the Puerto Ricans

PROLOGUE

IF SOMEONE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO HAD LOOKED AROUND AT the potential sources of new immigration to New York City, his eye might well have fallen on Puerto Rico: he would also have concluded that the Puerto Ricans, if they were potential migrants, would have a very hard time adapting to New York City and indeed might well be considered the migrants least likely to succeed.

Puerto Rico in the middle 1930's, after thirty-five years of American administration, was a scene of almost unrelieved misery. Rexford Tugwell, the American governor of the island during the early forties, titled his big book on Puerto Rico *The Stricken Land*. Its 3,435 square miles—a tiny area—held a population of one and three-quarter millions. Its death rate had been reduced from the very high figure of about 30 per thousand at the time of the American occupation at the end of the nineteenth century to about 20 per thousand; but its birth rate remained among

the highest in the world, and the population grew rapidly. The island lived off a cash crop—sugar—that had collapsed with the depression; it had almost no industry; in any case even in the best of times the agricultural workers who made up the majority of the population lived under incredibly primitive conditions that some observers have described as no better than were to be seen in the villages of India or China. Sanitary facilities were primitive; shoes were rarely worn in the country districts; the ground was infested with sewage and parasites and so, too, was the population; and a prevalent malnutrition produced a stunting of growth and susceptibility to a wide range of diseases. The details of the infant mortality rate, death rates from various causes, all showed the effects of a grinding poverty that is scarcely imaginable in contemporary industrial countries. Most of the population was unemployed and underemployed and suffered from hunger.

It is true there was something of a Puerto Rican upper class, which lived at the same level as the rich in all countries. This tiny upper class had never given much signs of energetic leadership or substantial ability. Puerto Rico had been a neglected part of the Spanish colonial system. It had been somewhat less neglected by the Americans, but here inconsistency in policies effectively prevented occasional good intentions from making their full impact felt. Illiteracy had been reduced from 83 per cent in 1898 to 31 per cent in 1940; the proportion of children attending school had been greatly increased; but shifting policies as to whether to teach in English or Spanish, and at what levels to introduce which language, led to a relatively ineffective education. If Puerto Ricans were not illiterate in both languages, it is certainly true that on the whole they learned English poorly, and at the same time the Spanish cultural heritage was transmitted inadequately.

The kind of economic situation that prevailed in Puerto Rico was of course the situation of most of the world, and indeed it was often pointed out that the economic situation of Puerto Rico was better than that of Latin America in general, even in the middle 1930's. But rural poverty of the kind that prevailed on the island is often relieved by two considerations: first, the existence of a

network of culture, religion, art, custom that gives strength and grace and meaning to a life of hardship; and second, the existence of a strong family system that again enhances life. And both a rich culture and a strong family system, in addition to their immediate rewards, are often the basis for an improvement in life. The net of culture keeps up pride and encourages effort; the strong family serves to organize and channel resources in new situations.

In both these aspects Puerto Rico was sadly defective. It was weak in folk arts, unsure in its cultural traditions, without a powerful faith. Folk arts existed to a limited extent: there was a tradition of folk and dance music, and a great love of dancing and singing. Indian culture was still meaningful in Mexico and Peru, Afro-American culture in Brazil and Haiti. But Puerto Rican Indians had long before been absorbed into the population, and its large African population of former slaves, almost one-half of the total population in the middle 1860's, had not retained the rich array of African cultural survivals that enlivened other parts of the Caribbean. Even Puerto Rican Spiritualism, while it owed something to traits borrowed from Haiti and Cuba (and thus indirectly from Africa), seemed to be based more directly on the works of a nineteenth-century French writer on occult matters.[1] The great Spanish cultural tradition to which Puerto Rico was linked also led a pale existence there. The Catholic Church, the formal religion of most of the population, reflected the weaknesses of the Church throughout much of Latin America: there was a tiny clergy (Puerto Rico has one priest for 7,000 Catholics, New York has one for 750),[2] in large measure foreign, and not closely attached to the national ambitions of the people or their daily life. The Church was seen as something for the rich—one could not expect that if the people migrated, their priests would follow them, as did the spiritual leaders of the many streams of European immigrants to this country. And indeed, they did not. There was a strong Protestant group, which was quite different in character, but it affected only 15 per cent of the population.

Nor was there much strength in the Puerto Rican family. In some ways, it was similar to the family type of peasant Europe, patriarchal and authoritarian, the

man reigning as absolute despot, demanding obedience and respect from wife and children. And yet, this was not the family of the Polish or South Italian peasant. The major difference was the wide extent of consensual or common-law marriage; more than one-quarter of the marriages were of this type, and as a result about one-third of the births were formally illegitimate. The evaluation of the consensual marriage form is a difficult thing—was it only the consequence of the distance between the Church and the people, the absence of priests, the expense of church ceremonies and formal weddings? This is the explanation that is often given. Yet consensual marriage also reflected an instability in the marriage form. The breakup of consensual marriage was common. More serious for the strength of the family were the widespread existence and acceptance, in legal and consensual marriage, of concubinage and sexual adventurism on the part of the men, which meant that children often grew up in confused family settings, and which introduced a strain between husbands and wives. Children were loved in Puerto Rico—this was fortunate since there were so many. And yet many observers believed that their mothers often loved them to the point of overprotection to make up for neglect by their husbands.[3]

Both the European peasant and the Puerto Rican jealously guarded the virginity of the female children, and superstitiously kept them apart from men. But while the European peasant could often then arrange the marriage of his virginal daughter or of his son so as to enhance his property situation, marriage in Puerto Rico was more typically a matter of an early escape of the young daughter with a man whom her parents had not chosen and whom she herself scarcely knew. Marriage at the age of 13 and 14 was not uncommon. Indeed, a random sample of the island's population in 1947–1948 showed that 6 per cent of the married women had been married at 14 or earlier, a fifth had been married at the ages of 15 or 16, a quarter at the ages of 17 and 18, another fifth at the age of 19 or 20—seven out of ten were married before 21![4] This, combined with the feeling that a man and woman married or living together should have children as soon as possible, meant a very early induction into childbearing on the part of women,

an early induction into responsibility for many children on the part of men. Adolescence did not exist for most Puerto Ricans, who moved directly from childhood to adult responsibility.

And yet, the family, despite these weaknesses, was perhaps one of the stronger elements in the Puerto Rican situation. Men might have children with a number of women, but they took responsibility for all of them. There was a relatively high degree of breakup of marriage (for a peasant culture), and yet there were always places in families for the children. The institution of the godparents, the *compadre* and *comadre* who were "co-parents" for each child, meant that a second set of parents stood ready to take over if the first was overburdened with too many children, too many woes, or was broken up by death or desertion. Children were overprotected, it seems true, but they were not resented and neglected; and perhaps the second is worse than the first.

But in competition with the more tightly knit and better integrated family systems of, say, Chinese and Japanese peasants, the Puerto Ricans did badly. In Hawaii, where at different times Chinese, Japanese, and Puerto Ricans had been imported to work on the plantations, the Chinese and Japanese rapidly moved out of the plantations, into the cities and into better-paying occupations, achieving positions of such high prestige that their descendants now sit in Congress. There were few Puerto Ricans, but they often left the plantation only to fall into dependency in the cities. In 1930, they showed the highest rate of juvenile delinquency of any of Hawaii's many ethnic groups; the highest proportion on relief. "The Puerto Ricans," an authority reported, "have constituted an exceptionally heavy charge on the community, while the Japanese and Chinese have required the least." [5]

There was no reason to think the Puerto Rican would make a better adjustment than this in the more demanding and less tolerant atmosphere of the New York City of the thirties. And indeed, he did not. When Lawrence R. Chenault made the first book-length study of New York Puerto Ricans in the mid-1930's, there were 45,000 migrants from Puerto Rico in the city, and he found

that they were heavily overrepresented on the relief rolls. As early as 1930 a social worker at a meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Charities stated that the Puerto Rican family was the biggest social work problem in New York at the time.[6] Nothing—in education, in work experience, work training, or work discipline, in family attitudes, in physical health—gave the Puerto Rican migrant an advantage in New York City.

Against this background, one might have expected massive Puerto Rican migration to New York to be a disaster. It is not, and part of the reason why not is the transformation of the island itself, a transformation so startling, and so little heralded by anything in Puerto Rico's earlier history that it is reasonable for two books on Puerto Rico published in 1960 to bear the titles *Puerto Rico: Land of Wonders* and *Puerto Rico: Success Story*.[7] New York must be as grateful to the leader of this transformation, Luis Muñoz Marin, as the people of Puerto Rico itself: for the great advances in education, health, self-respect, work capacity, and training that have taken place under Muñoz Marin's regime have meant a steadily rising level of New York's Puerto Rican population.

THE MIGRATION

NEW YORK CITY HAD 500 PERSONS OF PUERTO RICAN BIRTH IN 1910; 7,000 in 1920; 45,000 in 1930.

This group already included some professional people and businessmen in small stores, but the overwhelming majority of the employed men and women were engaged in unskilled work, as laborers, porters, factory operatives, and domestic workers. The center of the community was East Harlem, from 97th Street to as far as 125th Street, from Fifth Avenue to Third Avenue. There was also a small group around the Brooklyn Navy Yard and in South Brooklyn. In Manhattan, where three-quarters of the Puerto Ricans lived, they met the old East Harlem Italian community on the east, and the growing community of Negroes to the north and west.[8] There was also a large Jewish group in East Harlem, withdrawing to other parts of the city, principally to the Bronx. The paths of migration through the city are fixed by such matters as lines of

transportation and availability of housing at the next highest level one can afford to pay. Just as the Jews moved out of East Harlem along the IRT subway to the East Bronx, so, too, did the Puerto Ricans, when in 1945 the East Harlem community began to fill up and overflow.

