops for the enemy. This would pose a threat to the other islands and to Spanish vessels in the Caribbean, and cut off communications between Spain and America.²⁷

O'Reilly convinced Charles III of the need to strengthen the San Juan fortifications. On September 25, 1765 the king issued a royal cedula approving O'Reilly's plan. According to O'Reilly's Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico the plan was to be followed exactly as he and O'Daly had designed it. The land fortifications which protected the city, and the section of El Morro, which sheltered the port were to be given top priority. O'Reilly also specified that 100,000 pesos be assigned annually for the fortifications of the Plaza of San Juan. A special junta, consisting of the governor, the chief engineer and his assistants, the sergeant major of the San Juan Plaza, the lieutenant governor and the officials of the exchequer was empowered to make all major decisions affecting the fortifications. Articles four, five, and six of the Instrucción directed the governor to pay salaries from among the Spanish

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garrison and presidarios of San Juan, but to use Spanish soldiers only as a last resort. Lastly, O'Reilly instructed the governor to supervise the drawing of a large topographic map of the island of Puerto Rico.²⁸

On January 1, 1766 O'Reilly's plan was put into action. O'Daly began by making repairs on El Morro and demolishing part of the old fort of San Cristóbal. Work on the fortifications continued in the next few years, but the period of greatest activity occurred during the administrations of Miguel de Muesas (1769-1776) and José Dufresne (1776-1783).²⁹ The military reports on the state of fortifications, submitted by Muesas every six months from 1769 to 1776 attest to the progress made during his years, but work on the fortifications sometimes experienced set-backs. A case in point was the collapse of one of the walls of Castillo of San Cristóbal, which had been built out of badly-mixed cement, and on soil that was too sandy. In very apologetic tones, Muesas reported the incident to Arriaga on September 29, 1769, and assured him that despite this disaster, he had been paying close attention to the construction of the new fort. Some months later the crown simply ordered the appropriate repairs to be made.³⁰

The wall was immediately fixed, as Muesas pointed out in his March 2, 1770 report on the San Juan fortifications. In this report Muesas also noted that work on the new batteries had begun, that the repairs of the northern ramparts were under way, and that the ravelin of San Carlos had also been completed. He concluded his report with a word of praise for O'Daly, whose efforts, in Muesas' opinion, had made this program possible.³¹

Work on the fort of San Cristóbal continued, and the October 31, 1770 report revealed new developments. Five new batteries (archas) and

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new platforms and batteries had been concluded. But, Muesas was not completely satisfied with the progress that had been made during his first year in office. In November, 1770, when the British broke diplomatic relations with Spain, Muesas convened a Junta de Guerra to discuss preparations for the better defense of the island. At this meeting he informed O'Daly that despite his zealousness and activity and the work that already had been done on San Cristóbal, there were still some important sections to be completed. Other parts of the Plaza, such as the walls which faced the land side and the parapets or battlements of the Plaza, had also been neglected because too much time had been spent on the erection of San Cristóbal. Attention was to be given to those sections. He also proposed to set up some batteries in the embankments between the forts of San Cristóbal and El Morro to prevent beach landings in that area. The caballero of San Cristóbal and the batteries of El Morro and the Castle of Santa Cruz were to be equipped with artillery. To prevent any landings on the beach of Cangrejos, he proposed that 800 men be stationed there. Finally, the Milicias Disciplinadas were to be mobilized, the Plaza was to be equipped with all the necessary supplies, and provisional hospitals were to be set up to care for the wounded. ³²

The Junta agreed to Muesas' suggestions, and O'Daly promised to put them into operation as soon as possible. On the other hand, O'Reilly, who was asked to give his opinion, censured Muesas' proposals. All of Muesas' ideas, O'Reilly pointed out, had already been included in the fortification plan of 1765. The Junta might have profited more if Muesas had merely informed them of the articles dealing with Recomendaciones para el Plan de Guerra in the Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico. Muesas' position contradicted the proposal of Puerto Rico on the same

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to follow in case of war. The governor was to defend the Plaza of San Juan to the bitter end. If the city was destroyed or supplies dwindled, he was to marshal all the forces left into El Morro. It was at this time that the Milicias Disciplinadas could form an actual regiment and aid in the defense of the Plaza. Article three specified that six officers be sent to Yauco, Coamo, Aibonito, Río Piedras, Caguas, Loíza, and Fajardo to instruct the local vecinos on the use of arms. The governor was to remove all the non-military personnel and persons from the Plaza, and supply the garrison that remained with sufficient cattle, salt, casave, corn, rice and other foodstuffs. Finally, the governor and all his officers were to be thoroughly acquainted with every part of the island in order to provide the best defense possible.

These were O'Reilly's instructions in case of war. However, Muesas had presumed an emergency that clearly did not exist at that time. Even though O'Reilly did not believe that the British posed a threat to Puerto Rico, he showed some concern for the state of fortifications of San Juan. He urged Muesas to make sure that the Baluarte of Santiago and fort of San Cristóbal be completed immediately. The section of El Morro which protected the San Juan harbor was to be repaired promptly, also. In addition, he recommended that another 300,000 pesos be sent to Puerto Rico, along with 200 presidarios to hasten this work. For the defense of the Plaza, he ordered that all the munitions and artillery be assigned to it, be delivered immediately, and added that eight obuses or shell guns be sent to supplement those already there. Charles III's government sponsored most of O'Reilly's recommendations, but agreed to send only two presidarios and four chinos. It also accepted the suggestion made by the Junta that once shell vessels be loaned down to the

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entrance of the harbor in order to protect the Plaza, an idea which O'Reilly had considered useless.³³

The British threat, whether actual or not, spurred the work on the fortifications. By the end of 1771 almost all of the Castillo of San Cristóbal had been completed. In nine months the old redoubt near El Morro had been converted into a formidable fort which protected the city and Plaza Militar from any invasion by land and served as an auxiliary fort to El Morro in case the attack was by sea. The eleven-sided stone sentinel was crowned by a series of batteries, which overlooked the harbor, the over-land-entrance into the city, and the city itself. Inside, two large plazas, offices, an arsenal, and quarters for the officers, completed the new fortification.³⁴

After 1771 work continued on some of the exterior parts of San Cristóbal, but the main emphasis now was on completion of El Morro and other fortifications. Within five years repairs on El Morro had almost been completed. O'Reilly constructed new batteries and the famous paritas, the small watch-towers that dotted the most salient points of the fort. These salientes or sharp projections along the ramparts were equipped with large guns which protected the promontory.³⁵

The repairs and innovations made on El Morro during Encinas' administration increased the capacity of the old fort to defend the Plaza and city of San Juan. Bernardo Mijangos Gueáles in his Noticias Particulares de la Isla y Plaza de San Juan Bautista in 1775 described this renewed strength:

The castle of El Morro is situated in the most western part of the plaza. It is presently in excellent condition to frigate the entrance of enemy ships into the harbor. Its three main batteries can fire on all theaters, for they follow the natural incline of the

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terrain toward the sea. They run along the length of the castle, and their guns are situated in such a manner that they can follow a ship along the entire canal.³⁶

Not only did the castle protect the harbor and bay of San Juan, but the lands surrounding the city and the beach area near a section called La Perla. Toward the south the batteries of San Fernando, San Agustín and Santa Elena formed an impenetrable circle that was ready to resist the attacks of any foreign vessel that dared to enter into Puerto Rican waters.³⁷

Fray Inigo Abbad y Lasierra in his Historia Geográfica, Civil y Natural de la Isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico (1782) also described the reconstructed fort. His observations, though not as detailed as Miyares, were perhaps more complete, for he witnessed the last repairs of the fort under Muesas and Dufresne. Three batteries faced the sea, and protected the port of San Juan. A rampart, flanked by two bastions, and fully equipped with heavy artillery, protected the overland-entrance to the fort. Along the northern coast, the guns of St. Pedro were complemented by those of San Cristóbal. The interior of the castle was bomb-proof and a sea-level battery, inside the entrance of the harbor, enabled the troops to receive re-enforcements and communicate with the fort of Caguas.³⁸

The other fortifications which were concluded during Muesas' administration were the revelling of San Carlos and Principe in the northern part of the Plaza; the famous walls which surrounded the city and Plaza Militar of San Juan and joined the different forts and batteries; the gates of Santiago and San Juan; the bridge of San Antonio; and the revelling of San Sebastián and Miraflores. Also, by 1776 O'Reilly's plan for the reconstruction of the administration of San Juan, a trust land

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completed. Muesas' efforts, O'Daly's diligence, and the threat of renewed British activity in the Caribbean were largely responsible for this.³⁹

But this progress was not achieved without experiencing some of the problems which were characteristic of Spanish military construction in America. In Puerto Rico, as in other parts of the Caribbean, the problems of inclement weather, sandy terrain, shortage of money and labor served as obstacles in the work of fortification. Muesas' administration worked diligently to overcome these problems, but from time to time the fortification schedule was delayed. Sometimes the delays were due to natural causes--mainly storms; at other times the situación funds and workers were insufficient to cover the costs and manpower necessary for the completion of the fortifications.

Hurricanes caused the greatest delays and the worse damages to the construction areas and the old fortifications of the Plaza of San Juan. During Muesas' period of governorship two huge storms devastated the works of fortification. The first one occurred on August 31, 1772, and although it lasted only six-and-a-half hours, it damaged virtually all of the defenses of San Juan. The balconies, corridors, ceilings, and windows of La Fortaleza were all blown away. El Morro suffered the loss of the Chapel El Calvario and part of the officers' quarters. The last addition to San Cristóbal and the Puerta de Santiago collapsed completely, but the arsenals of Santa Barbara, the Baluarte of La Concepción, and the forts of San Gerónimo and Casuelo were only partially destroyed.⁴⁰

The second hurricane swept the northern part of the island of Puerto Rico on August 1, 1773, also, causing great damage. The works taken on August 27, 1773, which were almost finished and were

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presidarios, who were working on the fortifications, and killed one of the workers. Muesas reported these disasters to Charles III, assuring him that nothing would deter the work on the fortifications. The repair and restoration of the buildings and ramparts of the Plaza Militar would be undertaken immediately, and soon the Plaza would be in the best condition for a proper defense of the island.⁴¹

Lack of funds, or delays in the arrival of the sums which had been allocated also caused work on the fortifications to slow down. In the Instrucción al Gobernador O'Reilly assigned the sum of 100,000 pesos for the reconstruction of the Plaza of San Juan. This money was to be sent annually from the royal treasury of Mexico in addition to the regular situado. The governor was warned not to exceed this allocation, and to spend less if possible. To avoid delays in the fortification plan, O'Reilly also recommended that part of the sum be advanced for a few consecutive years, but this was never approved.⁴²

Work on the fortifications began according to O'Reilly's schedule, but soon O'Reilly realized that the sums he had stipulated in 1765 were insufficient. On June 26, 1771 he suggested to Arriaga that another 100,000 pesos be added to the Puerto Rican fund. Since Cuba's fortifications were almost finished, he proposed that the 300,000 pesos assigned to the Plaza Militar of Havana be reduced to 200,000 pesos, and the rest be transferred to the San Juan fortifications. Charles III's government agreed to an increase, but only granted 50,000 pesos. In 1776 another 75,000 pesos were added, making the fortification fund 225,000 pesos.⁴³

The fortification funds assigned to Puerto Rico were carefully managed by Muesas and his successors. Although P. O'Neil, in fact, attributed the increase in available funds to the reduction in O'Reilly's

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work and intelligence.⁴⁴ Muesas, himself, tried to curtail over-spending. On June 22, 1773, for example, he held a junta to discuss the sums spent on the delivery of materials to the construction sites. He thought the sum of 1,200 pesos a month excessive and ordered it reduced. To avoid over-spending, Muesas periodically asked O'Daly to submit reports on the expenses incurred by his office.⁴⁵ The sums received and spent during Muesas' years in office were:

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF THE FORTIFICATION FUND, 1769-1776

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sums Received</u>	<u>Sums Spent</u>
1769	100,000 pesos	100,614 pesos
1770	100,000 "	119,920 "
1771	346,889 "	162,679 "
1772	150,000 "	121,451 "
1773	150,000 "	146,643 "
1774	150,000 "	141,501 "
1775	150,000 "	124,998 "
1776	150,000 "	161,345 "

Peso (silver) = (equivalent to) 8 reales

Source: Bibiano Torres Ramirez, *La Isla de Puerto Rico, 1765-1800* (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1968), p. 230.

These figures show that for the most part Muesas succeeded in staying within the allocated budget, and in some instances did not spend all of the 150,000 pesos assigned to the San Juan Plaza. Despite this careful planning, the Plaza Militar did experience some shortages of money from time to time. To prevent the work of fortification from lagging behind, the crown sometimes sent extra sums to supplement the regular fortification stipend. In 1771 it ordered 346,889 pesos (133,809 from the regular fund; 113,000 from the royal treasury) added to this fund; and in 1776 it instructed Muesas to inventory the entire 350,000 pesos

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from the Guatemala fund to cover the expenses for that year. Muesas was also empowered to spend unused funds from the royal treasury of Puerto Rico, but these additional funds were only granted after 1771.⁴⁶ Therefore, at the beginning Muesas was forced to issue paper notes or borrow money from Puerto Rican hacendados to cover the costs of the fortifications. On the whole, however, Muesas' administration experienced few delays and shortages of funds, and consequently a great deal of progress was made on the defenses of the San Juan Plaza during this period.

In addition to the problem of financing the work, labor shortages also plagued Muesas for without an adequate labor force the fortification plan could not be realized. O'Reilly had noticed the shortage of labor in Puerto Rico during his 1765 visit, and instructed the governor to employ the officers and soldiers of the garrison in the construction work of the Plaza of San Juan whenever they were needed. The officers, who served as gobrestantes (overseers), were to be paid 4 reales daily, and the soldiers 2 reales. Those soldiers who were employed in heavy construction would be paid larger wages. It was O'Reilly's opinion that work on the fortifications would occupy the troops during times of peace, and thus help maintain discipline in the Plaza Militar of San Juan.⁴⁷

The governor was also empowered to hire militia men from the Compania de Morenos (Black Company), but only during times of war. O'Reilly considered these black soldiers very appropriate for such labor; in other words they were hard workers and could be used in the heavy construction work of the fortifications.⁴⁸ Although O'Reilly recommended these black workers, he rejected the idea of using slaves, who had recently arrived from Africa, for he had noticed that too many of them had died in the construction of the San Juan fortifications. He also mentioned

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of slaves who were already residing on the island.

The traditional source of labor for the construction of Spanish military and public structures in America had been convict labor. O'Reilly, therefore, continued to support the use of imprisoned military deserters and desterrados (convicts who were sent from Spain and other parts of Spanish-America to the San Juan presidio to serve out their sentences in the construction of the Plaza Militar), and foreigners who arrived on the island without permission or who were captured in battle.

In Puerto Rico army deserters, desterrados, and other prisoners comprised the largest number of workers on the fortifications of the San Juan presidio. These presidarios (name given to all the prisoners) were paid a real for their daily work on the San Juan Plaza, which ranged from heavy construction work on the fortifications to routine chores, such as cleaning the officers' quarters and supplying the Plaza with water. Their diet usually consisted of cassava and rum. The distribution of a daily ration of rum to the presidarios was introduced by Governor Ambrosio Benavides in 1762, and it was continued under Muesas' regime. Muesas, however, found the sums spent on rum rather high, and in 1771 tried to put an end to this practice. When the royal treasury officials informed him that rum gave the presidarios more energy to work on the fortifications, he decided to continue the rum rations for the workers. Muesas was above all anxious to see the work progress at a faster pace.⁴⁹

Muesas also attempted to deal with the problem of disease among the presidarios. Some arrived from Spain ill and others had difficulties adjusting to the hard labor and the climate. But more, like convicts in other presidios, often resigned themselves to avoid working on the construction of the Plaza Militar. They inevitably contracted

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slow-down of work on the fortifications. Muesas tried to prevent this from the very beginning of his administration. On November 30, 1769 he called a junta to discuss the problem. The junta concluded that the only solution was to request the doctor of the Plaza of San Juan, José Sabater, to examine those presidarios who claimed they were too ill to work on the fortifications, determine if they were indeed sick, and diagnose their illness.⁵⁰

Many of those who feigned illness were probably weeded out by Muesas' efforts, but the number of presidarios, who were incapacitated because of disease was still considerable. The numbers increased even more when epidemics attacked the Plaza, as was the case in 1773 when many presidarios and soldiers were unable to work on the fortifications because of scurvy. This and other infirmities caused temporary delays in the construction work of the Plaza Militar of San Juan. Muesas took all the precautions necessary to prevent these delays, but illness and disabilities among the presidarios remained a problem throughout his administration. Toward the end, however, the number of workers was increased because more soldiers and peones or free-laborers were assigned to the fortifications. Thus, the reconstruction of the Plaza Militar continued despite the problem of illness among the presidarios.

