

## ABSTRACT

### PUERTO RICO AND THE UNITED STATES: THE UNITED NATIONS ROLE

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This is an examination of the case of Puerto Rico in the United Nations from 1953 to 1975. The central proposition of this study is that the 1953 United Nations decision that took Puerto Rico out of its jurisdiction is no longer valid, because, due to resolution 1514(XV), the United Nations has re-involved itself, but not to the extent warranted by the complexity of the issue.

The 1953 United Nations decision on Puerto Rico is seen as the result of United States influence. It is also viewed in the context of Puerto Rican politics as a sort of legitimacy needed for the Commonwealth arrangement.

The United States involvement in the issue in the 1960s and 1970s is analyzed as a consequence of a new category of colonial territories created by resolution 1514(XV) under which Puerto Rico falls. The Puerto Rican independence movement is presented as the catalyst for United Nations re-involvement. The emergence of Cuba as an ally of the independence movement is explained as the result of a historical commitment and as a way to embarrass its chief adversary --the United States-- internationally. The role played by the nonaligned movement is studied as the result of the combined strategy of the independence movement and Cuba. The United Nations is found



to have asserted its jurisdiction in the Puerto Rican case, and its reserves for further action are explained as due to United States pressure and lack of majority support in Puerto Rico for independence.

For a proper perspective, a detailed review of the evolution of United Nations handling of the issue of decolonization is offered, together with a description of the Puerto Rican political panorama in the time span covered by the thesis.

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