But until the 1940's there was plenty of room in the old-law tenements of East Harlem—vacancy rates in the middle thirties there were 15 per cent.[9] There is no history of any conflict with the Jewish group. With the local Italians, relations were cool. The tight Italian community did not find it easy to open up to strangers; the youth, of course, simply followed in the pattern of adolescent ethnic hostility, and the mild Puerto Ricans, whose history had had plenty of misery but remarkably little violence, were taken aback. Even the Italian adults have at times been violent in their sentiments, for during the depression it was easy to blame anyone for one's troubles.[10]

Even in these early days a characteristic pattern of response to the American Negro could be seen in the Puerto Rican community. For the Puerto Ricans are a mixed people. And while in their own minds a man's color meant something very different from what it meant to white Americans, they knew very well its meaning for Americans. About one-fifth of the Puerto Rican group in New York in the thirties was listed in census returns as Negro (a slightly smaller proportion than were then listed as colored in the Puerto Rican census). Chenault believed "The American Negro is inclined to resent all of the people from the West Indies [he includes the Puerto Ricans in this group] because of their competition in the labor market. . . ." While on his part "The Puerto Rican, if white or slightly colored deeply resents any classification which places him with the Negro. . . . Finding the American-born Negro confronted with serious disadvantages in this country, the Puerto Ricans want to maintain their own group and to distinguish themselves from him. . . . People who have studied the relations of the West Indian groups in Harlem report that . . . the darker the person from the West Indies is, the more intense his desire to speak only Spanish, and to do so in a louder voice." [11]

But whatever the complications introduced in attitudes toward Negroes by this factor of color in the Puerto Ricans themselves, relations actually seem to have been pleasanter than with the Italians. In later years, the young people coming into this first section of Puerto Rican settlement, "El Barrio," would find their adjustment complicated by the hostility of Italian youth, while Negro youth was more willing to accept them.[12]

In 1940, the group was still small—70,000—still predominantly concentrated in East Harlem, with a sizable subconcentration in Brooklyn along the waterfront, and a small group in the Bronx. The census showed a sharp reduction in the number of Negroes, to about 11 per cent. Whether this was the result of a change in the composition of the group that took place in the depression years is hard to say; it would seem unlikely that so great a change should have taken place, and perhaps the uncertain census takers were for some reason listing more mixed Puerto Ricans as white. (By 1960 the proportion of colored among the New York Puerto Ricans was only 4 per cent.)

During the war, Puerto Rico, four days from New York by boat, was cut off to normal passenger movements. There was almost no addition to the Puerto Rican population until 1944. Then there was a heavy inmigration of 11,000. The next year, with the end of the war, air service between San Juan and New York was introduced. The situation of the potential migrant was transformed. In 1945, 13,500 entered the city; in 1946, almost 40,000. And New York was in the middle of a mass migration rivaling the great population movements of the first two decades of the century.

The movement ebbed and flowed with economic conditions in the city. During the early years the movement to the mainland was almost exclusively to New York City, and very few Puerto Ricans went beyond the city to settle elsewhere. By 1950 the census showed 187,000 Puerto Ricans in the city, and 58,000 children of Puerto Rican parents, making a community of more than a quarter of a million. The peak year of the migration was 1952–1953, when 58,500 settled in the city. Toward the end of the fifties, with worsening economic conditions, the migration

tapered off—to 31,500 in 1956–1957, 16,200 in 1957–1958, 22,700 in 1958–1959, 14,200 in 1959–1960, and only 8,000 in 1960–1961. (By this time, only three-fifths of the migrants to the mainland were settling in New York.) However, these figures are of net migration. The actual numbers moving back and forth for permanent or temporary settlement are much greater, and two or three times these numbers of "new" Puerto Rican migrants are probably added to the city each year.

In 1961, before the release of census figures, it was estimated there were 720,000 of Puerto Rican birth or parentage in the city.[13] The census, however, revealed only 613,000 of Puerto Rican birth or parentage in the city. The great movement of migration seemed to have come to an end, but the high birth rate of the Puerto Rican population guaranteed that those of Puerto Rican origin would make up an increasing proportion of the city. In 1961, more than one-seventh of the births in the city were of Puerto Rican parents (24,746 out of 168,383).[14] The crude birth rate of the Puerto Rican population of New York was 40 per thousand. (For nonwhites, it was 30; for others, 20.)

By 1960 El Barrio in East Harlem was only one of the important Puerto Rican areas of the city. A heavy concentration of the Puerto Rican population in East Harlem was prevented first by the desperate housing shortage, which made it impossible for El Barrio to expand into the areas to the north, east, and west, and second, by the vast program of slum clearance and public housing, which broke up the Puerto Rican concentrations (in the oldest and most decrepit housing, of course) as soon as they were formed, and prevented new concentrations from forming. And so Puerto Ricans spread rapidly throughout the city in the late 1940's and 1950's—to the West Side, to Washington Heights, to Chelsea, the Lower East Side; and outside of Manhattan, in the downtown Brooklyn and the near Bedford-Stuyvesant areas; in the Bronx, through the Morrisania, Melrose, and other districts; into sections of Queens; and outside the city into Newark and other communities in New Jersey. There was scarcely an area in the older boroughs in which Puerto Ricans were not to be found.

Thus because of the housing shortage and slum clearance they rubbed shoulders with everybody in the city.[15]

All through the forties and fifties Puerto Rico itself was undergoing great changes. The chief impact of the New Deal on Puerto Rico had been somewhat larger sums for relief—there seemed no solution to the chronic problems of unemployment and underemployment, poor living conditions, and poor health conditions. A succession of American governors found it impossible to do much, perhaps because it is always hard for a colonial country, whatever its good intentions, to do something *for* a colony. In 1940, however, Luis Muñoz Marin's new Popular Democratic Party won an election. The American government obliged him with a governor of his own choosing, Rexford Tugwell, who had already spent some time on the island in the middle thirties trying to develop a plan to pull it out of its chronic misery. The Second World War provided the new government a nest egg with which to work, for the excise tax on Puerto Rican rum, which came to replace in part scarce wartime whisky, was held by the federal government for Puerto Rico.

Muñoz first thought primarily in terms of solving the agrarian problem by the distribution of the large estates, and while something was done along these lines, it was not the main engine of Puerto Rican transformation. Puerto Rico was too crowded to think in terms of prosperous family-type farms; it needed its main cash crop, sugar, and other cash crops; and at the same time, to compete, it needed efficient organization, higher mechanization, and thus even *less* labor than was then employed in agriculture. The emphasis of the Muñoz–Tugwell regime was put on developing industry, at first through direct government building and operation, and later, and far more successfully, through the stimulation of outside mainland investment. Puerto Rico finally found a major virtue in its connection with America—the American market, and access to American investment capital and economic skills. Six hundred new factories were tempted to open in the island by tax exemption, government-supported economic and market analysis, and by a variety of other means. Forty-one thousand jobs

were created by the new factories, paying average wages far, far greater than those in agriculture. One-quarter of U.S. brassieres and electric shavers now come from the island.[16]

What this meant was a steadily rising income on the island, increase in numbers of workers with experience in manufacturing, an increase in urban population. It meant money for improved health services and schools, and better living quarters for the poor. All this was done by a freely elected Puerto Rican government. In 1948 Puerto Rico elected its first native governor, and in 1952, under a constitution it had itself drawn up, it was granted as much of independence as it wanted, and remained part of the United States as a Commonwealth.

The bearing of all this on New York is that the Puerto Rican migrants in the 1950's were not the same as those of the 1920's and 1930's. On the whole the migrants were better educated than the average Puerto Rican; they had a somewhat higher level of skill; they tended to come from the urban areas.[17] Whatever their drawbacks in relation to the older established New Yorkers, they were a better-than-average representation of the people of Puerto Rico, and the average itself rose rapidly from 1940 on. The early fears of an importation of tropical diseases were unfounded; health conditions on the island itself rapidly improved, and in New York certain diseases could not be transmitted because of the prevalence of aqueducts, sewers, concrete sidewalks, and shoes.

The economic and political transformation of the island did not, however, mean that all the Puerto Ricans were happy to stay at home. The reconstruction of the island destroyed almost as many jobs—poor ones, it is true, but jobs—as it made. The fine needlework that had occupied women at home, in line with Puerto Rican mores, was reduced by foreign competition, which paid even less than the miserable wages this provided in Puerto Rico. The increasingly mechanized sugar industry needed less labor all the time. And while the new jobs in the new factories paid good wages for Puerto Rico, wage rates in contrast to those in the United States remained low. Whatever the situation in other tropical islands, in Puerto Rico, where almost everything, including most food, has to be imported, prices

are high, and low incomes mean only a low standard of living. Eighteen per cent of the working force was unemployed in 1939–1940, 13 per cent was unemployed in 1957–1958—twice as many as were then unemployed on the mainland.[18] But the two unemployment rates have been converging. In 1962 the unemployment figure on the island was 11 per cent.

Unquestionably, economic factors were and are decisive in explaining the great migration out of the island. And yet there were other matters, too. There was first the growing impact of contact with the mainland—its products arousing dreams of material comfort, its mass media publicizing them, its merchandising techniques spreading the desire for change to every hamlet on the island. There was the additional experience of the Puerto Rican GI's. Over 65,000 had served in the Second World War, 43,000 in the Korean War. Their experience of the normal level of material comfort taken for granted in the U.S. Army was impressive. (Indeed, 40,000 of those who served in the Korean War were *volunteers,* despite the Puerto Rican experience with a segregated army in the Second World War.)[19] The American standard of living, experienced indirectly and directly through mass media and personal contacts, was a powerful agitating force. And as the Puerto Rican population of New York itself grew, and migrants and their children went back and forth by cheap airplane, everyone had direct personal knowledge of what life was like in New York. Once the stream is started and the road open, once the path is made easy, any minor cause may be sufficient to decide to try one's luck in New York: a poor marriage, overbearing parents, a sense of adventure, a desire to see New York itself. One must not underestimate another set of material advantages: the schools, hospitals, and welfare services. These are good on the island, comparatively speaking—they are of course much better in the richest city in the world. These, too, played a role.