The shortage of construction workers was not the only problem that was faced by the Plaza Militar of San Juan during the eighteenth century. Skilled workers and professionals--such as engineers, architects, carpenters, masons, silversmiths--were very much in demand also. In view of the increased number of workers, O'Reilly reportedly urged Governor Pitt to send enough men, soldiers, and drafts to assist O'Reilly in the reconstruction of the Plaza of San Juan. At the beginning of his

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administration Muesas also requested more assistants, and even took the initiative of naming a subteniente of the Regiment of Aragón as an engineering assistant to O'Daly. Charles III attempted to alleviate this problem during Muesas' years by sending some expert maestros to aid in the supervision and construction of the defenses of the San Juan Plaza. In 1771 he sent two delineadores (draftsmen), Juan and Ramón Villalonge, and in 1772 he ordered Antonio Wamai to supervise the architectural works in Puerto Rico. By 1775 the number of engineering assistants and maestros had increased considerably.⁵¹

The maestros sent to the Plaza Militar of San Juan were placed in charge of their respective workshops, and given a number of workers to supervise. Fortification workers were to be employed only in the works of construction and other official assignments, and not in obras particulares or personal tasks for the maestros and other supervisors. But, once in a while maestros took advantage of their charges, and ordered them to do personal jobs for them. Juan Villalonge, for example, used a presidiario for three days in a tailoring job for himself. He also ordered another, who had been assigned to work in the fort of San Cristóbal, to take care of the engineers' horses.⁵²

In an effort to prevent this misuse of fortification labor the officers of the Real Hacienda of Muesas' administration appointed Sebastian Pastrana, as overseer or Subrogante Interventor of the works of fortification. Pastrana was a conscientious inspector, and reported numerous violations to the royal officials. But, O'Daly, Mestre, Villalonge, and the other maestros objected to this interference.⁵³

Pastrana reported to Madrid, who immediately removed Pastrana and imprisoned his children in Barcelona.

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The royal officials protested Muesas' action, and Pastrana presented his case before Charles III in a letter to Arriaga, explaining that he had merely tried to defend the interests of the crown. In 1776 Pastrana was reinstated in his job, and O'Daly was ordered to prevent further abuses of the laborers. Muesas, on the other hand, was reprimanded by Tomás Landázuri, head of the office of accounting in Madrid, for having acted so hastily in Pastrana's case. He saw Muesas' arrest of Pastrana as a retaliatory measure against the royal officials. Muesas' relations with the royal officials of the Plaza of San Juan were not the most cordial, and Landázuri's judgment of the situation was probably correct. This perhaps explains why Muesas, who was desirous of completing O'Reilly's fortification plan, dismissed a supervisor who could have increased the capacity of labor production in the Plaza of San Juan.⁵⁴

Despite all of these problems, a great deal of progress was made in the fortifications of the Plaza of San Juan during Muesas' administration. The reconstruction of El Moro and San Cristóbal were almost complete; the sea and land bulwarks were raised; and two new gates and arsenals were erected. The new structures were architecturally patterned after the old fortifications--stone and mortar labyrinths with Roman arches, garitas, firing platforms, and high battlements imbedded in solid rock. Following the craggy terrain of this Atlantic promontory, the new fortifications added dimension and strength to Plaza Militar of San Juan. Charles III recognized that this progress was due in no small measure to Muesas' constant efforts. Even before Muesas' term of office was concluded, Charles III informed him that he was completely satisfied with the work that he had done in fortifying the fortification of the Plaza of San Juan.⁵⁵

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These reforms, along with those undertaken by Mueñas' successors, placed the Plaza Militar of San Juan in the vanguard of Spanish presidios in America by the end of the eighteenth century. They not only created an impenetrable line of defense against enemy attacks, but provided a base for the still-needed protection of Spanish commerce in the Caribbean area. The new fortifications, however, also increased the military character of the city of San Juan. In doing this, they also perpetuated the social cleavage that existed between the Spanish military and Puerto Rican upper classes that resided in the capital, and the vast majority of Puerto Ricans who lived in rural areas and made up the bulk of the population of the island.

The increased militarization of the Plaza Militar of San Juan also decreased the chances for a more civil development of the island of Puerto Rico. Indeed, the significance of Mueñas' civil government was practically non-existent when compared to his military government. Nonetheless, during his six years in office Mueñas also attempted to increase the political efficiency of his administration. But, unlike the military reforms, that followed a carefully conceived plan, the political changes initiated by Mueñas were haphazard and sporadic, often responding to emergencies within his administration. They consisted mostly of attempts to make the particular agencies of his government more responsible and thus more effective. In his eagerness to reform the Spanish government in Puerto Rico, however, Mueñas sometimes rendered personal attacks against those who held important political posts and whom he considered deficient in the administration of their offices. Needless to add, this channel always resulted in political battles between the different authorities existing on the island.

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A case in point was Muesas' conflicts with the royal treasury officials of San Juan. These bureaucrats--a treasurer and a comptroller--were entrusted by the crown with the collection of revenues in Puerto Rico. As part of their job they were required to keep regular hours, prepare careful ledgers of all transactions conducted by their office, and render bi-annual and annual reports to the Council of the Indies in Madrid. They were also in charge of guarding the royal revenues in the strong-box or caja real of San Juan. As a safeguard against thefts or misuse of funds, the crown provided each official with a key that opened one of the three locks of the caja real.

Despite this precaution, the caja real of San Juan revealed shortages in 1773 and 1775. The ledgers were often inaccurate, and a capitche (iron-brand used to mark slaves upon payment of the 20 pesos per head that was required by law) was also reported missing. This, plus what Muesas termed uncuitable professional behavior, led him to reprimand the royal officials, take away their keys, and place them under house arrest. He also appointed Francisco de Velasco, a captain in the Victoria Regiment as overseer or Interventor of the royal officials. Velasco was ordered to inspect the accounts of the royal treasury. He was also given a key to the caja real and the task of the safe-keeping of its contents. Muesas also instructed the Auditor de Guerra, Monserrate, to participate in the meetings of the treasury.⁵⁶

The ousted treasury officials of San Juan, Sebastian Galíndez and Gabriel Firagero, were disturbed by Muesas' actions, and immediately appealed to the Council of the Indies to remove Velasco and Monserrate. Moreover, they wanted Muesas censured for overstepping his authority. Finally, they asked to be relieved from their duties and given the

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opportunity to defend themselves publicly. The Council did not grant all of their requests, but made some efforts to redress their grievances. Muesas was blamed for the lack of harmony in his administration, and was admonished to treat the treasury officials with the honor that was due their office. The latter, however, were still held responsible for the missing funds; and although the Auditor de Guerra was forbidden to interfere with their work except in cases of de comiso, the Interventor was to continue to supervise them.

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Muesas' attempts to reform the professional conduct of the royal officials were unsuccessful. His successor, Dufreigne, continued to have the same problems that had beset Muesas' administration. Indeed, the problem of an inefficient royal treasury was one which had characterized Spanish colonial government in America. In the latter part of the eighteenth century Charles III introduced the system of intendants in order to remedy the situation. But, the Ordinance of Intendants which provided for the careful inspection of the cajas reales in the colonies and the ledgers of the treasury officials, was not issued until 1786.

The royal officials of the treasury of Puerto Rico were not the only source of conflict for Muesas. Like the treasury officials, the cabildo of San Juan also posed some problems for Muesas. There was, for example, the problem of absenteeism among the regidores or councilmen. As president of this body Muesas was concerned with the fact that meetings of the cabildo often did not take place because regidores failed to appear. On September 26, 1769, after attending a cabildo at which only two councilmen were present, Muesas ordered that no regidor was to absent himself from the city without his permission. The regidores were to be called by Muesas' clerk, and obliged to be signing in the city, or to be

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inconvenience for them since they had haciendas to attend in the country. Moreover, their homes were not too distant from San Juan, and within an hour's notice they could be in the capital to transact business. By 1775 the cabildo was meeting more regularly, and it was probably this that prompted Miyares González to note the bien estado or good order of the municipal government of San Juan.⁵⁸

Although Muesas experienced some difficulties with the San Juan authorities, he had few problems with the district leaders of the island. These leaders or tenientes de guerra were chosen from among the male Puerto Rican populace, but were appointed by the governor and captain-general. They were solely responsible to him, and any transgression or negative reports resulted in their dismissal. Therefore, unlike the royal officials and the cabildo which constituted autonomous authorities, the tenientes de guerra were dependent on the governor for whatever power they held, and therefore did not conflict with Muesas' authority.

In their own districts, however, they had a great deal of power and many responsibilities. They were in charge of maintaining law and order, collecting and distributing revenues, authorizing sales, purchases and contracts, repairing public roads, convoking juntas generales, and supervising the urban militia. In addition to these functions, Muesas also exhorted them to be ever vigilant for contraband activities and prevent illegal trade. On November 29, 1769 he issued a Reglamento to the tenientes de guerra giving them exact instructions on the procedures they were to follow in their battle against contraband. The following year he issued a more comprehensive document, a Directorio General (1770) which not only collected his earlier orders and decrees, but included other regulations as well.⁵⁹

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When Muesas ordered Vizcarrondo to visit the island's districts in 1770 he requested him to pay particular attention to the work of the tenientes de guerra. The governor was interested in knowing if his orders were being obeyed by his local officials, but Vizcarrondo's report did not contain any information on this. Thus, it is difficult to ascertain to what degree Muesas' orders were effective in curtailing contraband or in establishing law and order in Puerto Rico.

There is no evidence that Muesas issued any other general regulations besides his Reglamento and Directorio General, or that Charles III's government ever enacted a political reform program for Puerto Rico. O'Reilly, who had been aware of the lack of an efficient civil government, attempted to provide some guidelines in his Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, his section Sobre gobierno politico only instructs the governor of Puerto Rico in the ways of making the island's economy more productive. Muesas' political innovations, therefore, were nothing more than a single governor's attempts to improve his own administration. Nevertheless, they are a clear example of a governor's desire to perfect Spanish political administration in Puerto Rico.

Muesas' military administration of the Plaza Militar of San Juan was much more effective than his political rule. During his six years in office Muesas diligently executed Alexander O'Reilly's reform projects, and this increased Puerto Rico's military strength. The force of the Spanish garrison was supplemented by a well-organized militia, and the old forts of San Juan were completely renovated. The Plaza Militar of San Juan could now better justify the pompous titles of "Vanguardia y Alcaide de toda la Isla" that Philip IV had so grandly bestowed upon it in 1639.⁶⁰

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This renewed military importance made Puerto Rico one of Spain's most cherished possessions in America, and the most coveted of the Caribbean islands during the second half of the eighteenth century. Indeed, although the chances of foreign incursions had been greatly minimized by the military reforms of O'Reilly and O'Daly, foreign attack was still a reality. The British, for example, were still a menace in the Caribbean. In 1770 they broke off diplomatic relations with Spain, and Muesas was instructed to prepare for war. The governor put the Plaza Militar in a state of alertness, and took all the precautions necessary for a proper defense of the island. He ordered the Plaza supplied with munition and abastos (foodstuff) and recalled all the soldiers assigned to the fortifications.⁶¹ The English did not attack Puerto Rico at this time, but the island of Vieques became a source of contention.

Vieques or "Crabb" Island as the British called it, had not yet been settled by the Spaniards. There were no Spanish outposts or fortifications on the island, and no plans had been made to erect any. The governor of Puerto Rico, however, had been instructed to make reconocimientos or reconnaissance visits to the island to prevent settlement or occupation by any other power. The 1772 visit revealed that British wood-cutters and fishermen had begun to exploit Vieques' resources.⁶² Muesas sent guardacostas to the area to keep British vessels away from the island. This resulted in the capture of a schooner from Antigua and a British merchant vessel from Jamaica. The British requested the return of these vessels, but were not successful because they refused to meet Spain's demands and abandon their possessions to Vieques. In 1774 they again tried to take over the island by encouraging British families to settle there. After a year of failure, they abandoned the idea of new settlers,

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but continued to claim the island as a British possession.⁶³ In 1776 they even suggested the idea of trading Gibraltar for Vieques. The Spanish ministers wisely decided not to accept, and Vieques continued to be administrated by the San Juan government. Charles III had succeeded in keeping the vestiges of the Caribbean empire together, and Muesas had certainly been instrumental in achieving this in Puerto Rico.

Charles III could feel entirely satisfied with his appointment of Miguel de Muesas as military and civil governor of Puerto Rico. Muesas not only increased Spain's military prestige in the Caribbean, but also contributed to a better administration of the islands of Puerto Rico. If he was more successful as captain-general than as a civil governor it was because the times and policies of the Madrid government called for a man who was more of an expert in military affairs than in political administration. Such a man was Muesas. Probably no one could have implemented Charles III's military reform program better than this Extremaduran soldier, whose love for the military life had rewarded him with the governorship and captaincy-general of one of the most important presidios in America.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2395, Alexander O'Reilly, Reglamento para la Tropa Veterana de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, April 27, 1765.
2. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2390, Alexander O'Reilly, Instrucción al gobernador de Puerto Rico, Madrid, December 28, 1765. See also Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 303-307.
3. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2390, Instrucción, Section on the Tropa Veterana, Article 1.
4. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, Relación de la fuerza con que se halla el expresado Regimiento de Infantería de Toledo, Puerto Rico, February 1, 1770.
5. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Estado de las Frendas de Vestuario del Regimiento de Infantería de Toledo, Puerto Rico, Junio 1, 1770; Estado de la Tropa Veterana, Puerto Rico, June 2, 1771; Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, March 4, 1771; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2505, Encargo to Arriaga, January 29, 1774.
6. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2500, Instrucción, Section on the Tropa Veterana, Articles 2 and 4.
7. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506A, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, April 30, 1776.
8. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506A, Real Cédula al gobernador de Puerto Rico, El Pardo, September 9, 1776.
9. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 192-194; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Noticia del vestuario sobrante del Regimiento de León, Puerto Rico, October 1, 1770.
10. López Martínez, Historia de Cayey, p. 13.
11. In 1763 the governor of Puerto Rico was informed that in the future the period of service of the garrison would be three years. See Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 190, Note 52.
12. Miyares, Noticias, p. 57.
13. Richard J. Van Deusen, Puerto Rico, A Caribbean Isle (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1931), p. 79; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 190.
14. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2505, Encargo to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, January 29, 1774.
15. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Encargo to Arriaga, Madrid, October 27, 1771.

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16. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Orden del Consejo, Madrid, November 12, 1771.

17. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Muecas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, January 24, 1772.

18. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 191; López Martínez, Historia de Cayey, p. 62.

19. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Instrucción, Section on the Milicia, Article 6.

20. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2505, Estado de Milicias Disciplinas de Infantería y Caballería de la Isla de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, April 10, 1774.

21. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506A, O'Reilly to Gálvez, Madrid, September 30, 1776; Real Orden a Muecas, San Lorenzo, November 10, 1776.

22. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 197.

23. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Instrucción, Section on the Milicia, Article 9.

24. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2394, Reglamento para las Milicias de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, May 17, 1765, Article 27.

25. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Muecas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 30, 1775, September 15, 1775; Relación de las Prendas de las Milicias Disciplinadas y Estado de Tropas, Año 1775. See also Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 204-209.

26. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2501, Alexander O'Reilly, et. al. Relación del actual estado de las fortificaciones y de los reparos y aumentos que se consideraran conducentes a la mayor defensa de la plaza, Puerto Rico, May 20, 1765.

27. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2501, O'Reilly to Arriaga, on Board "El Águila," June 24, 1765.

28. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2399, Instrucción, Section on the Fortificaciones, Articles 1-7.

29. Nicolás Cabrilla, "Las fortificaciones militares en Puerto Rico," Revista de Indias, Año 27, Nos. 107-108 (Madrid, January - June 1967), p. 178.

30. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Real Orden a Muecas, Madrid, January 19, 1770; Muecas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, September 20, 1769.

31. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2501, O'Reilly to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, June 24, 1765.

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32. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Informe de Muesas a la Junta de Guerra de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, December 24, 1770.

33. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, December 26, 1770; Real Orden a Muesas, Madrid, March 5, 1771.

34. Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 34; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 232-233; Albad, Historia, pp. 115-116.

35. SHM, Ho. k-b-10-50, Plano de la Plaza de San Juan de Puerto Rico y sus inmediaciones de Thomas O'Daly (1772); AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, O'Daly to Muesas, Puerto Rico, September 30, 1773; Cabrellana, "Fortificaciones," p. 177.

36. Miyares, Noticias, p. 56.

37. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

38. Albad, Historia, pp. 115-116.

39. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506A, Informe del Ingeniero O'Daly al gobernador Muesas sobre construcción de la muralla del frente de tierra, Puerto Rico, February 26, 1773; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2505, O'Daly to Muesas, Puerto Rico, September 30, 1773; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506A, O'Daly to Muesas, Puerto Rico, January 9, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2301, Relación del Adelantamiento de las Reales Obras en los últimos cuatro meses (Informe de O'Daly), Puerto Rico, June 3, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2508, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 3, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506A, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, February 17, 1776.

40. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2355, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, September 5, 1772.

41. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2309, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 20, 1775; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2355, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, September 5, 1772.

42. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 224-225.

43. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2483, O'Reilly to Arriaga, Madrid, June 28, 1771; Real Cédula al gobernador y reales oficiales de Puerto Rico, Madrid, June 30, 1771; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 230.

44. Miyares, Noticias, pp. 52-53.

45. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506B, Testimonio de Junta del 27 de Julio del 1773, Puerto Rico, November 17, 1775; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Enseno to O'Daly, Puerto Rico, May 14, 1776.

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46. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Muesas to Gálvez, Puerto Rico, May 24, 1776; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 230, Note 27.

47. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 227.

48. Ibid., p. 324.

49. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, November 30, 1771.

50. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, November 30, 1769.

51. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2483, Real Orden a Municipal, San Ildefonso, July 28, 1771; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Real Orden a Juan Felipe Castaños, October 22, 1772; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 20, 1771; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2503, Muesas to Arriaga, August 18, 1769; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2483, O'Reilly to Muesas; Madrid, June 26, 1771.

52. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506B, Oficio del gobernador Muesas a O'Daly, Puerto Rico, November 7, 1775.

53. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506B, O'Daly to Muesas, Puerto Rico, November 3, 1775; Villalonga to O'Daly, Puerto Rico, November 3, 1775; Mestre to O'Daly, Puerto Rico, November 3, 1775.

54. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2506B, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, March 14, 1776; Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, March 14, 1776; Bastrano to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, November 14, 1775.

55. Caballana, "Fortificaciones," p. 176.

56. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2483, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 24, 1775.

57. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2483, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, November 6, 1775; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2488, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, July 24, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2358, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, March 13, 1786; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2435, Royal Oficio to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, November 8, 1775.

58. Mieres, Noticias, p. 11; Actas del Cabildo de San Juan, 1767-1771, Book IV, p. 124.

59. Directorio General que ha mandado formar el Señor Don Miguel de Muesas, Coronel de los Reales Ejercitos, gobernador y capitán general de esta Isla de San Juan de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, March 22, 1776 in Crónicas del y Puerto Rico (ed.), Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico, 14, 2da. ed. (New York: Pagan Reprint, 1933), pp. 39-117.

60. Mieres, Noticias, p. 14.

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61. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, January 17, 1771.

62. Morales-Carrón, Puerto Rico, p. 103.

63. Vera Lee Brown, "Anglo-Spanish Relations in America in the Closing Years of the Colonial Era," Hispanic American Historical Review (August, 1922), vol. V, pp. 460-473.

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC REFORMS UNDER THE GOVERNORSHIP OF MIGUEL DE MULLAS,
1769-1776

Spain's renewed interest in the Caribbean during the eighteenth century was reflected not only in Charles III's military reforms of the Plaza Militar of San Juan Bautista, but in his government's attempts to make the islands of Puerto Rico more economically productive and financially self-sufficient. The economic reforms, like the restructuring of the military in Puerto Rico, did not begin until after 1765, when O'Reilly presented to the King his Memoria on Puerto Rico. In this comprehensive study, as we have already noted, O'Reilly discussed some of Puerto Rico's major economic problems--the lack of revenue and labor; the dependency on the Mexican situado; and contraband. He also described the island's economic assets. For him, Puerto Rico was an agricultural mine: the land was rich, the climate was temperate, and the water supply plentiful. Because of this, he asked the King to encourage migration of economically important persons to Puerto Rico, to resolve the problem of land use in the island, to introduce new commercial reforms, and to invest directly into the Puerto Rican economy. In his 1765 Instrucción al Gobernador de Puerto Rico, O'Reilly further added that the governors of Puerto Rico be entrusted with the economic development of the island. In this capacity they were to exhort the native inhabitants to be industrious, to discourage idleness by putting the idle to work on the construction of roads and public works, and to encourage efficient land practices,

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especially the growth of sugar cane, cotton, indigo, coffee, tabasco, cacao, nutmeg, vanilla, tobacco and timber. O'Reilly believed that these proposals, along with those of other officials, would bring prosperity to the island and thus increase the royal revenues.¹

In the years to come O'Reilly's suggestions for the development of the Puerto Rican economy became the framework within which the new Spanish economic reforms were devised, and in time almost all of them were adopted by the Spanish government and applied to Puerto Rico. The important role that O'Reilly played in initiating Charles III's economic reforms in Puerto Rico is undeniable. But, perhaps more significant was the part played by the governors who were appointed by Charles III to carry out these reforms in Puerto Rico. For, it was this official who was ultimately responsible for the administration of the new reforms. Indeed, the success of Charles III's economic reforms in Puerto Rico probably was due in no small measure to the effectiveness and loyalty of the governors Charles III appointed in the years after O'Reilly's visit to Puerto Rico in 1765.

Miguel de Maesaz was the first of these governors. Like O'Reilly, Maesaz sought to increase the revenues of the crown in order to make the Plaza Militar of San Juan independent of other colonial treasuries. He also was interested in resolving the land issue in Puerto Rico, and in developing a more productive agricultural economy. More importantly, he was eager to abolish contraband trade, for, he was convinced that Puerto Rico's illegal trade was responsible for the island's decadence. Thus, from 1769 to 1776 Maesaz dedicated himself to a better economic administration of the region. During this period he promptly canceled all of the royal edicts, and royal decrees, directed to that problem in the islands

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problems of his administration.

As superintendent of the Real Hacienda or royal treasury of Puerto Rico Maeses was particularly concerned with the state of revenues or available monies that were deposited in the strong-box of San Juan. These monies were divided into two categories: the general funds or ramos comunes; and special funds. The general funds were the largest component of the royal treasury in Puerto Rico. They usually included the situado, the special stipend that was regularly sent from the Mexican treasury to cover expenses in the military establishment of San Juan; the almojarifazgo or the duties that were levied on imports and exports; the alcabala, a general sales tax, and other taxes, including excise taxes on liquor and cock fights; and payments for the establishment of a palmeria (a combination of general and liquor store). The general funds also included fees collected on the sale of offices, which according to law were to be sent to the Casa de Contratación in Seville, but were often spent in Puerto Rico. The special funds for the most part were earmarked for specific purposes, and included the fortification fund, the tithe, and the proceeds from the sale of papal bulls or ecclesiastical offices. The royal treasury also derived its income from taxes on the introduction of black slaves (40 pesos a head); the sale of contraband goods seized in raids; fees and fines imposed on particular persons; and taxes on land.

Maeses carefully supervised the collection and administration of these funds, but the treasury of San Juan continued to experience the perennial problems of shortages and delays in the situado. The situado consisted of 500,000 pesos and was scheduled to arrive annually from Mexico to pay for the expenses of the governor, lieutenant governor, royal officials, and of the various Spanish institutions residing in San Juan. The

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royal mercedes or grants conceded to certain individuals in Puerto Rico by the crown were to be paid out of this fund also. Unfortunately, the situado rarely arrived on time. Sometimes it never arrived at all; for often pirates claimed it as booty, or the crown ordered that it be used to meet emergencies in the Mexican treasury. The situado for the years 1769 to 1776 did arrive--albeit late and for the most part incomplete.²

Whenever the situado was delayed or lost, the governor of Puerto Rico was empowered to use the Déposito de Guatemala, a sum of 300,000 pesos which was specially sent from the treasury of Guatemala to take care of emergencies in the city of San Juan. At times, this fund experienced shortages as well. In 1769, for example, only 100,000 pesos arrived in Puerto Rico; the rest was kept in Havana. Muesas, instead of requesting that the remaining sum be sent to Puerto Rico, petitioned the Mexican royal treasury to send extra funds to the island. The Council of the Indies, however, denied Muesas' request, and ordered that the missing 200,000 pesos be integrated to the San Juan treasury.³

Although the Council of the Indies disapproved of Muesas' first attempt to increase the money supply in Puerto Rico, it did not disavow some of his other actions. It approved the issue of papeletas or paper notes when there were delays in the situado or the Guatemala fund. Indeed, on several occasions Muesas was forced to issue these notes in order to pay for the expenses incurred by his government in Puerto Rico. In 1769, 1770 and again in 1773 he ordered the royal officials to put out paper notes valued at 8 reales each.⁴ Sometimes in order to prevent the flooding of the island's economy with paper notes, he borrowed money from the Real Cofre de Puerto Rico bank.⁵ In 1775, when the situado had been delayed for almost a year, Muesas gave an order calling for

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valuable possessions to prevent the issue of more paper notes. It must have pleased him very much when the situado arrived in time to prevent this.⁶ Mestas, also, strictly enforced tax collection laws during these periods.

But, taxes collected in Puerto Rico usually were not a very significant part of the royal treasury. The almojarifazgo or duties on imports and exports were still only 5% and 2.5% respectively, although they could be levied on many different products, depending on the need. The import duties also included a 15% tax on the sale of seized contraband goods, while the export taxes were usually doubled on products going to non-Hispanic ports. In addition to the almojarifazgo, there was also a general sales tax or alcabala of 2% that was levied on most goods, except bread; books, manuscripts, and paintings; weapons and horses; and goods bought or sold by religious institutions or sold to the poor in the public markets. The alcabala also included a $\frac{1}{4}\%$ charge on merchandise that arrived from ports that were not listed in the Free Trade Act of 1765, and a 6% duty on aguardiente or rum. Until 1755 the alcabala in Puerto Rico was collected and compounded by the municipal government of San Juan, but it then came to be part of the royal treasury. With most of this fund the crown paid for the repair and maintenance of public buildings in the city of San Juan, and for the construction of two new bridges--those of San Antonio and Martín Peña. As a kind of emergency fund the cabildo of San Juan was granted 100 pesos annually from the alcabala returns.

The municipal government was dissatisfied with this arrangement, and on September 30, 1775 it petitioned the crown for the rights to the alcabala, aguardiente, and ajaca (salt liquor). The cabildo also believed that the 1755 decree had not provided the desired relief; for, the

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public buildings, especially the prisons, and the bridges were in need of repair. The members of the cabildo also found the 100 pesos allocated for emergencies insufficient to meet the present needs of the city government. Funds were needed for salaries, ceremonies, upkeep of the horses, and, of course, for repairs of public buildings and maintenance of the headquarters of the militia of San Juan.⁷ Both Muesas and the Council of the Indies denied the cabildo its request. It was the Council's opinion that the cabildo had exaggerated the conditions of the public works in the city; but, Muesas was instructed to investigate the cabildo's charges. If any repairs were needed, Muesas was to apply the funds derived from the taxes on aguardiente and aloja.⁸

The taxes on these liquors, as well as those on peñas de gallos (cock fights), were among the few excise taxes that were levied on luxury items in Puerto Rico. The tax on a cuartillo (pint) of aguardiente was 8 maravedís, and on that of aloja it was one maravedí. These had been in existence long before Muesas came into office. The tax of 6 pesos on cock fights, however, was established by Muesas himself in 1770. They were due once a month, and during Muesas' administration were collected in the capital only. In 1782 their collection was extended to the rest of the island.⁹

A tax of 20 pesos a year was also required of owners of mercantile establishments and pulperías. A small contribution of 4 reales for shops and 2 reales for pulperías was also exacted of all store-keepers upon the inspection of the pesos and medidas (currency, weights and measures) that were currently in use. The inspection visits were conducted by one of the secretaries of the San Juan government, assisted by several other officials, including the alcalde ordinario and the alcalde de primer voto.¹⁰

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visitas de pesos y medidas were extremely important because it was one of the ways by which the crown was able to prevent the use of illegal tender or counterfeit money, and regulate the various units of measure in America.

All citizens were expected to comply with the visitas and pay the fee that was required. The milicianos of San Juan, however, had traditionally been exempt from paying this tax although their stores were still subject to inspection. They based their rights to this exemption on article 40 of the Reglamento de la Isla de Cuba which stipulated that militia men could establish shops, sell merchandise, or work at their trade. The Reglamento did not grant the militia of Cuba or Puerto Rico the right to be exempt from any tax. In fact, it clearly specified that militia men were expected to pay all taxes according to the law.

In 1768, therefore, they were ordered to pay the fees due for the official inspection of their stores. The milicianos protested, but in 1769 they were once again ordered to pay 4 reales for the shops or 2 reales for the pulperías if they owned them. Muesas agreed to enforce the law, and ordered Vizcarrondo, commander-in-chief of the Milicias Disciplinadas, to inform the militia of the change. In a letter to Muesas, dated December 29, 1769 Vizcarrondo once more expressed the opinion of the militia men. He noted that native store-keepers who were members of the militia had been exempt from paying the visita fees because, like the militia of Havana, they had voluntarily rendered services to the crown. Although article 40 of the Reglamento only dealt with the right of milicianos to set up businesses, he believed that the intention of this rule was to exempt them from taxes or fees which were not officially established by law.¹⁰ The matter was finally settled by O'Reilly,

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who recommended that milicianos pay only half of the fees that were exacted from other shop-keepers.¹¹

Another tribute that was imposed upon the citizens of Puerto Rico was the pesa. Like the fees on the visitas, this was an obligation that fell upon a particular sector of the economy--the cattle industry. The pesa or carga pesada usually consisted of a contribution of a number of cattle that were ordered brought into San Juan to meet the needs of the city. The cattlemen were paid 6 reales per arroba for their cattle, but this price was always below the market price which was anywhere from 12 to 16 reales.¹²

The distribution of this tribute was based on the number of acres of land or on the number of cattle owned by the cattle ranchers. In 1770 due to the demographic changes which the island had experienced, a re-adjustment of the pesa was ordered by the cabildo of San Juan.¹³ The cabildo also approved a distribution plan in case of emergencies. In the event of a blockade or siege the following districts were responsible for a contribution of a total of 30,000 heads of cattle. (see Table 3). The districts of Toa Baja, Toa Alta, Bayamón, Guaynabo and Río Piedras, which probably had a total of 6,000 cattle, were expected to meet the immediate needs of the plaza.

The royal exchequer of Puerto Rico was also responsible for the levy and collection of diezmos or ecclesiastical tithes. But, the tithes was actually not part of the royal exchequer of San Juan, for, the crown only received 1/9 of its proceeds. The rest was divided between the religious authorities in San Juan and the Village of San Germán. It was usually applied to the salaries of the bishop of Puerto Rico and the dean of the cathedral chapter of San Juan; the chapters of the chapters locally; the contribution and repair of churches; the maintenance of the

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF THE YESSA IN PUERTO RICO, 1770

District	No. of Cattle
Villa de San Germán	1,300
Mayagüez	300
Añasco	600
Aguada (and Calbache)	600
Las Vegas	100
La Tuna	200
Arecibo	800
Utuado	200
Nanati	800
La Vega	400
Yauco	300
Ponce	600
Cosamo	800
Guayama	700
Las Piedras	700
Fajardo	300
Loíza	800
Caguas	500

Source: *Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, 1767-1771* (San Juan: Municipio de San Juan, 1965), Vol. IV, p. 177.

seminary and religious hospitals; and the support of the clergy in San Juan and San Germán. The clergy of other districts as well as the churches or chapels they supervised were supported by the citizens of these towns.

The tithes, like the secular funds, often experienced shortages, but during the latter part of Muesas' administration the ecclesiastical funds more than doubled. From 18,500 pesos that were collected during the first biennial period (1770-1773) the tithes jumped to 45,027 pesos in the following three years (1773-1776).¹⁴ This unprecedented rise in the diezmos was probably due to the increases in agricultural production that Puerto Rico experienced during this period. For Muesas, the reasons for the increase in tithes were that the citizens of the island had been applying the doctrine,¹⁵

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The increases in the tithe, however, did not solve the financial problems of the royal exchequer since they could not be used for non-religious purposes. Thus, the problem of shortages continued to plague the San Juan treasury during these years despite Muesas' efforts to increase the money supplies on the island. But, the problem of funding was only one of the problems inherent in the Real Hacienda of Puerto Rico. There was in addition the problem of an inefficient fiscal administration.

The administration of the royal treasury in Puerto Rico was in the hands of the two royal officials--the treasurer and comptroller. Together these officers were responsible for the collection, accounting, and supervision of the treasury funds. Usually they had little to do with the direct collection of taxes or other funds since most of these were parcelled out to the highest bidder in each district or were entrusted to local officials. The royal officials also had to account for all the monies that were deposited or taken out of the San Juan strong-box. Thus, they were required to witness and sign all entries and withdrawals, keep careful ledgers, and make periodic audits of their accounts. They were also expected to submit every six months and once a year detailed reports of their transactions to the governor and Council of the Indies. If they failed to do this, they would forfeit their salaries or pay for the expenses of sending the messenger who came to get them. In 1771 the crown ordered them to make these reports every month, and to send an annual report of the San Juan accounts to Cuba where they would be examined by the Tribunal de Cuentas of Havana, one of three independent auditing agencies in America.

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According to these rules, the royal officials were to keep by order and to be responsible for their officers. Among

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these were the presentation of bonds to guarantee any deficiencies or defaults in the royal treasury during their period of administration. They were also required to replace missing funds within three days after an accounting of the deposits in the caja real. They had to keep daily hours, and could not take other jobs. They were also forbidden to absent themselves from the city without the governor's permission. Violation of any of these rules usually meant the loss of office; but, their disregard in Puerto Rico often went unnoticed.

Muesas, as supervisor of the Real Hacienda in Puerto Rico, zealously watched the conduct and performances of the royal officials. This was particularly true after 1773 when it was discovered that more than 80,000 pesos were missing from the treasury funds of San Juan.¹⁷ Muesas not only held the royal officials responsible for this, but for the loss of a carimbo or branding iron. In 1776 he also accused them of having received some 9,600 pesos, which made up the rum processing tax and the alcabala, without entering this sum into the monthly accounts of the San Juan treasury.¹⁸ He found their bookkeeping in a state of disarray, for they kept their records on loose note papers rather than on the books that had been assigned to them. Muesas also reprimanded the royal officials for their continuous latenesses, and absences to the office of the treasury, and noted that they often failed to discharge their public duties as well.

To prevent these and other irregularities on the part of the royal officials, Muesas made periodic visits to the office of the treasury. Some days he came three or four times, much to the annoyance of the royal officials. From then on the treasury had a regular scrutiny which he aired publicly, and which he had against them. On occasion, he even had them

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arrested if he judged their transgressions bad enough. In 1775 he reported to Arriaga the arrests of the treasurer, Ignacio Ramón de Ezpeleta, for his refusal to allow the governor to inspect his accounts, and of José Jiménez y Navia, an interim officer, for his repeated absences and polygamous behavior. The following year, when the 9,600 pesos from the aguardiente and alcabala were discovered missing, Muesas had them all placed under house-arrest, and assigned an Interventor or fiscal overseer to supervise them in the office.¹⁹

The royal officials protested Muesas' actions, and in the hearings held in 1775 and again in 1776 defended themselves against the governor's charges. They claimed that they had faithfully carried out all their duties, often working long hours. They argued that in other places the royal officials were expected to work only five hours; and, therefore, considered it unjust that Muesas expected them to be in their office all

day.²⁰ No acceptable explanations were made of the missing funds, except that the royal officials suspected each other of having stolen the monies. They even accused Muesas of participating in illicit commerce, and believed Jiménez y Navia had been arrested because he had begun to pursue contrabandists with too much vigor.²¹ The royal officials presented these charges to the authorities in Madrid, and requested a redress of their grievances.

