

Fifty- One Stars?

By Rebeca Boria

I wrote the essay "Fifty-one Stars?" about a response that I read in a magazine. I was in shock about what I read. I thought Puerto Ricans were happy being a Commonwealth country. I was a little mad about the column I read. I was shocked because, how could the Puerto Ricans want to be part of the United States of America (U.S.A)?

The United States owned Puerto Rico, through having a treaty of Paris after the United States won the Spanish-American War in 1898. The Puerto Ricans gained American citizenship in 1917. The Puerto Ricans want to become a state of the U.S.A but want to protect their culture, since the island became a commonwealth (a self-governing part of the U.S.A).

The governor of Puerto Rico thinks that becoming a state of the U.S.A is a good idea. As a Puerto Rican, I would not go for the idea. If I were the governor I would take a lot of time to think about it and make sure I'm making the right choice. The governor and some Puerto Ricans want to be able to vote for the president of the U.S.A. I think that as a commonwealth they've got more leeway on paying taxes for economy changes and growth. The island doesn't have to worry about federal taxes. They don't have to worry much about tall buildings, or a lot of pollution. There are other good and bad sides to becoming a state of the U.S.A. The good part of becoming a state is that Puerto Rico's economy and health care will improve. More people could get jobs that pay good money. They could have a voice on the United States politics and add new bills, or rules to the constitution. Puerto Ricans would get more education for the kids.

The bad part of becoming part of the U.S.A is that America always tries to con people out of something. For example: politics use the small print in contracts or the red tape run around, to get people confused so they will say yes. People in the U.S. (and other big countries) talk extra fast so they would think you got a fair deal. The United States has too much red tape following any contract or any legal documents the politicians write down or say. I also found evidence that the U.S. is not helping Puerto Rico grow in economy issues and other things. (See attached charts.)

I believe if Puerto Rico became a state, the Puerto Ricans will have most of their freedom taken away. They

won't be able to run wild and do what they feel like at that moment. Before building a house the Puerto Ricans would have to deal with the red tape of America to get a permit to build a house.

I would like to stress that the Spanish language would disappear little by little and the new language would be English instead of Spanish. (The United States has been known as a divide and conquer country since back in the Indian day.) I'm proud of the Spanish Language. It makes me different than the other people in Boston. Also it's a bit special to have two languages under my belt. I would feel bad if the Puerto Ricans had the English language flow out of their mouths instead of Spanish; it's just shame I guess. I do like the English language; it's just that a country should have their own costume and languages so they are different from others.

The main thing that I worry about is the Puerto Rican culture of the island. The island has liberty to decide as a country, what they would like changed. I wouldn't like to forget that I'm a Puerto Rican. I'll teach my kids their history and where their descendents come from. My opinion overall is just stay a commonwealth. I think it's much simpler.