Finally, there was the complex impact of the population problem. The economic pinch on the individual grew tighter because, just as his demands and desires were rising, his family was growing, too, and to sizes that were exceptional even for Puerto Rico. For while the death

rate, and in particular the infant mortality rate, dropped, the birth rate did not.

The island government needed emigration as well as economic development to cope with these problems; if it did not encourage emigration directly (an unnecessary provision), it planned for and assisted it.

A characteristic of countries with both high birth rates and the benefits of modern medicine is that the death rates drop earlier, and faster, than the birth rates. This was the case in Puerto Rico. But in 1950 the birth rate began to decline. The decline has continued throughout the decade.[20] Some demographers believe the decline is in large part caused by the removal of so many people in the most fertile age-groups from the island to New York—in effect, the population problem has been transferred rather than transformed.[21] But there is no question that the situation is changing, and that long-range decline, even if delayed a few years, will finally set in.

During the forties, Puerto Rico's population problems were studied with the same intensity and skill that were devoted to its economic and social problems. Despite the fact that 85 per cent of the population were nominally Catholic, the Church, the study showed, played little role in molding attitudes toward family size. It had had an impact in preventing during the thirties the free operation of birth-control clinics. But its political power on the island was less than on the mainland, and certainly less than in New York City. Muñoz Marin's government was, if not anticlerical, humanist, and certainly did not take the opposition of the Church to a rational approach to population problems seriously. Contraceptive advice and devices were made available, and an operation for sterilization of women was made cheap and easy, and widely publicized (in part by the Church's denunciation). The studies showed that while the upper-class and middle-class groups used contraceptive devices to a large extent, this was not popular among the great majority. The sterilization of women who had had a number of children was more popular. Indeed, many New York Puerto Rican women will go back to the island to have children so they can take advantage of this operation. In one group of Puerto Rican

families in an East Harlem slum area, for example, no less than 20 of the 75 mothers had had the sterilization operation performed—a startling proportion.[22] In 1949, on the island, 18 per cent of the mothers giving birth in hospitals took the opportunity to be sterilized.[23] There seems to have been no decline in the popularity of the operation since.

The reasons why contraception did not work are interesting. There was first of all the problem of using it under the incredibly crowded sleeping conditions in Puerto Rico, and in the absence of modern sanitary facilities. There was second the attitude of the Puerto Rican male to his sexual rights. He dominated the sexual relationship, expected the woman to be passive and submissive, and would not take kindly to the notion of giving her some control of sexual relations by cooperating in contraception. Then, too, man and wife simply did not discuss sex—both might be wrong about what the other thought, but they did not know it. So, for example, investigators discovered that husbands and wives both wanted less children than they had, but each thought the other did not care or preferred more children than they actually did! There was, too, the traditional suspicion and jealousy involved in these marriages, which not only prevented frank discussion but also meant that men suspected that women who fitted themselves with diaphragms were planning to be unfaithful. In this complex situation, contraception would have a hard time of it, and when tried, would fail. Under the circumstances, sterilization, which required one action, little discussion before and none afterwards, no male complaints of deprivation, and was certain, was the most favored course.[24]

In New York, of course, things are different. The relations between men and women change, children are raised differently, the attitudes toward having children change. But old attitudes exist alongside new ones, old-style families alongside new ones, and meanwhile there is a very heavy Puerto Rican birth rate in the city.

THE ISLAND-CENTERED COMMUNITY

THE LINKS BETWEEN THE NEW YORK PUERTO RICANS AND THE island Puerto Ricans are close and complex, and quite different from the relationship of earlier migrant groups to

their homelands. Puerto Rico is a part of the United States, and there is no control over movement between the island and the mainland. Puerto Rico is brought relatively close by air, and air passage is not too expensive. The island government takes a strong interest in its people. Indeed, many would be hard put to say whether they belonged to the city or the island. A great part of the movement between New York and San Juan consists of people going back and forth for visits, to take care of sick relatives or to be taken care of, of children being sent to stay with one family or another. One index of the movement is entries into and withdrawals from New York public schools. In 1958–1959, 10,600 children were transferred from Puerto Rican schools, and 6,500 were released to go to school in Puerto Rico.[25] Going back is not, as it was in earlier migrations, either the return of someone who is defeated and incapable of adjustment, or of someone who has made a small competence that will look big in the homeland, although there is more and more of this movement. Going back is too easy for it to have such great significance.

Something new perhaps has been added to the New York scene—an ethnic group that will not assimilate to the same degree as others do but will resemble the strangers who lived in ancient Greek cities, or the ancient Greeks who set up colonies in cities around the Mediterranean.

So, for example, Luis Ferré, a candidate for governor of Puerto Rico in 1960, arrived for a spell of campaigning in the city—after all, as it was pointed out, 30,000 Puerto Ricans from the city return to the island every year. This is consequently as important a bailiwick in which to get votes as many on the island. Nor is there for Puerto Ricans any problem of dual loyalty—on the island they vote in its elections, in New York in its elections —just as one votes in California one year, and if one moves to New York, there the next.

But there are interesting consequences for the community. To continue on the problem of politics, relatively few Puerto Ricans, compared with Negroes in the city, or with the non-Puerto Rican white groups, register and vote. A huge campaign was mounted in 1960 to register

100,000 Puerto Ricans in the city. It was estimated at the beginning of the drive that only 100,000 of a potential 300,000 voters had been registered in 1958. This drive claimed it had registered 230,000 Spanish-speaking citizens; a year later, however, after the primary that renominated Mayor Wagner, his campaign manager said that only 120,000 Puerto Ricans were registered to vote (New York has permanent registration; perhaps the extra 110,000 of the earlier claim reflected non-Puerto Rican Spanish-speaking). One of the difficulties in registering Puerto Ricans is that the state constitution requires that one demonstrate literacy in English. After Mayor Wagner's election to his third term in 1961, it was estimated that no less than 200,000 Puerto Ricans were in effect disfranchised by this provision of the state constitution, and in December, 1961, the city filed a proposal for a constitutional amendment that would permit residents to take literacy tests in any language in which a daily or weekly newspaper was published in the state.[26] Clearly, people active in politics and the leaders of the Puerto Rican community expect that Spanish will be the major language in use in the community for as long ahead as anyone can see. As against the situation in some earlier immigrant groups, where dominant opinion in the city and in the group insisted on the need to learn English and relegate the immigrant tongue to a minority position, in the Puerto Rican group many leaders—and they are young people, for the entire group and its leaders too are young—expect and hope that Spanish will maintain a strong position in the group. The city government on its part encourages city employees to learn Spanish, and issues many announcements to the general public in both languages. Conceivably this will change, but Spanish already has a much stronger official position in New York than either Italian or Yiddish ever had. This is one influence of the closeness of the island, physically, politically, and culturally.

This closeness to the island is unquestionably a factor in another interesting characteristic of the Puerto Ricans in New York, the relative weakness of community organization and community leadership among them. The early group was so completely working class and below that it was understandable that professionals and

businessmen would find little in common with the other Puerto Ricans, and tended to blend into the Spanish-language group in the city. This consisted not only of some immigrants from Spain but of immigrants from Cuba and other parts of Latin America. In 1930 New York had 137,000 Spanish-speaking people, of whom only a third were Puerto Rican. It was understandable that those of higher status tended to understress their connection with a group of low status. As the Puerto Rican group grew in the city, something happened to the Spanish-speaking that is reminiscent of what happened to the high-status German Jews when the poor East European Jews arrived—the effort to maintain a separate image for themselves in the public mind failed. When the overwhelming majority of the Spanish-speaking in the city became Puerto Rican, the status of all the Spanish-speaking began to reflect the status of the new Puerto Ricans among them. While there is still some tendency for the upper-income and high-status Puerto Rican to identify himself as a Hispano, Spanish-speaking, this is declining. Under these circumstances, the growing size of the Puerto Rican group, and the fact that it now forms probably four-fifths of all the Spanish-speaking, has led to a recapture of some of the leadership elements that might have tried to separate themselves from the Puerto Rican group when it was smaller: it has also led to the acquisition of new leadership elements from the longer-settled, and perhaps better-educated, non-Puerto Rican Spanish-speaking in New York. The Spanish-speaking begin to act to some extent as if they all are in the same boat. Some of the leadership in the Puerto Rican group today comes from non-Puerto Ricans who have been in the city longer or have had more varied training and experience. Thus, Emilio Nuñez, the first Spanish-speaking city magistrate, appointed in 1951, was born in Spain. The five Spanish-speaking members of the executive board of the Skirtmakers' Union, Local 23 of the ILGWU, include one South American, one Mexican, one Cuban, and only two Puerto Ricans, though the Puerto Ricans make up by far the largest part of the Spanish-speaking membership.[27] *La Prensa,* an old and established Spanish daily, with originally little Puerto Rican emphasis, was a few years ago completely

revamped as a tabloid to appeal directly to the Puerto Rican population.

The fact that a newspaper that was originally designed for another group, and that was owned by the Italian newspaper publisher and businessman Fortune Pope, was so easily modifiable into an organ of the Puerto Rican group is itself a sign of the relative weakness of what may be called indigenous organization among the Puerto Ricans. The other newspaper of the Puerto Rican group, much larger in circulation than *La Prensa, El Diario,* was owned by a Dominican, and edited by a New York newspaperman who formerly edited a newspaper in the (then) Ciudad Trujillo. Today both newspapers are owned by the transit operator O. Ray Chalk, who is also not a Puerto Rican. These newspapers do serve the community, in expressing its concerns, in supplying various services, in helping people find their relatives, in guiding their readers to find the agencies that might help them, in carrying community news and community items. But they are not the *creations* of the community or of groups within it. And this is what one sees in many other areas of Puerto Rican life.*

We have already referred to the weakness of Catholicism in Puerto Rico. Roman Catholicism is not a national church, as it is in Ireland and Poland. It sets the general frame of life by baptizing (most), marrying (less), and burying, and its calendar sets the holidays and festivals, but its impact on the people, in guiding their lives and molding their ideas, and in serving as a vessel for their social life, is relatively small. It is, as elsewhere in Latin America, a church for the women. In New York the Catholic Church is engaged in an energetic program to increase the number of Spanish-speaking priests, and to widen the circle of activity among the Puerto Ricans. Since the Puerto Ricans have spread so widely through the city, the Church has for the most part carried on its Puerto Rican work in established parishes. The Puerto Ricans have not created, as others did, national parishes of their own. Thus the ca-

* This situation may be changing. After this book was in press, the two newspapers were merged, and a new Spanish-language daily began publication.

pacities of the Church are weak in just those areas in which the needs of the migrants are great—in creating a surrounding, supporting community to replace the extended families, broken by city life, and to supply a social setting for those who feel lost and lonely in the great city. This is a task that smaller churches, with an active lay leadership, and a ministering group that is closer to and of the people, can do better.