Tomás Landáuzuri examined both sides of the conflict, but, before rendering a final judgment, he ordered Juan Elizjo de la Fuente, Contador Mayor (chief accountant) of the Havana Fiscal Tribunal to make a complete audit of the funds due to the San Juan treasury since 1769. He also concluded an earlier only slightly less thorough audit. He also noted that royal funds were missing, but believed they had been taken to Antonio

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Alfonso y Posinguer, who also served as treasurer during Muecas' administration. Posinguer, of course, denied the charges.

Because there was no clear evidence against any one royal official, neither Muecas nor Landázuri could bring charges against those accused. Despite this, Landázuri held them all responsible for the loss of the monies, and ordered restitution of all the missing funds. Likewise, he reprimanded them all for their unprofessional conduct. Muecas was also informed that he had acted improperly also, particularly in the case of Jiménez y Navia. It was Landázuri's opinion that this royal official had been arrested without cause, and, therefore, should be cleared of any wrongdoing against the royal treasury of Puerto Rico. Muecas was ordered to release him, and allow him to proceed to his new post in Hararóbo. Muecas was also instructed to have more frequent meetings with the royal officials, and listen to their grievances. But, he was to continue to provide an overseer, and make careful inspections of the San Juan strongbox. If the royal officials disobeyed the laws in the future, Muecas was to bring formal charges against them, and correct the situation with the aid of a legal advisor. Finally, although the contraband charges against Muecas were ignored by Contaduría at this time, Landázuri recommended that they be investigated during Muecas' residencia or final evaluation of his administration.

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Muecas' administration of the Real Hacienda in Puerto Rico as we have seen, was not one of the most successful aspects of his government on the island. The crown did attempt to remedy some of the gross inadequacies of the system, but it failed to appoint royal officials who had the professional qualifications and the credibility to handle matters of finance. Thus, virtually the entire of the treasury was sold to the

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highest bidders. Muesas had tried to overcome this problem by assigning a fiscal overseer to supervise the accounts and office of the treasury, and the crown welcomed his suggestion. Nevertheless, the King ignored his recommendation that an Intendent be placed in charge of the royal exchequer in San Juan.²³ In 1784 the Intendencia was introduced in Puerto Rico, but only as a function of the office of governor, and too late to aid Muesas in his program of fiscal reform.

Muesas' efforts to apply the Bourbon land reform legislation were much more successful. Not only did Muesas continue the Bourbon land reform program in Puerto Rico, but he also contributed to the final resolution of this long-standing problem. At the beginning of his administration, however, he was faced with one of those legal battles that had prevented the land authorities in Puerto Rico from carrying out the royal cedula of 1754. Indeed, the dispute between the Puerto Rican hacendados and Ramón Allende, the new sub-delegado or land commissioner appointed by the Audiencia of Santo Domingo to execute the 1754 cedula, was one of the most heated controversies in the history of land reform in Puerto Rico.

Allende, who was commissioned in 1767 by the President of the Audiencia of Santo Domingo to assess the feasibility of establishing a Juzgado de Tierras (land commission) to carry out the 1754 royal cedula, arrived in Puerto Rico at the end of this year. He immediately presented his credentials to Marcos Vergara, the then governor of Puerto Rico, and requested his permission to conduct a survey among the island's local officials in order to expedite his mission. Vergara, who probably knew of the opposition of Puerto Rican hacendados to the application of the 1754 cedula, asked Don Juan Allende to take with him a deputy, and sent

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him to the cabildo of San Juan for recognition of his papers.²⁴

The municipal government did not recognize Allende's commission, claiming that Puerto Rico had been exempt from the royal cedula of 1754 by special dispensation from the crown. In its appeals to the crown during the years 1768 and 1769 the Cabildo recalled that in 1758 the crown had removed Severino Xiorro, the first land commissioner appointed to Puerto Rico, and approved Governor Ramirez de Estenoz's plan which had called for the conversion of pasture lands near San Juan into agricultural haciendas, and for the demolition of hatos in other districts of the island. The councilmen also pointed out that the crown had already granted Puerto Rican hacendados the property right to the lands they occupied. Thus, the municipal government considered the Audiencia's new orders a violation of previous royal ordinances, and would not allow Allende to carry them out until the Council clarified the matter.²⁵

Allende also appealed to the Audiencia of Santo Domingo and to the authorities in Madrid. In a series of documents he accused the councilmen of subterfuge, and argued that hacendados in Puerto Rico were opposed to land reform because they feared losing lands they held in usufruct, but which they failed to cultivate, or which they had acquired illegally. Since one of the functions of a land commissioner was to verify land use, naturally Puerto Rican landowners objected to the establishment of a land commission on the island.²⁶ Allende strongly recommended that the 1754 land law be immediately applied to Puerto Rico. It was his belief that this would not only benefit Puerto Rican agriculturists, but the Royal Company as well. The company, Allende pointed out, only failed to prosper, but land reform would increase the production of many other products on the island, such as native dyes, sugar cane,

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cacao, and cotton. This increased agricultural production would in turn give rise to commercial growth, and increased profits for the company. Unfortunately, most hacendados in Puerto Rico allowed their lands to lie fallow or used them for pasture, while many landless individuals roamed the countryside without a piece of land with which to sustain themselves. If the land development and redistribution plan of Ramírez de Estenoz had been put into effect, as the cabildo had the Madrid authorities believe, why then, so much poverty and lack of food supplies?²⁷

Allende was firmly convinced that the only way to develop the island's economy was to establish a land commission that would successfully carry out a land redistribution program in Puerto Rico. He, therefore, recommended the creation of a land commission, and requested that he be appointed Juez de Realengos (royal lands commissioner) to head it. In addition, he submitted to the Council of the Indies a proposal embodying some guidelines for the land tribunal to follow in the event that it was established.²⁸

The Council of the Indies did not adopt Allende's ideas; and in 1770 annulled the Audiencia's orders. The Council agreed with the Puerto Rican hacendados that to create a land commission while the dispensation orders were still in effect would constitute a violation of the law. Therefore, it declared that a land commission was not to be set up in Puerto Rico until the Council had a chance to study the results of Ramírez de Estenoz's land reform plan. Ponce and the San Juan cabildo immediately submitted a full report on this, noting the success of Ramírez de Estenoz's land reform program. The Council, satisfied with this report, approved the idea of establishing a land commission to replace the 1771 cabildo.²⁹

9-17 The Puerto Rican hacendados had once again emerged victorious in the battle for land reform in Puerto Rico, but to ensure their continuous success they had to dispose of Allende. In the fall of 1769, when Muesas had been in office for only a few months, they besieged him with statements about Allende's immoral conduct, accusing the sub-delegado of polygamy and unruly behavior. On the basis of their report, Muesas had Allende suspended from office, arrested and imprisoned without a hearing, and exiled to Caracas. From there, Allende appealed to the Council of the Indies, and requested that he be allowed to return to his native Puerto Rico, but the members of the Council denied his request, without clearly stating the reasons for this decision.³⁰ In retrospect, it appears that since the crown was willing to settle the land issue without enforcing the 1754 royal cedula, perhaps Allende's persistence that this law be enforced and land redistributed--an idea which was bitterly opposed by Puerto Rican hacendados--might have jeopardized the chances for a quick solution to the land problem. The Council, therefore, sanctioned Muesas' exile of Allende, and approved almost all of the compromises that Muesas reached with Puerto Rican hacendados during his period of administration.³¹

The land problem at this time continued to be defined by the questions of land rights and use, and by conflicts over territorial boundaries. Land redistribution and development were still issues of concern, also. Although the crown did not create a land commission during Muesas' years as governor and captain-general, it did expect him to carry on the Bourbon land reform program in Puerto Rico. In the first place, Muesas was to conduct a land survey, and report on the status of land reform to the king. If any unattached Indian remained he was to

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distribute them among the landless poor. Finally, he was to encourage the establishment of agricultural farms, but was forbidden from demolishing any more hatos or criaderos on the island. Muesas was not specifically ordered to settle boundary disputes, impose a land tax, or resolve the issue of property right, but it was in these areas that he made his greatest contribution in the crown's efforts to resolve the land issue in Puerto Rico.

From the very beginning of his administration Muesas demonstrated a sense of commitment toward a land reform program in Puerto Rico. In 1771 he ordered the San Juan authorities and the district leaders to make a complete account of the number of estancias, hatos and criaderos on the island. This account, one of the most detailed in the agricultural history of Puerto Rico, was completed on March 23 of this year and forwarded to the Council of the Indies soon after. The number of estancias, hatos, and criaderos in the island's districts is shown in Table 4. The Council examined these figures, but did not take action and did nothing more than urge Muesas to increase the number of estancias whenever possible. Since, there were few unclaimed lands left, and he had been instructed not to demolish any more of the existing hatos, he was forced to find other means of achieving this, such as expediting the settlement of some of the land conflicts that existed over the dividing lines between farms and pastures.³²

Two of these territorial conflicts are worth noting. The first one involved the hacendados of the district of San Germán, who in 1770 presented Muesas with an account that they believed settled the land disputes in that area. Muesas reported it without delay, and with some minor changes. He changed the boundaries set by the hacendados, but there

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF LANDS IN PUERTO RICO, 1771

<u>District</u>	<u>Estancias</u>	<u>Hatos</u>	<u>Criaderos</u>
Bayamón	4	18	19
Guaynabo	111	14	14
Toa Baja	143	3	2
Toa Alta	217	12	6
La Vieja	54	10	12
Manatí	248	6	7
Arecibo	406	44	45
Uturo	93	7	2
La Tuna	102	0	0
Aguada	552	2	2
Anasco	327	4	4
Las Vegas del Pepino	98	3	5
Mayagüez	324	8	5
Villa de San Germán	879	33	10
Coto de Buenajibo (in San Germán)	511 (terrenos)		
Junco	133	4	3
Ponce	711	199	100
Coamo	392	238	61
Salinas (de Coamo)	26	51 1/2 (cuerdas)	
Guayama	209	8.2	66
Huracao	90	139	104
Caguas		60	67
Pajardo	72	6	4
Loíza	76	13	0
Río Piedras y Cangrejos	192	4	2

The total number of these were: 5,379 estancias
 511 terrenos (fields)
 51 1/2 cuerdas
 611 hatos
 353 hato subdivisions
 410 criaderos
 190 criadero subdivisions

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Testimonio, Puerto Rico,
 April 13, 1771.

were to be made permanent. The fences were to be erected out of hard
 timber, and by groups of landowners and cash. Coming up, they were to
 be in good and regulated by the appointed landowners of the area in

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which they were located. If cattle trespassed into cultivated fields, however, cattle owners would have to pay a fine. To avoid any boundary disputes in the future, Muezas ordered that divisions of lands were to be certified by two witnesses. The hacendados agreed to demolish the hatos of Guasaji, Ancón, Miradero, Puerto Real, Varas, and Rincón, and dedicate these lands to agricultural production. Muezas did not oppose this because these pasture lands were now encircled by fences that protected agricultural fields or were too close to the coast, which might encourage contraband.

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The hacendados of Guayama, a district in the southern coast of Puerto Rico, also submitted to Muezas a settlement of their disputes. Likewise, this was accepted by Muezas with some minor alterations. The boundaries, for the most part, were to follow the natural course of the rivers. Fences damaged by floods were to be repaired by the landowners whose fields extended to the water's edge. The criadero or pasture of Jacoboa was to be demolished and its lands distributed among the landless peasants who had illegally occupied the hatos of La Punta and Aures, Arroyo, Machetes, Carrera, Calaital, Jobos, and Palma. Those who held the legal rights to lands in Jacoboa were to receive first preference in the distribution of these newly converted fields. Of the remaining lands, one caballería was to be set aside for the officers of the Milicias Disciplinadas of the Guayama. In addition, Muezas ordered that these officers be exempt from the responsibility of erecting the fences. Finally, as in San Germán, fines were to be imposed on those who permitted livestock to wander into farm lands.

As a result of Muezas' intervention, the boundary dispute between the hatos and haciendas of the districts of San Germán and Guayama were

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settled. Muesas' participation in the establishment of a land tax in Puerto Rico was equally notable. The land tax, as was noted earlier, was suggested by Puerto Rican hacendados in order to support the native militia which was in dire need of funds. Originally, O'Reilly had proposed the introduction of an excise tax on meat to meet the costs of the militia. But instead, Muesas decided to call a junta of the most influential hacendados, and asked them to present suggestions to him as to the best means of obtaining the necessary funds.³⁴

Muesas' second-in-command, José Tentor, the lieutenant-governor was the first to reply. In his dictamen of October 24, 1774 Tentor expressed the opinion that the easiest and fairest duty would be a land tax. Before imposing it, however, a careful study of land use and fertility should be conducted.³⁵ Colonel Thomas O'Daly, chief engineer of the fortifications of the San Juan Plaza and one of the largest hacendados in Puerto Rico, also believed that a land tax was the most judicious means of providing funds for the militia. In a detailed report to the governor he considered the various tax options open to Muesas. A tax, he pointed out, could be levied on the householders themselves or on their property--houses, warehouses, produce or lands. Of these, the tax on land was the most preferable, for it would be the most equitable. Moreover, since the crown was also encouraging agricultural production in Puerto Rico, it would be the most logical because it would inevitably increase the revenues needed to defray the expenses incurred by the Milicias Disciplinadas.

O'Daly further suggested that an inquiry be made into the lands which would be leased by the government and that potential revenues be made full. In addition, O'Daly offered some calculations based on the available land that would be available for taxation. At this he believed that

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a tax of 8 pesos on a caballería would yield 6,452 pesos a year. The cost of making and shipping the uniforms and arms of the Milicias Disciplinadas to Puerto Rico was approximately 39,270 pesos a year, but the royal ordinances had dictated that a uniform could last six years, and individual military equipment seven. If the total tax contributed came to 45,164 pesos for an average of seven years, then not only would the expenses of the militia be covered by this land tax, but there would be an excess of 5,894 pesos. These extra funds could be used to pay for the expenses of surveying the land, and computing and collecting the tax, or they could be applied to future taxes in order to lessen the tax burden on the poor. Some of it could also be used for the repair of weapons or for buying new armaments.

As far as O'Daly could judge, there was only one major obstacle to the levying of this tax--that it would be imposed on all lands regardless of the quality of the soil. But, distinctions had to be made of the different soils. Those which were more fertile could bear a greater share of the tax; those that were poorer might pay less. O'Daly concluded his report with an optimistic note. In years to come more agriculturists would bring more land under cultivation, and thus increase the chances of obtaining more funds. Therefore, the average tax per person would be less in the future. But, if the agricultural land tax did not yield the necessary funds, then city property or land on which vecinos had their homes had to be taxed, also.³⁶

Andrés Vizcarrondo, on the other hand, disagreed with O'Daly. He argued that any tax which fell upon the farming sector would discourage agricultural production on the island. Moreover, Puerto Rican farmers already bore the burden of supporting the church since it was they who

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paid the tithe and other ecclesiastical duties.³⁷

Muesas also requested the municipal government to present the suggestions. In the cabildo meeting of October 17, 1774, he reminded the councilmembers that the crown had already spent large sums on the San Juan Plaza and city. This, he added, had encouraged public works, agricultural production, and commerce in the island. But, the royal treasury could not be expected to pay for the expenses of the native militia. Therefore, the citizens of Puerto Rico had to devise a tax or some other source of income in order to provide for their own defense.³⁸

On October 27, 1774 the cabildo of San Juan met and considered Muesas' request. They not only agreed to a land tax, but on the rates that should be imposed. They proposed a land tax of one real for each acre of farmland, and half a real for each acre of pasture. They estimated a total of 4,281 1/2 pesos a year in revenues.³⁹ Muesas accepted the cabildo's proposal for a land tax. In his opinion, it was a tax that could be evenly distributed. It was also a dependable means of obtaining revenues, for, land would always have value despite droughts, epidemics, inclement weather, and other catastrophes. But, Muesas disagreed with the councilmembers on the tax rates. He believed that the rate should be higher than that proposed by the cabildo in order to cover all of the expenses of maintaining the militia and collecting the tax. He suggested a real and a cuartillo for the farmland and three cuartillos for the pasture, which could bring in more than 5,000 pesos annually. For the collection of the tax he recommended the leaders of the island's districts because they were well acquainted with the number of acres owned by each landholder.⁴⁰ All they needed was instructions on the method of collection. Muesas, however, found this proposal for

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Madrid would approve of the Puerto Rican hacendados idea, proceeded to prepare a format that the tenientes de guerra were to follow in the collection of the land tax in Puerto Rico.⁴¹

On June 12, 1775 Arriaga informed Mucos that the king had approved the new land tax proposed by Puerto Rican hacendados. It was made retro-active to January 10, and by the end of the year more than 6,000 pesos had been entered into the royal treasury of San Juan. The following year 6,181 pesos, 2 reales, and 18 maravedis were collected. But, the land tax revenues fluctuated considerably in the next few years because the crown had not completely settled the problem of land tenure in Puerto Rico.⁴²

During Mucos' period of administration Puerto Rican hacendados attempted to solve the problem of land tenure once and for all. On several occasions, they petitioned the crown for the property rights to the lands they occupied. In their requests they again reminded Charles III that Ferdinand VI had already granted them the right of possession to their lands in the 1758 cedula, but this order had not been made public. Consequently, many landowners, unaware of this concession, feared losing the lands they occupied and worked. Therefore, they requested the crown to issue a confirmation of the 1758 cedula in order to clarify the rights to the lands they held.⁴³

Mucos supported the hacendados request, and appealed to Charles III on their behalf. In 1771 and again in 1774 he presented their requests before the Council of the Indies. In 1771 he merely requested that the 1758 cedula, granting the hacendados the right of property to their lands, be confirmed in order for him to execute it. The security of property rights, Mucos explained, would encourage landowners to

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increase agricultural production, and this in turn would increase the revenues of the royal treasury.⁴⁴ By 1774 the Puerto Rican hacendados had added other demands. They not only wanted the right to own the lands they occupied, but also the free introduction of black slaves, tools, and supplies for their haciendas for a period of ten years. They also requested that white experts on the production of sugar, rum, indigo and cotton be encouraged to settle in Puerto Rico. Finally, they asked that the crown allow them to extract and sell these products free of duty.⁴⁵

Despite Muesas' intervention, the king ignored the appeals of the Puerto Rican hacendados. On April 18, 1775, however, O'Reilly wrote to Arriaga, that since the hacendados had agreed to a land tax, they should be granted the right of possession to the lands they occupied and cultivated.⁴⁶ As a result of this, the crown was finally moved to reconsider the request of the hacendados. But, in order to grant the island's landholders the right to their lands, the Madrid authorities claimed they needed information on the status of lands in Puerto Rico. Consequently, on June 12, 1775 Muesas was ordered to submit an up-dated account of the number of acres of land in the entire island; the number, extensions, and production of the estancias, the actual number and size of hatos or pastures; the number of acres of wastelands or baldíos, and an estimate of those pasture lands which could be dedicated to agricultural production; and the number of cattle supported by these pastures. In this account Muesas was to include information on the owners of lands in Puerto Rico, and the nature of their titles. The crown also entrusted Muesas with the task of preparing a census on the number of inhabitants, and detailing public works in the island, and of recommending other expedients for improving the island.⁴⁷

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As soon as Muesas received his orders, he informed the members of the San Juan cabildo of the crown's decision to reconsider the issue of land titles in Puerto Rico. The cabildo quickly agreed to give Muesas the information the crown requested.⁴⁸ Their report, entitled Satisfacción a las noticias que se han pedido, was completed on August 21, 1775. In it the cabildo reported that the island had 8,392 1/4 caballerías of land. In this calculation the cabildo excluded the rocky and inaccessible hills of the serranías because a survey of these lands was impossible. Of the above estimate, only 1,378 1/4 caballerías were dedicated to agricultural production; and 6,913 1/2 comprised the hatos. The figures for the number of acres of wastelands or of those pastures which could be converted into estancias were not calculated, but the cabildo pointed out that any future demolition of hatos had to take into consideration the particular needs of each of the island's districts. Otherwise, the cattle industry might experience some set-backs.

The total number of estancias was 5,581, and these were divided among some 5,048 landholders who owned anywhere from one to nine caballerías each; 185 medium-size estancias of less than one caballería each. For the most part, these estancias grew products that were used for the daily subsistence of the island's inhabitants, such as rice, maize, plantains, legumes, yams, manioc and other roots. The first two were grown in large quantities, but were not considered lucrative products. On the other hand, sugar cane was not only abundant, but very profitable because out of it they could make rum. Coffee, which had replaced cocoa as the popular drink, and tobacco, were considered lucrative products to grow, but their cultivation had slackened off. The production of other crops, such as melons, pumpkins, peaches and apples, also had declined

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because they lacked a market. In the future the cabildo envisioned the cultivation of these spices, as well as the growth of natural dyes and cotton. But, the cabildo was not able to estimate the actual or prospective yields of any of these products.

The 6,913 1/2 caballerías dedicated to cattle-raising were distributed among 234 hatos, 48 were classified as large hatos; 80 were considered medium-size; and 106 were labeled small hatos. These pastures supported cattle, horses, mules, sheep, goats and pigs. Cattle and pigs were the most profitable to raise. Consequently, they were the largest number of animals on the island. But, the cabildo failed to give the exact number that grazed in the pasture lands. The titles to these lands, and to the estancias discussed above, had been granted indiscriminately by the crown or the cabildo. Some had been issued as a result of composición (survey) of the land.

The cabildo did not render any information on the number of persons on the island because its members believed that the demographic census that Muesas had prepared would suffice. The cabildo did note that besides the capital city of San Juan, there were twenty-nine other settlements or poblaciones. To these would soon be added the settlements of Jaquillo and Tayaboa, for, the landholders in these areas were already seeking to incorporate these new territories.

Muesas submitted the cabildo's report to the Council of Indies on August 30, 1775, along with one of his own. But, Muesas' replies to the queries of the Council varied only slightly from the cabildo's account. Muesas did add that he had already begun to encourage the cultivation of cotton, and was expecting increased yields in this product, as well as in sugarcane, coffee, and indigo. Like the cabildo, he believed

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these products would bring in high returns. Tobacco, also, had a great deal of potential, but according to Muesas, it was not being cultivated properly, and so production in Puerto Rico was not very extensive. To overcome this problem, he suggested that Cuban growers be brought to Puerto Rico to help tobacco growers increase their yields.

Muesas also supplemented the cabildo's information on the cattle industry in Puerto Rico. He proudly noted that the number of cattle had increased from 43,000 in 1769 to 76,159 in 1775. The statistical study he ordered attached to a map and census of Puerto Rico, which had been prepared by Bishop Mariano Martí in 1769, distributed the figures on cattle by districts, and gave the total number of cattle as 77,304. This study also included the number of estancias and hatos in each district, and a census of the entire population of the island. In his report he added that the number of settlements had also increased during his administration. Seven new towns had been founded, but more settlements could be established in the future. Finally, Muesas once more expressed his support for the Puerto Rican hacendados. Granting the landholders the right to the lands they occupied, would make the island an agricultural paradise, and eventually a good source of revenue for the royal treasury.

The prompt reply that Muesas and the councilmen of San Juan gave to the June 13, 1775 order did not bring a quick settlement of the land issue in Puerto Rico. Anxious to resolve this problem, the Puerto Rican hacendados once again appealed to the Council of the Indies. In a letter, dated March 20, 1776, their representative, Pedro de Irujo, informed the Council that the landholders of Puerto Rico still hoped to answer the Indies to their needs.

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that this would encourage agricultural production. But, in order to achieve a balance between agriculture and ranching, the crown had to specify what lands and what products were to be developed. He recommended that Puerto Rican hacendados concentrate on the production and expansion of sugar, cacao, tobacco and malaguetta because these were easy to cultivate and transport, and were the most profitable. Sugar cane was particularly useful, for, it had adapted well to Puerto Rico's good soil. It was such a good product that Puerto Rico's leading hacendados--Thomas O'Daly, Joaquín Power, Manuel Díaz Barriola, Gaspar de Andino and Pedro Vicente de la Torre--had made their fortunes by investing in its production. O'Daly, Power and others not only produced sugar, but rum as well. Rum was very profitable, indeed, but it had caused the production of other products to be neglected. Moreover, many people had become ill from drinking too much of it, and still others committed fraud. Therefore, Layseca suggested that the crown forbid the extraction of rum, except to sugar-mill owners. To avoid tax evasion, he recommended that it be sold in public places only. The establishment of more sugar-mills was not to be neglected. Hence, Layseca reiterated the hacendados' request that Catholic mill operators be allowed to come to Puerto Rico from the neighboring islands.

Layseca also commented on the island's trade, and blamed the Catalan and Slave Trade companies for the lack of it. When these companies were first organized, Layseca noted, they accepted tobacco, coffee, spices, and other products in payment for the slaves, flour and other European goods they sold to the hacendados. But, soon they ceased to do this, and commerce began to decline. To reestablish trade, and credit, the Puerto Rican hacendados had to supply their supplies, the crown

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had to force the agents of these companies to buy the island's products.⁵¹

Layseca's petition, like those of Muesas, went unanswered, but the cabildo submitted still another petition, and this time the hacendados included a series of conditions that they were willing to abide by if they were granted the right of ownership to their lands. First, they agreed to the delineation of land boundaries as specified by special surveyors, who were to be appointed by the councilmen with the governor's approval. Secondly, lands were to be granted only to those who agreed to cultivate useful products or raise cattle. Moreover, no individual was to be given more lands than he could cultivate. Lands were to be divided into three sectors--those dedicated to products for domestic consumption; those producing export products; and those to be used for raising cattle. The cabildo also noted its willingness to provide lands for those who had none, but wished to become farmers. They also agreed to prohibit the extraction of rum, except to sugar producers, and only if they made it from the pulp that remained after sugar was produced. Thus, Puerto Rican hacendados were ready to comply with the municipal government's new guidelines for land reform on the island. In exchange, they expected to receive the right of ownership to their lands. They also wanted more workers--black slaves and white Catholic immigrants--who could help develop their haciendas; and to trade freely with the neighboring islands in the Caribbean.

The crown did not grant the Puerto Rican hacendados any of these requests until 1778, almost two years after Muesas' period of governorship ended. The royal cedula of January 14, 1778, however, recognized nearly all the demands of the hacendados. The 1778 cedula, granting permission of land, though not fully accepted, was an initial, but the title

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to the land was contingent on its cultivation or use for pasture. Ejidos or common lands were to be respected. In the distribution of baldíos or uncultivated lands, the landless inhabitants were to be given first priority in order to prevent the creation of large landholdings and a peonage system. Some of the unsettled territories, however, were bequeathed to the Duke of Crillon, a French military officer, who had rendered special services to Charles III. The redistribution of these lands was to be carefully supervised, and accounts were to be kept, noting the names of the landholders, the kinds of lands they received, and their use. Finally, the crown authorized the cultivation of sugar cane, malagueta, indigo, annatto, coffee, and cacao, and the introduction of white Catholic laborers from the other islands, who swore allegiance to the crown. The extraction of rum was to be done by sugar producers only, but they had to pay a tax of two pesos for each barrel of rum produced.⁵²

Thus, the Puerto Rican hacendados finally succeeded in getting the crown to abrogate the 1754 royal land cedula. Since the crown granted them the property rights to lands they occupied, the question of previous titles to lands became a dead issue. Now, the landowners were free to bequeath and inherit or buy and sell their lands without consulting the Madrid and San Juan authorities. Whether this benefited or harmed the developing Puerto Rican economy is subject to debate. But, Moenes' participation in obtaining the right of ownership of lands for Puerto Rico's hacendado class cannot be denied. He supported this, and the other demands of the landholders, because he firmly believed that a new adjustment of land and property rights would bring more agricultural development, and hence, a more balanced economy, and greater revenues for the Spanish government.

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The development of agriculture was, indeed, a very significant aspect of Muesas' administration. During the six years that Muesas governed the island, he not only encouraged the expansion of basic staples for consumption, but the production of crops which yielded high profits, such as sugar cane. The cultivation of sugar cane had always been easy and useful, and many Puerto Rican vecinos and Spanish military officers dedicated their best lands to it. Thomas O'Daly, Joaquín Power, and Alejandro Novoa, for example, had developed an efficient sugar and rum plantation, called "Fuerte Nuevo" in the district of Río Piedras. This hacienda was considered the largest on the island during this period. It had excellent buildings, productive cultivation methods, and good water communication with the bay of San Juan. In addition to this cooperative enterprise, O'Daly also owned a private hacienda of his own, called "San Patricio."⁵³

Toward the end of Muesas' period of governorship, O'Daly's brother, Jaime, was also granted permission to set up a sugar-mill in Puerto Rico. Jaime O'Daly was not only an expert on the production of sugar, but on the cultivation of tobacco, as well. Therefore, he was also granted a license to grow and trade tobacco.⁵⁴ Tobacco, like sugar cane, was considered a good investment, and many of the island's districts had begun to dedicate themselves exclusively to its production.⁵⁵ Throughout his stay in Puerto Rico Muesas showed particular interest in the production and expansion of this product, and even recommended that a factoría like the one in Havana, be set up to supervise its cultivation and trade. This was necessary because the Slave Trade Company, which had the right to export this product, had been refusing to do so; and consequently, many tobacco plantations were clandestinely selling their crops to foreign

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merchants. A factoría was established in Puerto Rico in 1785, and brought the increases in tobacco, which Muesas had predicted.⁵⁶

Muesas also encouraged the production of coffee, which had been recently introduced from Cuba. In 1768, just a year before Muesas' arrival, the crown relieved coffee planters of the duties they had to pay on coffee. The tax exemption was for five years only, but at the beginning of Muesas' administration it was extended for a period of ten years. In a letter to Arriaga, dated February 21, 1770, Muesas expressed his gratitude for this, and stated that the development of coffee would be very advantageous for the island. Already the districts of Arecibo, Pajardo, Río Piedras, Albonito, Manatí, and Caguas produced very good coffee, and Muesas agreed to develop coffee production in these and other areas.⁵⁷

Muesas was also interested in the commercial possibilities of coffee. In 1769, for example, he agreed to let the Slave Trade Company sell the coffee crops it had purchased from the districts of Toa Alta, Coamo, Guayama, Tuna, Arecibo, Manatí, Ponce, San Germán, Mayagüez, Añasco, and Aguada to the Barlovento (Leeward) Islands in the Caribbean. But, the Council of the Indies did not approve of this, and ordered Muesas to prevent any trade between Puerto Rico and the non-Hispanic islands. Muesas explained to the members of the Council that he had only wanted to exchange the coffee for food supplies for the black in order to prevent any shortages in the future. Nevertheless, the Council refused to allow coffee to be exported to the other islands, and instructed Muesas to send all shipments to Spain.⁵⁸

Although the crown did not express special interest in the cultivation of other products, during this period of consolidation the crop

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yield of the island's spices, cotton, indigo, rice, legumes (fríjoles), corn plantains, and manioc increased considerably. Many native trees, resins, wild fruits and herbs also abound. In their works both Miyares González and Abbad recorded the names of and uses of these products, and suggested that some be cultivated for export.⁵⁹ But, neither Muesas nor Charles III seem to have taken up their proposal.

The cattle industry also progressed during this period. As Muesas noted in his 1775 study, cattle and other domestic animals were raised in all of the island's districts, and their distribution was as indicated in Table 5.

During Muesas' period of government there was also an increase in commerce, and Muesas has been given the credit for much of it. For, the two commercial companies that were set up by the crown to develop the island's trade failed miserably in this task. The agents of the Barcelona Company, for example, only imported and exported those products which rendered the greatest profits. The Slave Trade Company, on the other hand, found it more profitable to deal with manufactured goods and flour than with slaves. Moreover, both companies openly practiced contraband trade throughout these years.⁶⁰ But, the Spanish government did little to prevent these practices. As a result, the benefits that the Free Trade Act of 1765 had been expected to bring to the island had not materialized by the time Muesas took over as governor. Puerto Rico's trade had yet to be developed.

In 1770 Charles III attempted to increase the island's commercial activity by instructing the Guipuzcoana Company of Caracas to include Puerto Rico on its trade route to Spain. But, Spanish trade was still the exclusive monopoly of the city of Cádiz since it was the only port

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF CATTLE IN PUERTO RICO, 1775

District	Cattle
Guaynabo	1,614
Bayamón	2,617
Toa Alta	2,893
Toa Baja	3,649
Vega	6,633
Manatí	4,780
Arecibo	5,988
Utuado	1,107
Tuna	676
Vegas y Pepino	923
Moca	917
Aguadilla	369
Agüada	3,362
Rincón	719
Añasco	2,945
Mayagüez	3,205
Cabo Rojo	2,914
Villa de San Germán	8,942
Yauco	1,747
Ponce	2,908
Coamo	6,148
Guayama	2,782
Cayey de Indios	856
Humacao	4,281
Fajardo	1,227
Loíza	2,728
Caguas	3,188
Río Piedras	2,055
Cangrejos	211
TOTAL	77,384

Sources: AGI, Santo Domingo, Mapa y Planos, 368, Plano de la Isla de San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1764-1775.

of entry and departure for all commerce. The rest of the inhabitants were forced to bear the heavy expense of transporting their goods to the San Juan harbor, and of paying the high export and shipping duties charged by the San Juan merchants. They were not to pay high prices for the fee of taking their goods on board the ships to San Juan. At the same

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surprising, therefore, to find that illicit trade was still the answer to most of the commercial needs of the Puerto Rican people.

When Muesas first arrived on the island, he was appalled at the intensity and extension of contraband. In his first reports to the Council of the Indies he particularly noted that many of the slaves in the island's haciendas bore no carimbo marks, indicating that they had been introduced clandestinely. He informed the Council members that the practice was so widespread that he feared taking any drastic action for fear the majority of the hacendados would leave. He, therefore, recommended a general amnesty for all those who had engaged in illicit contraband trade.⁶¹ Charles III accepted his proposal, and on March 1, 1773 granted a general pardon to all inhabitants and citizens who had practiced contraband. But, officials and foreigners who resided on the island were not included in the king's pardon.⁶²

The idea of amnesty was only one part of Muesas' anti-smuggling reform program. During his period of administration he also commissioned special agents to inform him of the whereabouts of contrabandists. The work of some of these "contraband spies" has been previously discussed. But, it is well to note here that these investigators were usually officers in the Milicias Disciplinadas of Puerto Rico. Militia officers, working along with tenientes de guerra or Muesas' representatives in the island's districts, were also entrusted with the task of preventing contraband ships from entering the island's coastal waters. If they succeeded in apprehending contraband vessels and goods, they were allowed to keep part of the booty, and might even be promoted. The idea of using the militia to combat illicit trade was originally suggested by O'Farte in 1769, and Muesas, as we have noted, successfully implemented it.