Most of the Puerto Ricans in the city are Catholic, but their participation in Catholic life is small. It is interesting for example that there are but 15,000 Puerto Rican children in parochial schools in the New York Archdiocese, against almost ten times as many in the public schools, a much smaller percentage than for any other Catholic group in the city. There are only 250 Spanish-speaking priests in the Archdiocese of New York for the Puerto Rican population, and most of these—as many in Puerto Rico itself—have learned Spanish to minister to the group. In 1961, in 42 Catholic parishes in New York City with Spanish-speaking priests, there was only one Puerto Rican. And the proportion of the Spanish-speaking priests to the Catholic Puerto Rican population was still one-third or one-fourth what it was for other New York Catholics.[28]

As the problems of the first generation are overcome, as families become stabler, incomes higher, and the attachment to American middle-class culture stronger, Catholicism will probably also become stronger among the Puerto Ricans. But it does not seem likely that it will play as important a role among them as it plays in the European Catholic ethnic groups. For there is already well-established a strong rival to Catholicism among the Puerto Ricans, and if we were to reckon religious strength not by mild affiliation but by real commitment, it would be likely that there are not many less committed Protestants among the Puerto Ricans than there are committed Catholics.

Protestantism's history on the island dates from the American occupation, when some major denominations divided up the island and began work there. A 1947–1948 study of the island showed that about 82 per cent called themselves Catholic, that 6 per cent of the population belonged to the major Protestant denominations, 2 per cent

to Protestant sects, and 2 or 3 per cent were Spiritualists.[29] The Mills–Senior–Goldsen 1948 study of New York Puerto Ricans showed about 83 per cent Catholic and slightly higher proportions of Protestants in the major denominations—9 per cent—and in the sects—5 per cent.[30] But the fervor of the Protestants seems greater than that of the Catholics; and the fervor of the members of the Pentecostalist and similar sects of the hundreds of the storefront churches that dot the Puerto Rican neighborhoods is even greater.

There are about 70 Spanish-language Protestant churches of major denominations in the city, and close to another 50 that have both English and Spanish services. Another 70 have some Spanish members. All told, there are about 14,000 Spanish-speaking members of major Protestant denominations in the city, about 10,000 in their own all-Spanish churches.[31] Attendance in the Spanish churches is high, evangelical zeal puts most Anglo-Saxon Protestantism to shame, and the willingness to spend money to support the church is also great.[32]

This is now largely an indigenous movement, staffed by Puerto Rican ministers. The Protestant church leaders of the city have been anxious to have the English-language churches also reach out to the surrounding Puerto Rican population. But for regular, denominational Protestantism, this is not an easy task. The strength of Protestantism is that it forms a community, and its weakness is that in forming a community it finds it difficult to reach out from its original ethnic or class base to attract other groups. The most catholic of the Protestant groups, the Protestant Episcopal Church, has been most successful in developing integrated churches of mixed native Protestant and Puerto Rican members, just as it is also this church that is most successful in developing churches that integrate white and colored members. Father James Gusweller's West Side Church of St. Matthew and St. Timothy is the best-known example of such an integrated church.

But the most vigorous and intense religious movements among the Puerto Ricans are the Pentecostal and independent Pentecostal-type churches. The 1960 study of the Protestant Council of New York located 240 such

churches—there are certainly more than this. Their membership was conservatively estimated at about 25,000.[33] These tiny churches generally run services every day of the week. They demand of their members that they give up smoking and alcohol and fornication. They are completely supported by their memberships, and often a church of 100 members will support a full-time minister. The Pentecostal movement, which began in America, has for reasons that are not clear been successful in penetrating a number of Catholic areas, for example Italy and Chile. Two Catholic sociologists who have studied the Pentecostal churches in New York suggest that they derive their strength from Catholicism's weakness. Many migrants feel lost in the city; many search for a community within the Church, and the integrated Catholic parish, whose base is another ethnic group and whose priests are not Spanish, cannot give this. The preachers and ministers of the Pentecostal Church in New York are almost all Puerto Ricans. Though it was initially spread to the island by English-speaking evangelists, working through translators, the requirements for preaching and ministering make it possible for devout members to rise rapidly to such positions. "In the Catholic Church," one member told the investigators, "no one knew me." Here, if a stranger comes in, he is warmly greeted; if a member falls sick, he is visited; the tight congregation is one of the most important expressions of a community that is found among Puerto Ricans in New York.[34]

Some of the Pentecostal churches have grown beyond their storefront beginnings and are now quite large, but despite their growth they maintain the allegiance and support of the earlier days, and maintain a sense of community in the larger group.

(The "Jardin Botanicas" of the Puerto Rican districts evidence the strength of "Spiritualism," which to a few Puerto Ricans is a religion, but which is more akin to an occult science like astrology. The Botanica will sell, in addition to herbs prescribed by the practitioners, books on mysticism and other subjects, and religious pictures and objects, for this occultism is practiced or believed in, to varying degrees, by many who are nominally or also Catholic.[35])

Protestantism is an interesting if minority phenomenon among the Puerto Ricans; and there exists here a real field for competition between Catholicism and Protestantism in the city. It is impossible now to predict how things will come out. There are some potential areas for conflict. For example: Will Protestant social welfare agencies try to serve Puerto Ricans? Up to now this has been left to city agencies and to Catholic agencies. A third to a half of the clients of the family and child-serving agencies of Catholic Charities are now Puerto Ricans; since the Protestants have to take some responsibility for the Negroes, it is understandable that they have dragged their feet somewhat in staking out a claim to lost souls among the Puerto Ricans too. But according to the press releases of Billy Graham's three-day crusade to the Spanish-speaking of New York in 1960, 500,000 of New York's Spanish-American population are considered unchurched—which means that the religious organization of New York Protestantism considers most of the field available for sowing. If Protestant agencies should also make this claim, some serious headaches will arise for the public agencies (such as the New York City Youth Board) which distribute cases to private agencies, and help support them.

Aside from the storefront churches, organizational life is not strong among the Puerto Ricans. There are many social organizations, based on place of origin on the island, but they do not have the importance of the immigrant societies among earlier immigrants. It is understandable they should not; their functions for recreation and entertainment have been usurped by movies and television and other commercialized recreation, their practical functions—aiding the poor and the sick—are now in the hands of public and private agencies. One can always find functions for an organization if one is organizationally minded, but Puerto Rico, just as the rest of Latin America, has always been weak in spontaneous grass-roots organization. Probably the rise of organization has been inhibited too by the factors that have dispersed the population and prevented the development of a great center for the Puerto Rican population—housing shortage, slum clearance, and the availability of public housing. In 1948 only 6 per cent

of the migrants belonged to Puerto Rican organizations, somewhat more men than women, and more of the older migrants than recent arrivals.[36] Compared to some other ethnic groups, this seems low.

If slum clearance has been a factor preventing the growth of certain kinds of organization among Puerto Ricans, it has also been the occasion for the birth of other kinds of organization, the groups that try to prevent the bulldozing of a neighborhood, or, in the cases of more selective renewal as on the West Side,* the weeding out of the "bad housing." The demolition of the houses that affront the neighborhood means precisely the demolition of those that house vast numbers of Puerto Ricans—families living in single rooms, families taking in migrant relatives, displaced children, and temporarily homeless friends. Ironically, "improving a neighborhood" means moving out those who are most crowded, have the least room, and whose resettlement offers the most difficult problem for themselves and city agencies. But in the defense of their threatened homes, an organization will often be created, and nascent leaders will become real leaders, developing experience in cooperating with and fighting with other groups and city agencies. In a New York neighborhood one may find out that a community exists only at the point where one is ready to destroy it, and it rises up to protect itself. More realistically, however, the threatened destruction is not what demonstrates that a community exists; it is rather that the threat creates a common interest where none existed before, and brings out people ready to take leadership to protect the threatened interest. Under such circumstances (as in the West Side Urban Renewal scheme), since one of the aims of the enterprise is to create neighborhoods and communities, one might sophisticatedly conclude that the aim has been effected in the fight to carry through the plan, and modify it to deal with the problems that everyone agrees are problems (overcrowding and antisocial elements).

There are probably many and subtle ways in which the relation to the island affects the organizational

* We refer to the West Side Urban Renewal Project, which will displace most of the present Puerto Rican population of the area from 87th to 97th Street, from Central Park West to Amsterdam Avenue.

life of Puerto Ricans in New York; but one clear impact is seen in the role of the Office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in New York City. The Migration Division of the Department of Labor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico maintains offices in a number of cities of the mainland, the largest in New York, and this is for the Puerto Rican community of New York what the NAACP and the National Urban League are for the Negroes. It serves as an employment agency and an orientation office for new migrants; it represents Puerto Ricans and Puerto Rican interests on various city committees and organizations, formal and informal, private and government; it helps organize the Puerto Rican community where such organization seems necessary, as, for example, in the 1960 campaign to increase registration, in which it took a leading and active role. It is concerned with the way city agencies handle problems of special interest to Puerto Ricans, and will make its position known to them, and it cooperates in the elaborate exchange programs and conferences whereby New York tries to educate its personnel in the problems of their Puerto Rican clientele, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico tries to educate its people on the problems the migrants face in New York. It is also concerned with the public relations of the Puerto Ricans, supplying information and correcting misconceptions. It has been the chief agency in attempting to get Puerto Ricans to move to other cities besides New York, and its efforts have helped reduce the proportion of migrants who settle in the city from 85 per cent in 1950 to about 60 per cent, which is the figure for the last few years. (Jews had the same problem early in the century, when their organizations were worried about the huge concentration of Jews developing in New York City. The "Galveston Project" tried to get them to move elsewhere—it was by no means as successful as the Migration Division has been.)