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To guide the milicianos and the district leaders in their battle against contraband, Muesas drafted a series of instructions which he expected all to observe. His orders issued on November 29, 1769 called for the arrest of the captain and crew of any foreign vessel that was found anchored in Puerto Rico waters. A careful inspection of the ship's papers, cargo, and monies was to be undertaken immediately. If the reports showed that the ship had engaged in illicit trade, its personnel would be sentenced to a ten-year prison term, and its cargo seized. Secondly, any vecino or householder caught transporting or grazing cattle, mules, pigs, sheep or poultry would be arrested, and suffer the loss of their animals, also. Lastly, Spanish vessels from other American ports which found it necessary to stop for supplies or repairs were to present their papers to the district leaders; and be placed under a special guard, consisting of militia men, until they were ready to sail again. If anyone attempted to go on board any of these ships, he would be sentenced to do heavy labor in the San Juan fortifications.⁶³

Muesas' Directorio General of 1770 also included a section on the prevention of illicit trade. These additional orders, although not as detailed as the instructions of 1769, complemented Muesas' earlier edict on contraband. Here, Muesas instructed the tenientes de guerra, his local representatives in the districts, to carefully supervise the cutting of timber, and not to issue licenses for this trade, unless they knew the destiny of the lumber. He also informed the local leaders that only licensed persons could have stores in their districts; and, if they allowed any others, they would be subject to a fine and dismissal from their post. Muesas also informed the district leaders that they could initiate a search or investigation for contraband by simply halting the

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testimony of any person, including those of slaves. But, they were not to arrest anyone unless they found the goods, and the person was about to flee. If any suspected person left the island, they were to apprehend him upon his return, and bring charges against him. In his Directorio Muesas also re-affirmed San Juan's exclusive rights over the island's trade. For, he instructed the local leaders not to issue licenses to ships intending to trade with the other districts or with other islands. Only vessels headed for San Juan were to be granted a license.⁶⁴

In addition to encouraging the local leaders and militia men to fight contraband in their districts, he also organized a ronda valiente or horse guard, which was made up of urban militia men. The function of this guard was to protect the coastal areas by making rounds on horseback. Eventually, it was replaced by a guarda de hacienda. Unfortunately, these coast guards proved ineffective because their number was too few, and the territory they had to cover too vast.⁶⁵ Much more practical was Muesas' request that Lorenzo Daniel, one of the most famous corsairs of his times, come to Puerto Rico to guard the island's coasts. Daniel arrived in 1773, and according to Muesas, was instrumental in the arrest of many contrabandists in the area.⁶⁶

The local leaders and the militiamen of the island's districts, guided by Muesas' orders, also captured many foreign vessels, and seized their cargo. After a quick trial, the culprits usually were banished from the island or sent to the San Juan fortifications to serve out their sentences; and the contraband goods--mostly slaves, flour, wine, soap, silks, cottons, hats, knives, swords, rifles--were sold at public auction. The proceeds were then divided between the San Juan treasury and the district. Each district was responsible for the payment of a certain amount of contraband

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materials.

The government of Charles III approved of all of these measures, and recognized Muesas' zealousness in his fight against contraband. Despite Muesas' efforts, however, illicit trade continued to plague the Spanish government in Puerto Rico. At the beginning of his administration Muesas had informed the Madrid government that this trade would continue until the vecinos of the island found other commercial avenues that brought them the same benefits as contraband. Although he did not advocate complete free trade as one of the avenues, he expressed the idea that greater commercial liberties were necessary if the economy of the island was to develop.⁶⁷ But the crown granted few commercial privileges to Puerto Rico during Muesas' period of administration.

The years between 1769 and 1776 were important years for Puerto Rico's colonial economy. During this period the Spanish government continued its commercial land reforms, and its encouragement of agricultural production. Muesas successfully carried out these reforms, and aided in the solution of some of the island's lingering economic problems. He not only supported the idea of economic development for Puerto Rico, but actually contributed to increases in the royal treasury, agricultural development, and commercial activity. The economic growth was slow, but noticeable, and Miyares González did not hesitate to record. In his Reflexiones Particulares he boldly stated that during Muesas' period of administration the misery which had defined Puerto Rico in past decades, came to an end.⁶⁸ Muesas also applauded the economic growth of the

island at this time. In his letters to Arriago, particularly his last letter as governor of Puerto Rico, he listed the economic development of the island as one of his principal accomplishments. This economic

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progress, Muesas noted, was made possible by the increases in agriculture and trade, and the decreases in contraband which he had so actively pursued.⁶⁹ Muesas' economic administration was, indeed, one of the most efficient in Puerto Rico's eighteenth-century history.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. O'Reilly, Memoria in Tapia, Biblioteca, pp. 624-635; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Instrucción, Section on the Gobierno Político, Articles 3-11.

2. Córdova, Memorias, vol. III, pp. 35, 39, 40; Torres, Isle de Puerto Rico, pp. 267-269. Sometimes the fortification fund was added to the citado, but since it was destined to pay for the costs of construction, it could not be used to cover the other expenses of the city of San Juan.

3. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2285, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, August 16, 1769.

4. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2286, Puestas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 16, 1769; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, April 25, 1770; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2390, Puestas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, January 30, 1774.

5. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2383, Puestas to Oporto, Puerto Rico, August 31, 1775.

6. Puestas to Bucarelli, Puerto Rico, November 28, 1775, Historia, vol. 1, No. 1 (1951), pp. 203-204.

7. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2357, Representación del Ayuntamiento de San Juan, Puerto Rico, August 17, 1775.

8. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2357, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, March 4, 1777.

9. Bran, Historia de Puerto Rico, p. 163.

10. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, March 25, 1770.

11. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, O'Reilly to Arriaga, Madrid, March 2, 1771; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Real Cédula, Aranjuez, June 12, 1771.

12. Cristina Campo de Cacer, Notas generales sobre la historia eclesiástica de Puerto Rico en el siglo XVIII (Seville: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, 1963), p. 35.

13. Actas del Cabildo de San Juan, 1767-1771, vol. IV, p. 163.

14. Torres, Isle de Puerto Rico, p. 292; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2384, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, September, 1769.

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15. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2288, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, May 2, 1775.

16. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2288, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, September 27, 1774; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 291.

17. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2355, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, 1775.

18. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2358, Muesas to Gálvez, Puerto Rico, May 3, 1776.

19. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2358, Muesas to Gálvez, Puerto Rico, May 3, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2288, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, May 2, 1775; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, September 22, 1775.

20. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2400, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, August 24, 1775.

21. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2288, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, March 14, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2358, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, May 2, 1776.

22. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, March 14, 1776; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2288, Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, July 24, 1776; Informe de Contaduría, Madrid, February 26, 1776.

23. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2288, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, May 2, 1775.

24. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, October 7, 1768.

25. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2355, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, 1771.

26. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Representación de Allende, Puerto Rico, March 13, 1768.

27. Ibid.

28. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Proyecto que para presente el Juez de Realengos de la Isla de Puerto Rico y que juzga conveniente a su fomento, y el de sus naturales en caso de que la real voluntad se digne aprobar el establecimiento de este juzgado, Puerto Rico, January 18, 1769; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, November 5, 1768.

29. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2355, Expediente del Consejo.

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30. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2389, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, 1769.

31. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, April 13, 1771.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Muestras to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 30, 1774.

35. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Dictamen del Teniente del Rey, Puerto Rico, October 24, 1774.

36. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Dictamen del Coronel Don Thomas O'Daly, Puerto Rico, October 25, 1774.

37. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Informe enviado al gobernador por el Teniente de Isla, Puerto Rico, October 27, 1774.

38. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Muestras to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 30, 1774.

39. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Dictamen del Cabildo, Puerto Rico, October 27, 1774.

40. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Muestras to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 30, 1774.

41. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Estado que se de be observar para la cobranza de un real y quartillo en cada cuerda de estancia y 3 quartillos por lo de hato; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396; Muestras to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 30, 1774.

42. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 210; Brau, Historia, pp. 160-161.

43. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Joaquín Puert and Alejandro de Cohen to Russes, Puerto Rico, February 11, 1771.

44. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Muestras to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, February 12, 1771.

45. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Representación del Ayuntamiento, Puerto Rico, August 26, 1774; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2386, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, November 6, 1779.

46. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2386, Ofertilla to Puert, Puerto Rico, April 13, 1771.

47. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2386, Ofertilla to Puert, Puerto Rico, April 13, 1771.

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de Puerto Rico, Aranguéz, June 12, 1775. See also Coll y Tosté, Boletín histórico, vol. 1, p. 261.

48. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Representación del Ayuntamiento, Puerto Rico, August 21, 1775.

49. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Nuevas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 30, 1775; AGI, Santo Domingo, Mapa y Planos, 3/21, Plano de la Isla de San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1769.

50. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Representación y súplica del Ayuntamiento a S. M. por medio de Pedro Layseca, Madrid, March 20, 1776.

51. Ibid.

52. Gil-Bermejo, Enorama histórico de la agricultura en Puerto Rico, pp. 275-276.

53. Miyares, Noticias, p. 94; Gil-Bermejo, Enorama histórico de la agricultura en Puerto Rico, p. 155.

54. Gil-Bermejo, Enorama histórico de la agricultura en Puerto Rico, p. 169.

55. Miyares, Noticias, p. 70.

56. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 94-95; Gil-Bermejo, Enorama histórico de la agricultura en Puerto Rico, pp. 164-167.

57. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2470, Nuevas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, February 21, 1770.

58. Gil-Bermejo, Enorama histórico de la agricultura en Puerto Rico, p. 196.

59. Miyares, Noticias, pp. 101-107; Abbad, Historia, pp. 293-295.

60. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 80; Torres, la Compañía Goditana de Negros, pp. 186-187.

61. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2471, Informe de Contrerías, Madrid, July 3, 1770.

62. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2352, Minuta ó forma del Bando que debe publicar el gobernador de Puerto Rico para el indulto concedido por S. M. a los tratantes de ilícito Comercio en aquella Isla, Madrid, March 1, 1773.

63. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2352, Representación y súplica del Ayuntamiento de Puerto Rico, Madrid, March 29, 1773.

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64. Directorio General in Coll y Toste, Boletín Histórico, vol. I, pp. 102-103.

65. Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 261-262; Frau, Historia, p. 168.

66. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Guesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 15, 1773.

67. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Relación o Informe de Guesas al Fiscal de Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, December 29, 1769. See also Gila-Barrejo, Panorama Histórico de la agricultura en Puerto Rico, p. 32; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 73.

68. Miyares, Noticias, pp. 60-61.

69. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2208, Guesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, May 2, 1775. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Información de meritos del gobernador Guesas, Puerto Rico, January 30, 1774.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIETY AND CULTURE UNDER THE GOVERNORSHIP OF MIGUEL DE MUCASAS,
1769-1776

Puerto Rico's social and cultural developments under the governorship of Miguel de Mucasas were not as impressive as the military and economic expansion that the island experienced during those years. There were, however, notable increases in the island's population and number of new settlements and towns. Attempts were also made to improve the island's religious and social institutions and to extend the public works projects in the city of San Juan. Mucasas, himself, proposed some educational reforms that were years ahead of his time. Although most of these social developments and reforms had limited results, it is important to discuss them. For, they shed some light on Puerto Rico's eighteenth-century society, as well as on the king's concern for the social development of the island.

The most significant of the social changes that took place during Mucasas' period of government was the creation of seven new towns or pueblos. The founding of these towns, Mucasas noted in his August 17, 1775 report to the Council of the Indies, had increased the number of settlements on the island from twenty-two to twenty-nine--all in the short period of five years. Mucasas also informed the Council that the incorporation or chartering of these new towns had followed the prescribed guidelines for the establishment of new towns. These, which included the required number of the following: a church, a school, a hospital, a prison,

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a prison, and clearly defined boundaries. The new towns were Rincón, Cabo Rojo, Moca, Cangrejos, Cayey, Aguadilla, and Las Vegas.¹

Rincón, located on the western part of the island, was the first town to be created. In the 1720's farmers and cattle ranchers moved into the area, but it was not until 1770 that its leading citizens requested its incorporation. In that year, Pablo de Arroyo, representing some 158 vecinos, petitioned Nuevas for permission to build a town. On July 27, 1771 Nuevas granted them their request, and a year later Rincón's founders had built a church and eleven houses, and had increased their number to 210 families. Cabo Rojo, located on the southwestern part of the island, was the next town to be created. It was founded on December 22, 1771, at the request of Juan Antonio de Arce and thirty other vecinos of the area. The town of Moca, also in the west, was created six months later, on June 22, 1772. Its petition was presented by José de Quiñones, acting on behalf of 71 settlers. Cangrejos, on the northeastern coast of the island, was separated from the district of Río Piedras by Nuevas on November 20, 1773. Pedro Cortijo, captain of the Compañía de Morenos of the area, presented the request in the name of some 55 free blacks who resided in the area. Although Nuevas granted them the right to create a separate town, they were still under the military jurisdiction of the teniente de guerra in Río Piedras.²

The creation of the interior town of Cayey, suggested by O'Sullivan in 1765, did not come about until 1773. But, the petition for its incorporation, presented by Juan de Mata Vázquez on July 2, 1773, was one of the most quickly attended to by the governor. Only six weeks after he received the petition, Nuevas granted Pedro Vázquez and the other 31 vecinos of Cayey the right to create a town. This gave a permanent legal

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been due to the fact that the founders of Cayey named their town after Muecas. But, most likely Muecas was merely interested in carrying out O'Reilly's instructions on Cayey, which called for the settlement of those soldiers who had served in a company he had created to supplement the León regiment. O'Reilly recommended Cayey because he believed the lands in this area were the most fertile in the island, and the best for cattle raising. Therefore, he instructed the governor of Puerto Rico to give preference to these soldiers, encourage them to cultivate these lands, and aid them in whatever they needed. O'Reilly also cautioned the governor to make sure the settlers erected a town on the pattern of those in Spain. In time the town of Cayey was built according to O'Reilly's specifications, but it is difficult to ascertain how many of its first settlers were from among the soldiers O'Reilly had recommended. According to Míyares González, in fact, many of its inhabitants were landless persons, who had settled in the valley and had helped develop it.³

The towns of Aguadilla and Las Vegas were also established by Muecas. Aguadilla, on the west coast, was removed from the jurisdiction of Aguada on February 1, 1775 at the request of Juan Bernardo de Sosa and the vecinos of Aguadilla, who had been having conflicts with the citizens of Aguada. It was considered one of the most fertile of the new districts. Las Vegas, on the other hand, was probably the poorest. Located on the north central coast, the town had been erected on June 19, 1775 as a result of a petition that was presented by Francisco de los Olivas and 32 other citizens. But, it seems that few of these settlers applied themselves to the development of agriculture, and the fertile lands of Las Vegas only produced food for the soldiers and some of its inhabitants.⁴

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In addition to the creation of new towns, Muesas also raised to a more important status the towns of Arecibo, Aguada, and Coamo. Since their founding, these towns had developed considerably, not only in the number of persons but in the number of households as well. Each had an asset that made it unique among the island's pueblos. San Blas de Coamo, for example, was popular for its thermal springs. During Muesas' period of administration, these waters were analyzed for their mineral content and possible effects by José Sabater, a medical doctor at the Royal Hospital in San Juan. After briefly tracing the origins of the springs, Sabater noted their sulphuric and nitrous qualities, and their varying temperatures. It was Sabater's opinion that these mineral waters could be used as a medicinal cure for skin diseases, such as psoriasis, herpes, leprosy and ulcers. They could also remedy arthritic or paralytic conditions. Internal disorders were often relieved and sometimes cured by the drinking of the clear waters. In 1773, Sabater took Governor Muesas to Coamo to drink and bathe in its healthy waters. Muesas had for a long time suffered from acute nephritis, and was supposedly cured of this illness by the spring waters of Coamo. Aguada and Arecibo were not as famous as Coamo. But, Aguada on the west coast had an excellent port, which according to some historians was the original landing place of the Columbian expedition of 1493. Arecibo, likewise, was historically important. In 1702 the citizens of Arecibo, under the command of Antonio Correa, successfully defeated a British attempt to take over the island. Because of their demographic or historical importance all of these towns were now given the right to form a municipal government, and elect their own officials. They were also entrusted with the supervision of other towns, namely Beaufort, Utuado, Lajas (Júcaro y Lajas on Isabela), Aguado,

Pepino, Moca, Aguadilla, Ponce, Guayama, and Cayey de Muecas.⁵

In general, town life on the island continued to prosper and in 1775 Miyares González proudly recorded this growth in his Noticias Particulares. The Plaza Militar of San Juan had become a real fortress, and was ready to protect the citizens of San Juan from foreign aggression. The city also experienced a growth in population, and the same was true of the districts of Guaynabo, Bayamón, Toa Alta, Toa Baja, and Manatí. Likewise, agricultural and cattle production continued to increase, particularly in the district of Toa Baja. Manatí, located further inland, had few flatlands, but it had about 100 households, and a well-built church. Among its settlers were a good number of wealthy hacendados. Utuado, also in the interior, had fewer households--about 30--but it was rich in the production of rice, corn, coffee, and cattle. La Tuna, on the northwest coast, also, had few households--only about 25. Like Utuado, La Tuna produced rice, corn, and cattle. It produced legumes, sugar cane, tobacco, and cotton as well. Vegas and Luperón, which comprised one single district in the western part of the island, was a fertile area, but its settlers lacked initiative, and only produced what was sufficient to satisfy their immediate needs. The western towns of Aguada, Añasco, Mayagüez, and San Germán were areas of substantial population, also. To the south were the towns of Yauco, with some 40 households, Ponce with 470 households, Coamo with 80 or so small households, and Guayama with over 100 households. All of these towns, with the exception of Coamo, had well-cultivated fields and grew many native products. In contrast, the eastern districts of Humacao and Fajardo were not as well developed agriculturally because their lands were devoted to cattle raising. On the northeast coast was the town of Caguas, which produced

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cassava for the penal laborers of the fortress of San Juan. Finally, there were the towns of Caguas and Río Piedras to the south of San Juan. Caguas had very good lands which could be used for tobacco but instead were used by its settlers for pasture. Río Piedras, on the other hand, produced excellent sugar cane and rum.⁶

Miyares González not only described all of the towns and districts existing in the period of Miguel de Muesas; he also gave a brief comparison of the state of the island before and after Muesas' arrival in 1769. He noted, among other things, the population increase that resulted during this period. As the basis for comparison he used the census prepared by Bishop Mariano Martí in 1769 after his 1763 pastoral visit to the island of Puerto Rico.⁷ Martí had placed the number of vecinos or householders at 6,400 and the entire population at 46,197 while Muesas' 1775 census showed the distribution as indicated in Table 6.