Under the sociologist Clarence Senior (who in 1961 became a member of the New York City Board of Education) and now under Joseph Monserrat, it has been an efficient and effective organization, with a staff of great competence and skill, and it has drawn on some of the best people outside the Puerto Rican community to aid it in its

work, just as every branch of the Commonwealth government has.

But it is again a special twist for New York's Puerto Ricans that its equivalent of NAACP and NUL, or of the Jewish community organizational complex, should be a *government* office, supported by *government* funds. It is understandable that we do not leave newcomers to New York to sink or swim any more: but it may very well be that it is because the Puerto Rican group has been so well supplied with paternalistic guidance from their own government, as well as with social services by city and private agencies, that it has not developed powerful grass-roots organizations.

But perhaps with greater income, more leisure, and the solution of their most pressing problems, the Puerto Ricans will find they want things for themselves that the Commonwealth and the city do not provide.

THE MOBILE ELEMENT

IN 1947 CLARENCE SENIOR SURVEYED THE EXPERIENCE OF Puerto Rican migrants in various parts of the world and came upon the interesting case of the Puerto Ricans of the island of St. Croix. This is one of the American Virgin Islands. Its native population consists of English-speaking Negroes, descendants of Africans imported to work on sugar plantations. St. Croix went into decline more than a century ago; it has long been a depressed island losing population (from 27,000 in 1835 to 11,400 in 1930). Since the United States acquired it in 1917, it has in effect lived off funds of the American government.

Under these circumstances, for this to have begun to attract Puerto Rican migrants in the later 1920's and 1930's is somewhat surprising; what is even more surprising is that they have been economically successful, and seem to be on the way to taking over the economic life of the island. They arouse the same resentment among the natives by their energy and competence that Jews and Chinese have aroused in lands which these peoples have penetrated. "The newcomers . . . ," it is reported, "work harder and produce more than the natives." They are preferred in the sugar fields, where they are asserted to be "more in-

telligent and more adaptable to new methods." They also do about 40 per cent more work in the fields than the natives. They form one-quarter of the population but own and run more than half of the 122 businesses on the island—despite their recent arrival, and in an impoverished state:

> The Crucian reaction to this aspect of the invasion is strong but ineffectual. It varies from bitter jokes to half-hearted attempts to organize "buy Crucian" campaigns. Soon stores will display signs "English spoken here," runs one of the current stories. On every hand one hears the assertion that the Puerto Ricans are "clannish," that they hire only fellow Puerto Ricans, that they help each other in financial crises, that the larger and wealthier storekeepers will help newcomers start businesses in competition with the local people. Several Crucians interviewed were honest enough to confess that if they owned stores, and dared to do so, they would hire Puerto Ricans themselves because, as one civic leader said, "The Puerto Ricans have taught us how to work and produce." [37]

They also have one of the highest birth rates on record (66 per thousand against 20 per thousand for the Crucians); they do not seem to take well to the Crucian schools—there is a great deal of truancy, and there are very few of them in the local high school (some go back to Puerto Rico for secondary education).

Certainly the New Yorker reading this story of Puerto Rican migrants in another setting will have cause for musing and wonder, and may conclude that "success" and "failure" are relative matters, and depend on the challenge that is presented, and the grading for the contest. The challenge of New York City is one of the most severe in the world; the grading is the hardest; and a sizable degree of success in adjustment by Puerto Ricans in the city tends to be swamped in consciousness by the problems of a new migration.

It is also true that adjustment means inconspicuousness, and the well-adjusted Puerto Rican is not seen as a Puerto Rican; he tends to be only someone with a Spanish name. The successful and adjusted withdraw to Washington Heights and two-family or one-family houses in the Bronx and Queens. The newcomers, crowding the

rooming houses of the West Side and Chelsea, are in some of the busiest sections of the cities, with a large and active previously settled population that is made all too aware of their presence, and they are also easily accessible to any reporter out on a story. There is no answer to this problem of distribution and the images it creates. But the Puerto Rican story is more complex, and the degree of success greater than appears on the surface.

The Puerto Ricans of St. Croix are very much like the Puerto Ricans of New York; from the evidence, the only important difference seems to be that fewer of them are white, more dark. And their relatives in New York have very much the same impulses to better themselves, and the same business-minded instincts. As against however the easy-going Crucian competition, here we have A & P and Macy's. Yet in the face of heavy competition and a high rate of small business mortality, the New York Puerto Ricans have shown themselves amazingly fertile in spawning small stores. In 1948, when Mills, Senior, and Goldsen looked around for dense Puerto Rican neighborhoods in the city, they located them by the number of grocery stores, the distinctive "Bodega." They found no less than 468, and the count was certainly incomplete.[38] The population has gone up two and a half times since, and the number of stores has probably kept pace.

The Puerto Rican migration division estimated a few years ago that there are 4,000 Puerto Rican-run businesses all told in the city. This is an amazing figure. It is considerably more, for example, than the much larger Negro population has established, even though, in terms of period of major migration, it is thirty years ahead of the Puerto Ricans. It suggests that one of the widely accepted reasons for the low participation of Negroes in small business—discrimination in loans—probably is not of primary importance, for it is not likely that the Puerto Rican, with his characteristically accented and poor English, impresses the banker or supplier any more than a Negro does. Two other factors seem to explain the difference: one is that the Puerto Rican, coming from a country where he is not of the lower caste, does have a business tradition, and while not many successful storekeepers have migrated to this country,

many have eked out a living in times of unemployment by peddling one thing or another. A second reason is that he has a special function—supplying products to a group with special needs in food, records, books, herbs, and what have you. There is further the special bond of language.

What is the future of the Puerto Rican businessman? There is no question that his path is not easy. There is the competition of the chain stores, more effective as tastes change and as English becomes more common. And there is, helping the chain stores, as if they needed it, the public policy of wiping out large numbers of small businessmen in the areas of older housing. This is an unfortunate consequence of slum clearance and urban renewal, and could be added to the many considerations that already suggest that these policies should be changed. The destruction of Puerto Rican businessmen in East Harlem, the old Barrio, which has been almost entirely leveled for new housing projects, was prodigious. The losses on the West Side will ultimately be as great. But entrepreneurial drive is one of those aspects of human potentiality that is not easily destroyed, and a businessman will be able to do business under even the most adverse circumstances. One already sees such adaptations as the sprouting of Puerto-Rican owned "superettes" on the West Side which serve a partly non-Puerto Rican clientele.

There is as yet little that the Puerto Rican storekeeper supplies the rest of us. But again, the energy that leads to the Bodega and the small restaurant will unquestionably apply itself to the problem of finding something to sell. There was after all nothing in Greek food that served as the basis of the Greek restaurant industry, and the Chinese had to invent a few dishes before they could sell meals to the unenlightened barbarians. There may be nothing in Puerto Rican cuisine today that any of the rest of us want, but it is amazing how brief traditions are and how the need can be father to the invention. In twenty years we may see a Puerto Rican equivalent to the Pizza Parlor.

The 1950 census already showed that there were slightly more Puerto Ricans proportionately in the category "managers, officials, and proprietors" than there were in the Negro group. There were somewhat fewer pro-

fessionals. But we must say something about the professional group among the Puerto Ricans. The overwhelming majority of the migrants to New York came to seek work and were poorly qualified in skill and education. They were superior to the average Puerto Rican, but an elementary school education in Spanish, while better than illiteracy, still does not open up many doors in New York. However, from the beginning, in the twenties, there was a sizable flow of Puerto Ricans who came here to study and who in the end settled here. These became the basis for an important part of the Puerto Rican professional group that is the leadership group in the Puerto Rican community today.

Even during the heavy migration of the forties and fifties a sizable proportion of the immigrants were well educated and came here for advanced study or for specific jobs—5 per cent of the migrants in 1958 had had four years of college. Puerto Rico and the mainland often form one job market for the educated Puerto Rican as they do for the less educated.[39] We can expect a good deal of movement back and forth, as the balance of opportunity for upper-level employment shifts between New York and Puerto Rico. The University of San Juan, for example, has grown to an enrollment of 17,000, and many of the students will in time end up here, just as some of the Puerto Ricans in the city's colleges and universities will end up there.

The opportunities for professional and other well-paying white-collar employment for Puerto Ricans in the city will certainly increase. There has, for example, been nothing equivalent among Puerto Ricans to the flow of Negroes into city and other government offices, and yet here are certainly opportunities for a group that will make up perhaps an eighth of the city in 1970. There is the whole area of trade with Latin America, which requires bilingual personnel of all types. Conceivably this area of employment will also increase as the American government devotes more attention to Latin America, and as Latin America (hopefully) becomes more prosperous.

Will Puerto Ricans meet discrimination as they strike out for better jobs? A great deal depends on the development of racial attitudes among New Yorkers. Puerto Ricans in the city were about 4 per cent colored according

to the 1960 census, but many more than that bear some indications of the mixture of white and black that has been going on in the island for centuries.

One index of discrimination is low. Relatively few complaints of discrimination are filed by Puerto Ricans with the State Committee Against Discrimination. Between 1945 and 1958 there were 273 complaints, and in the last two years of this period they were running at the rate of 40 to 50 a year. Only 12 of the complaints in this entire period were over sales and clerical jobs, only 4 for jobs as craftsmen; all the rest were for jobs as service workers, operatives, and laborers.[40] One would think that there are enough Puerto Ricans going into professional and white-collar work, and they are sufficiently sensitive to slights and discrimination, to have produced more complaints than this if discrimination were a serious problem. On the other hand, the Puerto Ricans are much less aggressive in fighting for and demanding their rights than are Jews and Negroes.

The 1950 census already indicated a remarkable shift upwards in the occupations of the second generation of Puerto Ricans. In 1950, 37 per cent of Puerto Rican men were operatives, 28 per cent were service workers (see Table 5). These were the two great categories of employment—the semiskilled in the various factories, toy, plastics, printing, assembling and the like, and porters, kitchen workers, elevator operators, and other workers in the hotels, restaurants, and office buildings. But if one looked at the Puerto Ricans born in this country who were under 24 and at work—still a small group, but suggesting the shape of the future—there were radical declines in these categories, and there was an increase in the sales and clerical category from 9 per cent for the Puerto Rican-born to 24 per cent for the native-born. Of course this group is still too young to number many professionals or businessmen, but one can be sure the proportion of these in the second generation will also rise.

The changes among women are even more striking. In 1950, more than four-fifths of young Puerto Rican women migrants were working in factories (mostly clothing factories) and only 7 per cent were in clerical and

sales. Among the young native-born, on the other hand, the proportion working as operatives dropped in half, and the number working in clerical and sales rose to 43 per cent! [41] There has been a great increase in the native-born in these ten years, and there has been a major change in the over-all employment figures; how big it is we shall not know until we have further detailed reports from the 1960 census.

LOWER INCOME

THE WAY WE TALK ABOUT POVERTY AND MISERY TODAY ALMOST determines how we interpret it: our rhetoric explains that society is at fault. It is interesting to look back at the great study of poverty conducted by Charles Booth in London toward the end of the nineteenth century. Booth in a rather unimaginative and matter-of-fact way went through the whole population of London, looking for those who were poor and miserable and finding out the reasons why. The huge mass of poverty in London 60 to 70 years ago contained remarkably few able-bodied men who were healthy, who had some modicum of education, who had some skill, and who were not mentally unbalanced.

This rather obvious conclusion is nevertheless one that seems to play little role in present-day discussions of poverty. It does not explain everything—the proportion of unemployed *does* go up and down in response to conditions that have nothing to do with the qualities of individuals. But for any individual, and for any group made up of individuals, such factors as education, health, and skill are very important in determining income; and for a society as a whole the level of health, education, and skill is not only related to income but probably related to the level of employment too.

We have spoken up to this point of the successful and the adjusted among the Puerto Rican migrants. It takes no discerning eye to see that there is a sea of misery among the newcomers.

As to its extent: Puerto Rican median family income was considerably lower than even nonwhite median family income—$3,811 as against $4,437—in 1960. This was 63 per cent of the median income for all New York families. Unemployment among the Puerto Ricans

seems to be consistently higher than among nonwhites and whites. The census of 1950 showed, for men, 7 per cent of the non-Puerto Rican whites, 12 per cent of the Negroes, and 17 per cent of the Puerto Ricans unemployed; for women, 5 per cent of the non-Puerto Rican whites, 8.5 per cent of the Negroes, and 11 per cent of Puerto Ricans. A random sample of New York City households in 1952 showed 13 per cent of the Puerto Ricans unemployed, 6 per cent of nonwhites, 4 per cent of the non-Puerto Rican whites.[42] In 1960, 5 per cent of all New York males, 6.9 per cent of nonwhite males, and 9.9 per cent of all Puerto Rican males were unemployed.

In explaining misery among the Puerto Ricans, the high birth rate must be taken into account. While the birth rate among Puerto Ricans in the United States does not reach the heights of that in St. Croix, it was estimated in 1950 at 43 per thousand. The nonwhite birth rate was 29 per thousand, the white birth rate 17 per thousand.[43] By 1960 the crude birth rate had declined slightly, to 40 per thousand, but it was still twice the continental birth rate, and half again as much as the nonwhite birth rate.

These are crude figures, affected by the fact that so many of the Puerto Ricans are in the childbearing ages, so few of them are aged (in 1950 of 605,000 New Yorkers over 65, only 5,000 were Puerto Rican; and it was estimated that of 865,000 over 65 in 1960, only 18,000 would be Puerto Rican).[44] But even making adjustment for this factor of a disproportionate number of young people, the Puerto Rican birth rate is remarkably high. Puerto Ricans begin bearing children younger, and bear more of them. The 1950 analysis showed that for women between 15 and 19 the Puerto Rican rate was about five times the continental white rate (the Negro rate for this age group was almost as high); for women 20 to 24 it was almost twice the white rate, and a third higher than the Negro birth rate.[45] The early arrival of children and the large numbers of children mean that a family income that in 1950 was slightly less than that earned by Negroes must support more people.

We see the strain in a number of ways. For example, there have been a number of studies of adjusted

Puerto Rican families, families that are not on relief, that are not broken, that do not have any severe problems. It is interesting to note how many of these families have only one or two children.[46] The job at $50 a week, which manages to support such a small family in an apartment in the Bronx and which, compared with the $12 a week income that was left behind on the island, represents real advancement, is completely inadequate to support five children or more. All problems tend to pile up. The bigger family may not get into a good apartment or a housing project. The crowding in a small apartment may mean more illness and poor management of children.

One sees the impact of the large families in welfare statistics. Once again, the same $50 a week that means bare self-sufficiency with one child (and it may mean more, for a child or two can be left with a neighbor or a relative and thus permit the mother to add to family income) means the need to go to welfare for supplementation with a large family. One-half of all the families in the city receiving supplementation from the Department of Welfare are Puerto Rican. One-quarter of all the Puerto Rican children in the city are on some form of assistance. About one-seventh of all Puerto Ricans are on public assistance.

It requires special reasons to explain an incapacity to support oneself in New York. Some of these reasons are to be found in age, some in disablement. Puerto Ricans make no significant contribution of the aged and disabled to the welfare load. They do however contribute one-half of the home-relief cases and one-third of the aid-to-dependent-children cases. And when one reads that more than half of the home relief cases consist of six persons or more, one discovers that the special misfortune that consigns so many Puerto Ricans to the relief rolls is their large number of children.[47]

Health also plays a special role. The Puerto Rican is not happy about going on relief; no one is, but one must be aware that the prevailing degree of poverty coexists with a high value placed on the maintenance of dignity and self-respect. There is no shame in a woman with children and without a husband to support her going on relief; that is understandable. But there is a good deal of shame in a

man being forced to go on relief. If however he suffers from an understandable and acceptable misfortune—he has had an accident, he is in ill-health and cannot work—then there is no shame in requiring public assistance. Now as a matter of fact there seems to be a higher degree of illness among Puerto Ricans. Many arrive with ills, many acquire them in the strain of transition. Dr. Beatrice Bishop Berle, who has made a subtle and understanding study of the health problems of a sample of eighty Puerto Rican families, reports,

> . . . The data on the eighty Puerto Rican families in this study, the clinical impression of physicians who treat Puerto Rican patients, the high incidence of new cases of tuberculosis . . . and the high admission rate to mental hospitals . . . reported for Puerto Ricans suggest that the general susceptibility to illness is high among Puerto Ricans in New York City as compared to other segments of the population. . . .

But there is more to the story. Dr. Berle points out that Puerto Ricans come here to progress, to work and make a better life for them and their children:

> In order to progress one must work, and in order to work one must have health. In New York, a man can no longer take pride in his biceps. He is expected to wield a pen or operate a complex machine if he is to be respected and progress. . . .
>
> Under these circumstances, illness may be an aspect of lack of success and may therefore become a justification for failure. Failure is inevitable when the discrepancy between an individual's aspirations and the limited employment opportunities open to him due to lack of schooling or special skill cannot be reconciled. To prove illness so that one may be cared for then becomes a vital necessity.
>
> A good hospital will exhaust a large battery of tests to prove that there is nothing wrong with such an individual. Each new doctor, each additional test, confirms the man or woman in his conviction that he is sick, and that he is not being helped. . . . [But such individuals] are actually sick since they are unable to carry on the activities of their daily lives in the environment in which they live. . . .

. . . occasionally, a sick man is made whole. Apparently this is a matter of luck or a result of a careful manipulation of the environment by interested persons. In a family, school, church, settlement house, trade union, or neighborhood, when a dedicated individual with imagination who can mobilize some social or economic resources establishes and maintains a relationship with a man in trouble, things begin to happen. As a young American Negro who had become a member of the council of a local Baptist church in the neighborhood put it: "For the first time in my life I felt I was somebody." [48]

Everything may contribute to breaking the circle of dependency: more education, more training, fewer children, fewer illnesses, better housing, dedicated people who are interested in you, etc., etc. Some times at the bottom of the scale things are too far gone for anything to break the circle. Here are the "multiproblem" families, afflicted simultaneously by a variety of miseries—a child who is a drug-addict, another who is delinquent, a father who is psychologically or physically unable to work, or perhaps is not there. Here are the families so vividly described in Julius Horwitz's *The Inhabitants,* a novel by a man who has worked as an investigator for the welfare department. (Eight thousand employees are required to service the 300,000 people in the case load of the welfare department of the city.) Perhaps the worst misfortune of this bottom layer in New York is the need to deal with large numbers of harried city employees who have no contact with each other, or, in truth, with their clients, except for the specific malfunction which brought them into action. The schoolteacher or principal can do nothing about what goes on at home; the welfare investigator's role must be simply one of testing whether the family is qualified; the probation officer is supposed to keep in touch with his case, not the case's family, and can do nothing if the home in which the probationer lives is located in a tenement that is a center for drug addiction or thievery; the housing project employee (if the family is lucky enough to be in one) is concerned with financial eligibility, the payment of rent, and the maintenance of the physical property; the hospital hands out drugs and treatment, and so on and so on. And social work-

ers and others now and then set up a joint project to see if out of the welter of bureaucratic confusion there can be fashioned an instrument that responds to families and individuals as full human beings.