The population increase during these years was probably due to the greater number of Spanish soldiers who settled in Puerto Rico after completing their period of military service in the Plaza Militar of San Juan. As a general practice, O'Reilly's Instrucción had forbidden this. Nevertheless, many soldiers stayed behind after their units returned to Spain or were transferred to other presidios in America. O'Reilly's Instrucción did provide for the settlement of foreign Roman-Catholic mercenaries if they had a trade and paid a license fee of forty pesos. Presidarios were also allowed to remain on the island after they completed their sentences, but only by special permission from the crown. Thus, in 1774 some sixty incarcerated presidarios were permitted to settle in Puerto Rico, and Muesas was instructed to distribute them throughout the island. He was also ordered to find patrol dogs and

TABLE 6

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN PUERTO RICO, 1769-1776

<u>District</u>	<u>Vecinos</u> (Householders)	<u>Inhabitants</u>
Puerto Rico (San Juan)	1,207	6,527
Guaynabo	116	852
Bayamón	150	1,289
Toa Alta	228	2,013
Toa Baja	159	1,967
Vega	128	786
Manatí	390	2,815
Arecibo	607	3,873
Utua	142	925
Tuna	174	1,081
Vegas and Pepino	220	1,095
Moca	153	1,051
Aguadilla	127	937
Agüeda	311	2,382
Rincón	214	1,482
Añasco	578	3,538
Mayagüez	314	2,397
Cabo Rojo	284	1,943
San Germán	883	6,529
Yauco	336	2,197
Ponce	678	4,337
Comerio	371	2,641
Guayama	369	2,571
Cayey	51	370
Humacao	177	1,409
Fajardo	110	793
Loíza	101	1,075
Caguas	165	603
Río Piedras	125	1,528
Caguajay	46	436
TOTALS	8,883	61,449

Source: AGI, Santo Domingo, España y Planos, 368, Plano de la Isla de San Juan de Puerto Rico, 1769-1775.

for them. All, except one presidiario who had a wife in Spain, were settled on the island.

Both black and white foreign-born were also allowed to settle in Puerto Rico. The black foreigners were usually black slaves who had

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escaped from the non-Hispanic colonies. The fact that they were given refuge by the San Juan authorities often caused conflicts with other governments in the Caribbean. In 1770, for example, Governor John Winds, of the Dutch island of St. Eustacius, complained of the fact that Muesas refused to return the fugitive slaves who had arrived in Puerto Rico that year. But, Muesas was powerless to return any of the slaves, for, in 1773 the crown reiterated its stand that foreign slaves, seeking asylum in Hispanic territories, were to be granted their freedom and allowed to settle.⁹ White foreign Catholics, especially military and agricultural experts, were also granted permission by the crown to start a new life in Puerto Rico. During Muesas' period of government only a few white immigrants were allowed to emigrate to the island; and at least one foreigner--an Irishman named John Kennedy--was denied permission to settle there. It was not until after 1778 that the crown permitted large-scale foreign immigration to enter the island.

Spanish ship deserters, on the other hand, were forbidden to remain in Puerto Rico if they abandoned their ships. Nonetheless, during Muesas' administration a reputed 2,000 deserters jumped ship and settled on the island. The first deserters arrived in 1771, when some 1,000 men, who sailed under the command of Captain Luis de Córdova, abandoned his fleet and stayed in Puerto Rico. In 1776 another 1,000 Spaniards from Antonio de Moya's fleet, which made a brief stop in Puerto Rico, also remained on the island. Although the number of deserters from these expeditions was probably exaggerated, ship-jumpers were considered a very important element of the island's population. According to Abbad, they were good potential candidates for the organization of Puerto Rican *comandantes* because of their European origins. Hence, many were given refuge by the

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native populace, and were kept hidden in the mountains until the fleets sailed.¹⁰ Unfortunately, no study had ever been done of them, or of their impact on the growth of population in eighteenth-century Puerto Rico.

Religious developments during Muesas' period of administration were not as noticeable as the demographic changes that the island experienced at this time, but some noteworthy reforms were undertaken by Fray Manuel Jiménez Pérez, an energetic and dedicated man, who was appointed by Charles III to head the diocese of Puerto Rico. Bishop Jiménez Pérez arrived in San Juan on May 24, 1772, and immediately proceeded to inspect the island's religious institutions.¹¹ In less than two years Jiménez Pérez had visited all of the parishes, churches, and convents in Puerto Rico, and by June 30, 1774 had sent Charles III an account of this visita pastoral (ecclesiastical visit).

In his report Jiménez Pérez informed the Madrid authorities that his visit was one of the shortest ever conducted by any bishop. Judging by his Informe, Jiménez Pérez's visit was also one of the most successful in the island's history because during this period he proceeded to reform the church in Puerto Rico and better the religious life of the people of Puerto Rico. When he first arrived, for example, he found that many of the churches were in very bad condition, and some of the towns merely had small chapels. He, therefore, exhorted the district leaders to repair these churches and erect new ones. He also ordered the reconstruction of the Cathedral of San Juan and the bishop's residence. Jiménez Pérez, himself, elevated many of the rural chapels that he had visited to the level of churches.

The Bishop also found that in many instances these churches did not have masses performed by parish priests, but rather by lay persons

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and Franciscan friars who had assumed these responsibilities. He immediately appointed priests to these churches. The ecclesiastical needs of all the island's districts were, thus, met. There were twenty-four parishes, and each had its own priest and sexton. Moreover, there were five new priests ready to assume the responsibilities of new parishes.

During his visita Bishop Jiménez Pérez collected from each of the parish priests a census of the number of parishioners. According to these statistics there was a total of 95,995 parishioners. This included free blacks and slaves, but not the Spanish garrison stationed at the San Juan Plaza. Comparing his figure with Bishop Martí's 1769 account, Jiménez Pérez noted a sharp rise in the island's population. This increase, Jiménez Pérez further noted, had resulted in an expansion of agricultural production which in turn was expected to lead to increases in the tithe. Indeed, even before his visit was over the diezmos in Puerto Rico had experienced large increases.¹²

While in Puerto Rico Jiménez Pérez also tried to better the relations between the governor and the ecclesiastical cabildo or cathedral chapter of San Juan. In some instances he served as mediator, and successfully settled a few of the existing disputes. One of these conflicts revolved around the key to the sacristy of the Cathedral of San Juan, which traditionally was handed to the governor of Puerto Rico after the Holy Thursday celebration for safe-keeping. In the year 1774 the cathedral chapter refused to give Muesas this key. Muesas immediately protested the ecclesiastical cabildo's action. In a letter to Bishop Jiménez Pérez, dated March 31, 1774, the governor advised that the cabildo had acted in such a manner because he had denied its right to the right to the tithe revenues which had been collected in 1773. He considered

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this an act of personal vengeance against him, and in his capacity as patron of the church, detrimental to the king. The regalia of royal patronage had to be preserved; therefore, the key to the sacrarium should be entrusted to him.¹³

The ecclesiastical cabildo defended itself against Muesas' accusations by pointing out that according to a new royal order they were not bound to give the governor of Puerto Rico the sacrarium key. Moreover, Muesas' behavior and personal conduct were unbecoming of a representative of the king. He rarely came to church and when he did he invariably arrived late and never knelt down for the benediction. It was Muesas who had dishonored the office of vice-patron by not setting an example of humility and respect. The members of the cathedral chapter also criticized Muesas' actions as governor and captain-general. They particularly blamed him for the shortages of monies that had occurred during his administration.¹⁴

Jiménez Pérez, who at the time was visiting the Village of San Germán, found the ecclesiastical cabildo's action unusual, and ordered that the governor be treated with the decorum due his office. The Council of the Indies agreed with Jiménez Pérez. It consequently instructed the cabildo members not to violate the religious privileges of the governor in Puerto Rico, reminding them that the new laws regarding the sacrarium key only applied to the provinces in Spain and not to America. Muesas, therefore, should be given the key to the cathedral sacrarium. On June 23, 1774 the ecclesiastical cabildo complied with the Council's decision, and presented Muesas the controversial key.

It has been argued that there is no record of the giving of the key to Muesas. However, the governor and the ecclesiastical cabildo's publication

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in San Juan. Such a situation occurred in the asylum case of 1775 when the Bishop refused to allow Muesas to extradite the twelve condemned soldiers who had taken refuge in the Cathedral of San Juan. The granting of asylum in the Hispanic world had been a long-standing tradition. But, in 1772 Charles III succeeded in getting Pope Clement XIV to reduce the number of asylums in America and to clarify the confines of asylum. Henceforth, sanctuary was relegated to the interior of churches, and to the buildings and grounds adjacent to them. Since the Cathedral of San Juan was recognized as such a place, Jiménez Pérez permitted the escaped prisoners to remain.

Muesas, on the other hand, believed these prisoners had abused the privilege of asylum, and requested that they be returned to the presidio. The matter was finally resolved in 1776 when the Council of the Indies ordered Jiménez Pérez to turn the prisoners over to the civil authorities, cautioning Muesas not to bring charges against them for having sought asylum in the Cathedral. This decision, however, did not end the quarrels between the governor and the bishop.

Muesas continued to complain that the clergy of San Juan were still being disrespectful to him. On several occasions, for example, they failed to give him the proper blessing. In the meantime Jiménez Pérez accused Muesas of undue interference in ecclesiastical affairs. The Bishop was particularly incensed that Muesas prohibited the clergy of San Juan to leave the city without his permission. He considered the granting of licenses to priests the bishop's prerogative, not the governor's. The struggle between these two personalities continued until the end of 1781, respectively 1782, when each abandoned the post. Muesas, that his authority superseded the other's.¹⁵

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During his visit to the diocese of Puerto Rico Jiménez Pérez also noticed that the poor people of the island did not have an adequate hospital or place of refuge to go to when ill. In 1772 Charles III had attempted to provide for this when he instructed Jiménez Pérez to develop the existing facilities of the Hospital de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción, the only public hospital in the city of San Juan. Jiménez Pérez followed the king's orders, and gave the administrator of the hospital the sum of 4,000 pesos to build new beds for the hospital. But, he was not satisfied with this, and after his visita pastoral decided to add two more wards to the old hospital. O'Daly, alarmed that any expansion of this hospital would interfere with his fortification plans, objected and as a result the Bishop decided in 1775 to build a new public hospital. With the help of O'Daly, he selected a site located on one of the highest points of the city--Calle Campeche; and with his own funds bought the land for the new structure.

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Construction of the hospital began right away. At the same time, the Bishop sought Huesas' approval of the whole project, for some vecinos had already objected to the construction of a new hospital without express royal permission. The governor immediately informed Jiménez Pérez that only the king could grant such a request. Although he personally believed that there were not enough funds to support another hospital in the city, he agreed to forward the Bishop's petition to Charles III. The crown, in the meantime, considered Jiménez Pérez's objective a useful one, and instructed him to submit a detailed plan of the edifice. Accordingly, it was to consist of four floors: one for men; another for women; a third for prostitutes; and a fourth for clergy. The hospital was to have special wards for those afflicted with tuberculosis and other contagious diseases.

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ceutical dispensary, kitchen, dining hall, patio and morgue. The new hospital, which took the name of the old Hospital de la Concepción, was completed in 1782, long after the Bishop had departed from Puerto Rico.¹⁷

As Bishop Jiménez Pérez traveled around the island visiting the various churches he also observed the life style and customs of the people. He noted, for example, that there were many consensual unions among many of the men and women of the island. Since the church did not recognize these common-law marriages, he proceeded to marry all the unwed couples he could find. He also found many broken marriages, and, of course, tried to reunite these, as well. Black married slaves who lived in separate plantations were to do likewise. In a set of rules that he promulgated after his visita, Jiménez Pérez also ordered these about to marry not to visit each other's homes before their wedding or they would be fined. In addition, he informed them that they had to be well-versed in church doctrine, or they could not wed.

Jiménez Pérez also ordered that rogatorios empinados be abolished immediately. These "sung prayers" usually took place in the evening at the house of a person who had made a special vow of some kind. At the conclusion of the prayers, however, the reunions turned into a social occasion and the participants freely played games, danced, and drank. Jiménez Pérez vituperatively condemned these gatherings, and decreed that any parishioner caught celebrating one could be fined twenty pesos for the first night, 40 pesos the second, and if he persisted notice should be sent to the bishop.¹⁸

More importantly, Jiménez Pérez found that people throughout the island ignored their religious responsibilities. They not only failed to attend mass on Sundays, but worked on their day of obligation or other

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holy days. Even before his visit was over Jiménez Pérez ordered the local constable to be on look-out for persons guilty of this. Those caught would have to pay a fine of eight reales and serve time in jail. The Bishop also instructed parish priests to make sure that all religious acts and ceremonies were observed. They were to teach the catechism, and explain the basic church prayers and laws to their parishioners. Those who failed to come to Sunday school were to be fined one peso. Parents and masters of slaves were to aid the priests by teaching whatever doctrine they knew to their children and servants. Jiménez Pérez also took exception to the appearance of women in church. He found their short skirts and low-cut dresses scandalous and provocative, and ordered any woman who dared enter the church in such attire fined eight reales.¹⁹

Bishop Jiménez Pérez concluded his visita of the diocese of Puerto Rico on June 10, 1774. In the account or Informe he made of this visit Jiménez Pérez not only gave us a description of the state of the church and its problems, but a glimpse of Puerto Rican society in the eighteenth century. The Bishop's report was well received by the Madrid authorities. The government of Charles III also approved of his reforms, and praised the Bishop's spirit of charity and wisdom. Bishop Jiménez Pérez's contribution to the progress of the Puerto Rico of Miguel de Muesas was indeed notable. His two-year stay in Puerto Rico marked the beginning of an expansion of the church and of the reform of many religious practices and customs.

Like Bishop Jiménez Pérez, Muesas also sought the religious and social development of the island of Puerto Rico. By the time Jiménez Pérez arrived in 1774, Muesas already had begun to remedy the more conspicuous defects of the churches and convents in Puerto Rico. At his 1770

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Directorio Muecas specifically instructed his local representatives to compel the citizens of their districts to repair and maintain their churches and support their clergy. In addition, the local district leaders were to provide an escort for the priests who were out on errands of mercy. More importantly, the district leaders were entrusted with the task of supervising public morals. They were to prevent immoral public acts, such as blasphemy, cursing, and outrageous behavior. In the churches they were to ensure proper behavior, and not allow trijanas (gatherings), conversations, or indecent attire. Finally, they were exhorted to aid the clergy in punishing the guilty. Muecas also appealed to Charles III on behalf of the Carmelite nuns of San Juan for the sum of one hundred pesos for the repair of their convent which had been badly damaged by hurricanes.⁸⁰

The development of the few social institutions which existed on the island were, likewise, of concern to Muecas. He was particularly interested in the establishment of cofradías, religious brotherhoods that also rendered invaluable social services to the citizenry of San Juan. The members of these confraternities usually worked in hospitals, participated and funded festivals, supported charities, and if necessary provided for the defense of the city. Thus, Muecas did not hesitate to endorse the petition of various vecinos who in 1770 requested permission from the crown to create a new confraternity by the name of Santo Entierro de Cristo y de la Virgen de la Soledad. Muecas also did not oppose the creation of the confraternity of la Sagrada Familia, which was associated with the hermitage of San Antonio de la Cruz on Calle de Cristo in San Juan. This confraternity did not act as a religious brotherhood, however, and was devoted to the care of the poor and the sick.

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create a church in order to house the brotherhood and name one of his sons as sexton. But, Bishop Jiménez Pérez objected to his plans, and the Council of the Indies, denied Rosa his request to build a church. Nevertheless, it allowed him to create the confraternity. The city of San Juan now had two new brotherhoods ready to help the poor, ill and needy.²¹

Muesas was also instrumental in the evolution of the idea of public education in Puerto Rico. Up until 1765 the education of the island's children was in the hands of the church; and according to O'Reilly, there were only two schools in the entire island--one in San Juan, another in the Village of San Germán. Critics of O'Reilly are quick to point out that there were probably more schools on the island--private ones perhaps--and that O'Reilly had referred to public schools only.²² Since O'Reilly did not specify whether the schools were private or public, it is difficult to ascertain the status of public education in Puerto Rico at this time. But, O'Reilly made one thing clear; there was a high degree of illiteracy among the island's people. Unfortunately, he made no specific recommendations to remedy this situation.