The Puerto Rican has entered the city in the age of the welfare state. Here and there are to be found the settlement houses of an earlier period, in which a fuller and richer concern for the individual was manifested by devoted people from the prosperous classes. The job of such social workers today is largely to humanize and coordinate, often through arousing the people of a neighborhood to bring pressure on public authorities, the various agencies on which the poor are so dependent. But there are few such agencies and social workers who can stand outside the system and see what is wrong with it, and within each Puerto Rican community there flourish individuals—"interpreters" —who accompany the unfortunates on their round of the city agencies, and who claim to be more skillful in finding their way through the maze of regulations and requirements.

In New York City one of the greatest misfortunes of the unfortunates who cannot help themselves is the enormous difficulty of managing one of the most complex and ingrown bureaucracies in the world. An equal misfortune is the housing situation, which consigns those without sufficient resources and without energy to the frightful one-room furnished dwellings carved out of brownstones and apartment houses principally on the West Side of Manhattan. There are better living quarters, at cheaper rents, in the Bronx and Brooklyn. But when one is overwhelmed by so many misfortunes, the energy to take the subway to look for an unfurnished apartment, to get together the few sticks of furniture and the minimal kitchen equipment (the welfare department will pay), is often literally beyond the capacity of many families. And so they migrate dully from one of these awful dwellings to another scarcely better a few blocks away. On these lower levels, what are needed are rehabilitation programs on a scale that scarcely anyone dares propose. It may cost no more than what the many agencies now spend, but the difficulties of breaking through the encrusted barriers that assign functions to each agency

are simply too great for a new and more effective arrangement.

Meanwhile, one generation on relief gives rise to another. One-quarter of the Puerto Rican children in the city are on public assistance. The culture of public welfare, which Horwitz has so brilliantly described, is as relevant for the future of Puerto Ricans in the city as the culture of Puerto Rico.

During the fifties, despite all this, there was not an exceptionally high rate of delinquency among Puerto Rican children.[49] But it takes a while to adapt to a new culture, and one may reasonably expect that the "Americanization" of the Puerto Ricans under conditions we have described will lead to somewhat higher rates of delinquency and crime in the future. Today, a good deal of Puerto Rican crime consists of crimes of passion involving members of the community, but once again, it is not unreasonable to expect that in the future more and more of this violence will be turned outward. Rates of admission to mental hospitals are higher than they are on the island, or for New Yorkers in general.[50] And the Midtown study of mental health showed a remarkably high rate of impairment for the Puerto Ricans in the East Midtown area. This is not one of the typical areas of Puerto Rican settlement; the authors suggest that this group, isolated from the main body of new migrants, may be under greater strain than Puerto Ricans in more characteristically Puerto Rican parts of the city,[51] yet the findings are consistent with other findings on rates of illness. The migration it seems has hit New York Puerto Ricans very hard. For some reason, the rate of suicide seems to be less than it is on the island.[52] It may have risen since this study was made in the late forties.

THE NEXT GENERATION: FAMILY, SCHOOL, NEIGHBORHOOD

WHAT KIND OF EXPERIENCES DO THE CHILDREN MEET IN THEIR families, schools, neighborhoods? How are they growing up? [53]

A typical pattern of migration of families with children is for the father to migrate alone, stay with relatives and friends, find a job and living quarters, and

then gradually bring over the rest of the family. Many families are consequently divided between Puerto Rico and New York, and when they are united, if ever, they show wide differences in degree of knowledge of English, assimilation, and the like. A second pattern of migration involves a woman with children—her husband has deserted her, or she has decided to leave home and go to New York, where jobs are plentiful, where the government is reputed to be "for the women and the children," and where relief is plentiful.

The Puerto Rican mother works here much more often than she does in Puerto Rico, but women still tend, if at all possible, to stay home to take care of the children. Fewer of them work than do Negro mothers.

The question then is what kind of care the children get from these mothers, many of whom have been married since what we could consider childhood. In Puerto Rico, despite rapid urbanization and industrialization, and many consequent social changes, it is perfectly clear how one raises children. The boys are praised for their manliness, taught to be proper males, and aside from requiring them to be respectful to their fathers (whether or not these still live with their mothers) are left to raise themselves. In radically different fashion, the girls are carefully watched, warned to keep their virginity—without which a proper marriage is inconceivable—and relatively early escape from this restrictive stifling atmosphere into marriage and motherhood.

But in New York both traditional patterns raise serious problems. If the boys are left to themselves, they find bad friends, may take to drugs, will learn to be disrespectful and disobedient. And even if a boy survives the streets morally, how is he to survive them physically, with cars and trucks whizzing by, and tough Negro and Italian boys ready to beat him up under slight provocation? If the girls are guarded, are raised in the house as proper girls should be, they become resentful at a treatment that their classmates and friends are not subjected to. In addition, guarding in Puerto Rico means to keep an eye on one's daughters in a community where everyone was known and you knew everyone. Here, since the streets are dangerous,

it means keeping the girl literally in the house. And if the house is a furnished room or apartment, tiny and overcrowded, it seems cruel and heartless to do so (yet many Puerto Rican parents do).

The radical boy-girl disjunction does not work in New York City. To the mind of the migrant parent the social agencies and settlement houses are no great help and often seem nests of sin. To the social worker or young minister working in the slums the dancing and other coeducational activities seem to be inducting young boys and girls into proper American behavior patterns, to be teaching them how to relate to each other in ways that are not purely sexual and exploitative, and perhaps in a measure they do accomplish this. To the Puerto Rican (and often Negro) parents what goes on seems simply shocking invitations to premature pregnancy. Very often then the children who go to the centers and the church activities are the ones from the most disorganized families, where the effort to raise them in proper fashion has been given up, and they are allowed to run wild! [54]

In this confusing situation there are two possibilities. One is to give up. There is a widespread belief among migrant parents that the government prevents disciplining of children, but this seems to be in part a rationalization for the difficulty of making the adjustment to the great freedom of American children, for the Puerto Rican Commonwealth protects children as much as New York City does. The parents feel inadequate at handling the children (and one can sympathize with such feelings in a teen-age mother) and explain the inadequacy by the government's responsibility for the children. Another sign of giving up is the frequency with which Puerto Rican parents express the desire that their children should be sent away someplace where they may learn discipline, manners, and respect.[55]

But a more typical reaction to this confusing new situation is a tightening of the screws, not only on the girls but on the boys too. Many cases of disturbed Puerto Rican boys that come to the attention of social agencies are cases of anxious concern by parents, overprotection, exaggerated fear of the streets—their physical and moral

dangers.[56] What is exaggeration or what is realism in thinking of the New York streets is a difficult question. The Puerto Rican mother is not as well disciplined as the native American mother who, in her desire to see her child become independent, can steel herself to forget the dangers her children face in such a simple act as coming home from school. The overprotection of the boys is often a response, social workers feel, to dissatisfaction with the marital relationship. The pattern is of course a common and widespread one, and there is nothing especially Puerto Rican about it.

The screws will also be tightened on the girls. Even without a tighter discipline against the greater dangers, the same discipline here as in Puerto Rico is going to be felt as a serious deprivation. One also faces the change in the age of marriage. Half the girls in Puerto Rico will be married by 19 and freed from the stern parental supervision. But there is no place in Puerto Rican cultural and family patterns for the older working girls who will not get married at such young ages here, and who are expected to scurry home from work as fast as they did from school. When one social worker suggested to a Puerto Rican girl who was working that she get away from the traditionally strict supervision of her father by moving into a residence, the girl was shocked. "She seems to think that in Puerto Rico they would consider any girl who moves away from her family into a residence as someone who goes into a house of prostitution." [57]

Then another problem is created by the inevitable shift from the extended family in Puerto Rico to the smaller one in New York. The Puerto Rican mother expects to have someone around to relieve her in the care of her children—there will be a mother, a sister, an aunt, a *comadre,* and she will be living with her or close enough to be helpful. In New York this traditional pattern will often be found, but it is much more difficult to maintain. It cannot be arranged, for example, to have mother or sister move next door in the same housing project. Children become much more of a bother, much more of a strain. One is expected to take care of them completely on one's own, and without help. An anthropologist who has studied this mat-

ter feels that the more traditional Puerto Rican family in New York does a better job raising its children than the nuclear family of man and woman, for in the latter the mother is likely to feel resentment and strain.[58]

The changing city no longer provides the neighborhood that is exclusive to one ethnic group. And the city administration insists that in the low-rent housing under its management the groups be mixed as much as possible (20 per cent of the city's low-cost housing is now occupied by Puerto Ricans, and about a seventh of the Puerto Rican population now lives in them). And so the models for new conduct in rearing one's children vary; there are Negro, Jewish, and Italian models of child rearing and child discipline, as well as the American models of the welfare workers and the settlement houses, and a variety of subvariants in each. What degree of discipline, what kind of punishment and rewards, what expectations should one have from one's children—the Puerto Rican mother is at a loss in deciding the right course.

We speak of the Puerto Rican mother, because on her falls the main task of child rearing, in part because so many of them manage homes without males present, or with males who take no particular responsibility for the children; and because in the traditional Puerto Rican home the father expects, aside from his demand for respect and obedience, to have little to do with the children. He also considers it beneath his dignity to participate in the management of the home, and considers it his prerogative to be off by himself whenever he wishes to be. But of course his traditional position is seriously challenged in America. Not only can the mother get relief and throw him out, not only can she get a job that pays as well as his does (she can often do this in Puerto Rico, too, today), but society does not prevent her from following an independent course. The women, many of the men grumble, are "spoiled" here; the women, on the other hand, will often express preference for a man raised in America who does not expect the same self-effacement from them. Nor are the courts or the police or the social workers sympathetic to the position of a traditional Puerto Rican male standing upon his dignity. His

world often falls apart—this is why there is so often a descent into incapacity and into mental or physical illness.