Article two of Muesas' Directorio General of 1770, however, is dedicated exclusively to the education of children. In this article Muesas instructed the island's district leaders to make sure that a good and reputable person from the area become the teacher of the district's children. Muesas also let it be known that he expected each parent to send one out of every two children to school until they learned to read and write. If they wished, they could send all their children to be educated. Parents were also expected to pay one-half of costs for the children's salary, which was to be paid every three months. The teacher,

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on the other hand, was entrusted with the task of erecting the school on the best location in the district. He was to accept without distinction all the children who were brought to him, be they white, pardos (mixed) or free blacks. Muesas also instructed the teacher to treat the children with kindness and wisdom, and to impose punishments according to their age and misbehavior. The teacher was to set a good example for the children, and encourage them to go to confession at least once a month and on the most important religious festivals. He was to teach them to be devout, merciful, civil and courteous to elders, fearful of God and king, and law-abiding. In addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the teacher also was to instruct the children in whatever christian dogma the parish priest considered appropriate. In other words, he was to make them useful citizens. Finally, Muesas ordered the teachers to search the district and find children capable of receiving instruction. Once the children were located, the teacher was to notify the governor's representative or head of the militia so these officers could inform the parents of the obligation to send their children to school.²³

Muesas' proposal for the education of the island's children has been hailed as the most important of all of the eighteenth-century reforms. For, it introduced the idea of semi-public schools and compulsory education in Puerto Rico.²⁴ But, there is little evidence that these schools were ever built. Juan José Guma, an authority on the history of education in Puerto Rico, speculates that: "Such a general order in behalf of education should have resulted in a very active educational movement throughout the island evidence of which we do not find except in San Juan."²⁵

Many, however, doubt whether Muesas' proposals could be carried out in the first place.²⁶

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Muesas' educational plan also has been lauded for establishing the principle of racial integration in the public schools of Puerto Rico.²⁷ Again, there is no documentation that free black children were actually admitted in the existing schools or those that were set up during Muesas' years. Moreover, the Directorado made no mention of the education of slave children. This, however, was to be expected. Nevertheless, Muesas' instruction on the education of children on the island was quite progressive for this period, and his name is worth remembering in the annals of the history of public education in Puerto Rico.

Muesas was also interested in developing higher education in Puerto Rico. In 1770, for example, he supported a petition to establish a university in the city of San Juan. The petition, drawn up by Fray Rafael de Miranda, prior of the Convento Real de Santo Tomás de Aquino, and some of the island's most important citizens, requested the creation of a university center in the old Convento Real itself. According to Miranda a university was necessary in order to develop the intellectual capacities of the young men of the island. In his letter of request, dated August 16, 1770, Miranda argued that higher education was bound to increase the number of persons ready to assume the religious and civil responsibilities of the island's districts. Presently, there were few who could read or write well enough to handle the affairs of the various districts. Those who continued their education abroad were even fewer because of the great expenses involved. A university in Puerto Rico, therefore, would encourage students to go on with their studies, and bring culture and learning to the entire island.²⁸

For a detailed presentation of the correspondence between Muesas and Miran-

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the island would not hesitate to send their sons to it. The cabildo also expected students to come from the other colonies. The ecclesiastical cabildo or cathedral chapter of San Juan, on the other hand, opposed the establishment of a university in Puerto Rico at this time. It was the opinion of the chapter members that a seminary would be more useful, and they readily agreed to build such a seminary. The cathedral chapter did not entirely object to the erection of a university, for they proposed to set one up in the future as an adjacent function of the seminary.

The supporters of the university argued that a seminary would only be able to receive a small number of students whose vocation would be the religious life. By necessity its curriculum would have to be geared to these students, and the education of other youths would be neglected. Expenses for such a seminary had to come from the general ecclesiastical funds, but the church in Puerto Rico did not have any extra monies for such a venture. In the meantime, they refused to contribute any of the monies they had already pledged to the establishment of a university which ranged from two to two-hundred pesos per donor.²⁹

Altogether there were sixty-eight sponsors, who raised some 2,352 pesos for the new university. Miranda and these sponsors selected the Convent of Santo Tomas as the university site because of its many rooms, and because it had faculty members who were ready to instruct students without pay. Eventually, the university was to have a rector and vicerector, a chancellor, and teachers of Latin, rhetoric, philosophy, and theology. Finally, Miranda was put in charge of making the necessary arrangements in order to get the university founded.³⁰

When Governor O'Farrall received Miranda's petition he forwarded it to the king. In his letter of remittance, dated August 18, 1770, he

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reiterated the need for an institution of higher education in the island of Puerto Rico, and disavowed the ecclesiastical cabildo's proposal for a seminary. He particularly noted that whereas the citizens of San Juan were ready to finance the university they proposed, the cathedral chapter had no such funds to support the erection of a seminary much less maintain its faculty. The Madrid authorities examined both proposals, and found the ecclesiastical cabildo's recommendation the more proper of the two, for the founding of colleges and universities had always been within the jurisdiction of the church. Since the only problem appeared to be the funding of the seminary, the bishop of Puerto Rico was ordered to submit an account of the ecclesiastical funds of the diocese, and of the actual need of such a seminary.³¹

After considering the plan proposed by the ecclesiastical cabildo, Bishop Jiménez Pérez agreed with Muesas. The church in Puerto Rico did not have sufficient funds to erect a seminary. Moreover, there were two schools of higher learning already in existence in San Juan that were available to students who wished to continue their education in Puerto Rico. The schools of the monasteries of Santo Tomás and San Francisco had chairs in grammar, philosophy, and theology. In Bishop Jiménez Pérez's opinion these establishment schools could serve as seminaries, and, thus, provide the education that the young men of Puerto Rico needed. Therefore, the erection of a new seminary was not necessary. Bishop Jiménez Pérez also considered impossible the founding of a university because he did not think there were sufficient funds for its construction. On the basis of this report, the Council of the Indies decided not to grant approval for the establishment of a seminary. The idea of a university did not materialize, either; but, Muesas' support of the

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island's first attempt to establish an institution of higher education was clear.³²

The end of the Muecas' administration saw an enlarged population, new towns, and some improvements in education and religious customs in Puerto Rico. There still existed many social problems, such as an unbalanced distribution of the island's population, dispersed settlements, few urban centers, and lack of means of communication. Although Muecas' government was unable to solve these problems, the social changes that were initiated during his years marked the beginning of some earnest attempts to improve social conditions in eighteenth-century Puerto Rico. Not surprisingly, San Juan continued to be the most urbanized and densely populated area with a total of 6,527 inhabitants. Its newly paved streets, reconstructed bridges, and recently cleaned port--all under the supervision of O'Daly contributed to the city's rising importance.³³ The rest of the population was distributed throughout the various towns and settlements on the island. With the exception of San Germán, the second most important town, most towns consisted of a few poorly-built houses, a modest church, and almost no public buildings. A simple and rustic life appeared uninterrupted by the social reforms that were introduced at this time, but the sociological changes that were to characterize the Puerto Rico of the nineteenth century had quietly begun under the governorship of Miguel de Muecas.

1. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, August 17, 1775.

2. Manuel Mayoral Parnes, Historia de Puerto Rico (Ponce, 1947), p. 73; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Testimonio, Puerto Rico August 17, 1775.

3. Miyares, Noticias, pp. 89-90; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, O'Reilly, Instruccion, Section on the Tropa Veterana, Article 15; López Martínez, Historia de Cayey, pp. 33-34.

4. Miyares, Noticias, pp. 65-67, 73; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2396, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, August 17, 1775.

5. Bran, Historia de Puerto Rico, p. 151; Figueroa, Breve historia de Puerto Rico, vol. I, p. 114; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, p. 19; Miyares, Noticias, pp. 83-84.

6. Miyares, Noticias, pp. 67-68.

7. Ibid., p. 67.

8. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2505, Buenas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 25, 1770.

9. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2390, Tercera to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, June 15, 1770; Morales-Carrion, Puerto Rico, p. 67.

10. Abbad, Historia, p. 136.

11. Bishop Manuel Jiménez Pérez was accompanied by Fray Iligo Abbad y Lasierra (1745-1813), who served as the new bishop's confessor and secretary. After Jiménez Pérez left, Abbad remained on the island until 1778. While in Puerto Rico he was commissioned by the Count of Floridablanca, one of Charles III's ministers, to prepare an account of the Island and Plaza Militar of San Juan Bautista. Abbad promptly complied with this order, and in 1782 submitted to the government of Charles III his famous Historia geográfica, civil y natural de la Isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2382, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, December 7, 1771; Memorial de Fray Iligo Abbad y Lasierra a D. Carlos, Príncipe de Asturias in Fray Iligo Abbad y Lasierra, Historia geográfica, civil y natural de la Isla de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico (Rio Piedras: Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1970), pp. xixi-cxxvii.

12. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2505, Buenas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, March 23, 1774; Informe del Obispo, Puerto Rico, June 30, 1774.

13. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2390, Tercera to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, June 15, 1770.

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14. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Representación del Dean y Cabildo Eclesiástico, Puerto Rico, April 4, 1774.

15. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2357, Testimonio, Puerto Rico, September 7, 1775; Jiménez Pérez to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, October 10, 1775.

16. Campo La Casa, Notas generales, p. 67; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Informe del Obispo, Puerto Rico, June 30, 1774.

17. Campo la Casa, Notas generales, pp. 66-73.

18. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2356, Decretos de la visita del Obispo, Puerto Rico, June 30, 1774; Informe del Obispo, Puerto Rico, June 30, 1774.

19. Edicto del Señor Obispo Fray Manuel Jiménez Pérez prohibiendo a las mujeres el uso de trajes indecentes in Coll y Toste, Boletín histórico, vol. VI, p. 222.

20. Directorio General in Coll y Toste, Boletín histórico, vol. I, Article 3, p. 94.

21. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2358, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, 1775.

22. José Osuna, A History of Education in Puerto Rico (Río Piedras: University of Puerto Rico, 1949), p. 17.

23. Directorio General in Coll y Toste, Boletín histórico, Article 2, vol. I, pp. 94-5.

24. Figueron, Breve historia de Puerto Rico, vol. I, p. 121.

25. Osuna, History of Education in Puerto Rico, p. 18.

26. Actas del Cabildo de San Juan, 1767-1771, vol. IV, pp. 157-159, 225; Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico, 1774-1777 (Puerto Rico: Municipio de San Juan, 1966), vol. V, pp. 8-9.

27. López Martínez, Historia de Cayey, p. 168.

28. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Diligencias sobre pretensión de universidad de Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico, August 16, 1770.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2354, Informe del Obispo, Puerto Rico, April 7, 1771; AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2354, Informe de Arriaga, Puerto Rico, August 12, 1770.

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32. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2353, Expediente del Consejo, November 18, 1776; Torres, Isla de Puerto Rico, pp. 142-143.

33. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2504, Muecas to Arriaga Puerto Rico, April 26, 1772; Real Cédula al gobernador de Puerto Rico, November 15, 1772.

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CONCLUSIONS

The eighteenth century was a period of change and ferment for the Hispanic world. During this period the Spanish crown introduced new ideas and innovations in Spain as well as in the American territories. In the Caribbean area the Spanish government sought to increase its military and economic power. Accordingly, it embarked on a reform plan that included changes in the fortifications, military manpower, and economics of the area.

In Cuba and Puerto Rico the reforms began at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but it was not until the late 1760's that a real concentrated effort was made to strengthen the military fortresses and increase the royal revenues of these islands. The impetus for these reforms came from the takeover of Havana by the British in 1762. At this time Charles III, fearing the loss of these territories, began to correct the problems which endangered the Caribbean territories. First, he sent Marshal Alexander O'Reilly to study the military situation in Cuba and Puerto Rico. O'Reilly diligently carried out these orders, and in addition made some specific recommendations for the betterment of Spanish government in the islands. Charles III approved these proposals, and then appointed responsible and capable administrators to carry out O'Reilly's reforms.

Miguel de Mesesa was the first of Charles III's governors to earnestly and effectively execute the new reforms in Puerto Rico. From the very beginning of his administration, he - *governor of Puerto Rico*

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recognized Muesas' zealousness and dedication in carrying out these reform plans. In 1770, for example, the Council of the Indies, praised Muesas' first year in office, and suggested that the crown give him every possible aid.¹ Muesas, himself, recognized his contributions and did not hesitate to remind the Madrid authorities of his dedication and interest in carrying out the orders of the king.

On May 27, 1771 in his request for promotion to the rank of Brigadier, he listed the office of governor and captain-general as his culminating experience in America.² When in 1774 the crown did not grant Muesas his request, he once again informed the Council of the Indies of the going under his administration. In his letter to Arriaga, dated January 30 of this year Muesas noted that when he arrived he found the San Juan government in disorder, and immediately dedicated himself to improve its operations. He also found contraband to be flourishing, and took measures against it. This, he added, increased the trade between Spain and Puerto Rico. In addition, he increased the funds in the treasury by 25,000 pesos when he requested that hacendados who had un-branded slaves be allowed to keep them if they paid 12 pesos per head. He also succeeded in making substantial increases in agricultural production, and consequently there were increases in the tithe proceeds and the food supplies destined for the city of San Juan. Likewise, he succeeded in settling the disputes that existed between the various authorities on the island. To resolve the problem of delays in the arrival of the situado, he borrowed additional funds from Puerto Rican hacendados, but these loans never exceeded the sum of 500,000 pesos. Moreover, the fortifications, troops, and militia were in the best of condition, and as a result the viceroy of San Juan was fully prepared to meet any emergency. In addition,

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Muesas noted that despite all these endeavors the crown had failed to promote him or to grant him a decoration that he had also requested.³ On August 30, 1775 he submitted another account of his accomplishments, but the crown appears not to have ever granted him his requests.

In the Hoja de Servicio that was prepared at the end of his administration the government of Charles III did recognize Muesas' dedication in carrying out royal orders, and his efforts in improving conditions on the island of Puerto Rico. It listed the increases in the royal revenues, the creation of seven new towns, and the expansion of the works of fortification as his most important accomplishment, and praised him for defending the island of Vieques against foreign incursions.

Marcon José de Rivas, Muesas' jefe de residencia, also rendered a favorable evaluation of Muesas' administration. Rivas, who was ordered by Charles III to take Muesas' residencia (judicial investigation of his administration) on September 29, 1776, did not arrive in Puerto Rico until the following year.⁴ As soon as he landed in San Juan, on November 21, 1777, he immediately began secret and public hearings on Muesas' performance as governor and captain-general. During these hearings several charges were brought forth against Muesas. In the first place, Muesas' critics pointed out that he failed to issue orders for a better government during his six years in office. Secondly, Muesas was accused of permitting Bishop Jiménez Pérez to found a hospital without royal license. Critics also noted that the public works of San Juan, especially the bridge of Martín Peña, which joined the islet of San Juan with the island of Puerto Rico, was in very bad condition, and that Muesas did not make the usual inspection (visiting) of the island which were required by law. Muesas also was charged with meddling in the contraband

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trade of the area. Lastly, Muesas was criticized for spending royal funds in the celebrations for the feast of Santiago in 1774.⁵

A record of these charges was presented to Muesas, who by this time had departed for Spain. Muesas defended himself against these accusations. In his 1777 report to Judge Rivas he argued that he had never neglected the government of San Juan, and had issued the appropriate orders for its proper functioning. He also denied having granted the Bishop of San Juan the right to build a hospital without royal permission. Muesas also pointed out that he had tried to maintain the public works of the city in the best state of repairs, but the works of fortification had occupied most of his time. He explained to Judge Rivas that he had been unable to make the annual visits throughout the island because of his illness (nephritis). Nevertheless, he instructed one of his officials to carry out this responsibility. Muesas completely denied the contraband charges, but admitted using some 52 pesos for entertainment during the feast of Santiago which he felt was not inappropriate. Finally, Muesas outlined the improvements he made during his administration, requesting that he be absolved from all the above charges.⁶

After considering the charges and the Governor's defense, Judge Rivas recommended that Muesas be cleared of all of them, except for the one involving the use of royal funds for a social occasion. In the meantime, Muesas was to reimburse the 52 pesos in question. In general, Rivas found Muesas' administration an honest and efficient one. He noted Muesas' dedication and sense of justice in meeting the problems he encountered. Muesas' order and activity against contraband were particularly notable. Following the governor's D. O. M. response to the British occupation of Managua in 1779 was an available. It not only cont-

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ships to expel the enemy, but at the same time provided for the most complete defense of the island of Puerto Rico. Muesas had always paid special attention to the works of fortification and supplies for the garrisons. Nevertheless, he did not neglect his other responsibilities, fulfilling all his functions as patron of the church and superintendent of the royal treasury. He also contributed to the economic and social development of the island. The creation of seven new towns, and an increase in the proceeds from the alcabala and tithe attested to this growth. In conclusion, Judge Rivas considered Muesas a loyal and good servant of the king, and, unhesitatingly, recommended that he be granted an important post in Spain.⁷

The crown accepted Judge Rivas' decision, and on May 14, 1779 appointed Muesas military commander of the Plaza of Madrid. Dissatisfied with this post, Muesas soon requested that he be allowed to return to America and given charge of the government of the province of the Yucatán. The king appears not to have honored Muesas' petition or granted him further recognition of his abilities and accomplishments.⁸ Muesas' contribution to the application and expansion of the Bourbon reform program in Puerto Rico, however, has become part of the history of the eighteenth-century Caribbean; and this, perhaps is an infinitely more important reward.

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FOOTNOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2357, Expediente del Consejo, Madrid, October 20, 1770.
2. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Instancia de Muesas, Puerto Rico, May 27, 1771.
3. AGI, Santo Domingo, leg. 2300, Muesas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, January 30, 1774.
4. AHN, Consejos, leg. 20048, Residencia de Muesas, Puerto Rico, 1777-1784.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., leg. 20039.
7. Ibid.
8. López Martínez, Historia de Cayey, p. 17.

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