And then there is the role of the school in the lives of the children. Even the least-schooled migrant knows the value of education; Puerto Ricans universally would like to see their children well educated, and hope they will be professionals. But school is often a frustrating experience. The shift to a new language has been peculiarly difficult for the Puerto Ricans. We can only speculate about the reasons why Jews and even Italians, coming into the city at roughly the same ages, with much less formal knowledge of English, should have made a rather better linguistic adjustment. Certainly the schools did much less to ease their path. Of course in the years of the heaviest Jewish and Italian migration the school-leaving age was much lower, children often began working at 12, and the problems that the schools must today face (which are severer with the older children) were reduced. In other words, the children who could not learn English forty years ago got out before their problems became too noticeable. But we can only guess at the differences—no one seems to have gone back to see what the schools did when whole districts were filled with Yiddish-speaking and Italian-speaking children.

Probably no public school system has spent as much money and devoted as much effort to the problem of a group of minority children as the New York public school system has devoted to the Puerto Ricans. There are now hundreds of special personnel to deal with parents, to help teachers, to deal with special problems of students. The magnitude of the problems is barely communicated by figures. "On October 31, 1958," reports the Board of Education, "of the 558,741 children in our elementary schools, there were 56,296 children of Puerto Rican ancestry whose lack of ability to speak or understand English represented a considerable handicap to learning." [59]

The numbers alone are enormous; there is the additional problem of the rapid movement of the newcomers. On the West Side of Manhattan, one of the major sections of entry for new migrants, the turnover in an area containing sixteen schools was 92 per cent; which means

that each year the school confronts what is in effect a completely new student body.[60]

It is probably particularly difficult for the adolescent boys to adjust to this situation. The pattern of maintenance of male self-dignity makes it embarrassing to speak English with an accent. Dr. Berle believes it is easier for adolescent girls who have not had this emphasis in their upbringing to adapt to the English language school. (Perhaps the Jewish tradition of self-ridicule—dignity there is only for the old—stands them in good stead in new situations. One is astonished at the willingness of Jewish storekeepers to speak a most corrupt Spanish to deal with their Puerto Rican clientele: in contrast to their customers they are shameless.)

Meanwhile, there is a good deal of school-leaving at the earliest possible age, and relatively small proportions today go into the academic high schools. The register for New York City schools in October 1960 showed that 18 per cent of the elementary school students, 17 per cent of the junior high school students, and only 8 per cent of the high school students were Puerto Ricans. The proportion in the academic high schools was 5 per cent.[61]

The other side of the coin is an impressive amount of activity by young, educated Puerto Ricans to raise the level of concern for education. For example, Puerto Rican social workers, professionals, and teachers have set up an organization, *Aspira,* devoted to working with students and their parents so that they will take all possible advantage of educational opportunities. It runs workshops in which plans to get through high school or into or through college are worked out, it gives lectures on professional opportunities, looks for money for scholarships, reaches parents and community organizations. The young Puerto Rican leaders also run an interesting annual youth conference that gives a revealing insight into the concerns and struggles of the young people. This group clearly sees Puerto Ricans as following in the path of the earlier ethnic groups that preceded it, and speaks of them as models of emulation rather than as targets for attack. Its identification is with the Jews or Italians of forty years ago, rather than with the Negroes of today. It has a rather hopeful outlook, which

emphasizes the group's potential for achievement more than the prejudice and discrimination it meets. One can only hope that this buoyant outlook will be better sustained by life in the city. It is a note in tune with the gentleness and gaiety of the Puerto Ricans themselves.

CULTURE, CONTRIBUTIONS, COLOR

THE YOUNG PUERTO RICAN LEADERS WOULD LIKE TO SEE A NEW Hispanic-American strand added to the culture of the city. They organize art shows and book fairs, and one feels they could make a contemporary Puerto Rican Educational Alliance hum with activity if they had more financial resources. They would like to see in the city a Spanish newspaper that was not a sensational tabloid. (As one Puerto Rican leader said, he would like to see a Spanish *Jewish Daily Forward*—this is the great Socialist daily that educated the Jewish immigrants.) Despite this spirit, one sees formidable obstacles in the path of establishing a high Hispanic-American culture among the Puerto Rican immigrants. The Nobel-prize-winning author of *Platero and I* and Pablo Casals, two great cultural figures of the Spanish-speaking world, have chosen to live in Puerto Rico; it is hardly imaginable that they could have found as congenial a setting in the Puerto Rican community of New York.

There are a few small groups in the city which give lectures, music and dance demonstrations, but the audiences for these are tiny. There is an occasional effort to try to do something about a Spanish theater or to mount a Spanish play, but as yet there is no regular living theater.

The Puerto Ricans, despite their numbers in the city, come from a small country, in which the Spanish cultural heritage has not been strong and has been affected by sixty years of contact with America to produce a certain amount of cultural schizophrenia; Puerto Rico can and does depend upon the cultural products of the whole Spanish-speaking world. And so Puerto Ricans read magazines and books printed in Spain and Latin America (as the Cuban *Bohemia,* which is popular among them) and see movies made in Latin America.

But there is a more general reason why we cannot expect any striking new cultural strands to be brought to the city by immigrants, regardless of their source. The fact is that all cultures, even in their homelands, become more and more alike under the impact of mass media. The Puerto Ricans, like many in Latin America, read the Spanish editions of the *Reader's Digest, Life,* and *Sexology* (relabeled in Spanish *Luz*), and the content carried by a different language comes more and more to parallel the common content of the most successful and widely distributed cultural products.

Under the impact of movies and television, the people, even if they could speak and say something distinctive, are dumb. The Yiddish stage and the theaters set up by other groups in the nineteenth century could flourish for a while because in the age of handicraft culture their products were almost as good as any others. It would have to take a striking degree of cultural self-consciousness on the part of Puerto Ricans to create a vital Spanish stage when there are thirty movie theaters showing Spanish-language movies. And by the time the more subtle and sophisticated cultural needs that might demand a stage or serious magazines are developed, the processes of assimilation will guarantee that the need will be met in the general cultural arena.

But if the prognosis for high culture is doubtful, New York's folk culture—and in time, one feels sure, its commercial culture—is already deeply affected by the Puerto Rican migration. In every area of Puerto Rican settlement little record stores carry a remarkable variety of Latin American music; the same records, and live music, pour from hundreds of rooms and apartment houses, and from small and large (and even internationally known) dance halls. As the group becomes larger and more self-conscious, the special Puerto Rican passion for music and dancing will mark the rather cold and sharp city more and more.

Indeed, if one spreads the word "culture" to include "ethos," one sees even more significant effects. The Puerto Ricans add to a rather tough and knowing cast of

New York characters a new type, softer and milder, gayer and more light-spirited. One hears little of these more positive elements of the Puerto Rican migration as yet, for the problems created by the mass migration take first place, both for the Puerto Ricans and the city.

Indeed, in speaking of the contribution of Puerto Rican migrants to New York City, one hears little of culture and rather more of the economic benefits of the migration. The Waldorf-Astoria and certain branches of the clothing industry, we are told, would not be able to manage without Puerto Rican labor. But then suppose for some reason there had not been this migration from the island? In part it would probably have been replaced by a somewhat greater migration of Negroes from the South; the Southern pool is not inexhaustible, but in proportion to the population of the cities, more of it has gone to Chicago, Detroit, and Philadelphia than has come to New York. Perhaps the two labor sources mutually complement each other, and where one is abundant, the other falls off.

But it is also possible there might have been a shortage of the lowest-priced labor in the city: in which case sections of the garment industry might have migrated to Pennsylvania and the South even faster than they did, and new factories based on cheap, semiskilled labor might have located elsewhere. The immovable industries (hotels and restaurants and laundries) would either have had worse service or charged more. There would have been other economic effects: for one consequence of the abundant quantity of cheap labor in the city was the fact the large parts of the housing stock were rapidly ruined by subdivision and overcrowding, and that the city had to invest more in welfare services. If one wants to argue the advantages of a migration on economic grounds, one must run the risk of the figure turning out against the migration rather than for it. This is not to say that there was a striking economic disadvantage to the Puerto Rican migration for the city; but it cannot be demonstrated that the city is better off as a result.

The Puerto Rican migration, it is true, responded to the supply of jobs in the city closely; but the

fact that there was an inexhaustible and easily mobile supply of low-cost labor also affected the kinds of jobs that existed in the city.

A more significant Puerto Rican contribution to the city of New York, one suspects, will be in the area of attitudes toward color. There New York, as well as all America, does need improvement, and the Puerto Rican migration is likely to have interesting and varied effects on the city's attitudes. The Puerto Ricans introduce into the city a group that is intermediate in color, neither all white nor all dark, but having some of each, and a large number that show the physical characteristics of both groups. And second, they carry a new attitude toward color—an attitude that may be corrupted by continental color prejudice but it is more likely, since this is in harmony with the trends that are making all nations part of a single world community, that the Puerto Rican attitude to color, or something like it, will become the New York attitude.

The Puerto Ricans are not paragons of democratic color attitudes, but in contrast with American prejudices they show a very different picture. The upper classes in Puerto Rico, and the middle classes too, are almost entirely white. In the United States one knows that whatever the status of the Negro the dominant factor in his history is prejudice. In Puerto Rico one knows that whatever the status of the Negro he is what he is because of historical circumstances in which color prejudice has played little part. He was a slave, and when he was emancipated he was a landless laborer, and he has had no opportunity. And so he is poor, less educated, more frequently not legally married, and the rest. In the lower classes, where everyone is poor and without opportunity, there is no strong sense of difference based on color; intermarriage is common, and people are aware of color and hair and facial features as they are aware of any other personal and defining characteristics of an individual. They say he is darker or lighter the way we say he is blond or brunet, and personal taste in marriage and sexual partners may lead one, it appears, to someone of differing color almost as often as it will to someone of the same color. In Puerto Rico, in fact, there seems to be much less concern over color than there is in Jamaica,

where among the Negro population that makes up almost the entire island there are subtle distinctions made in shade, and persons try to marry lighter than themselves. So indifferent is the lower class Puerto Rican to this aspect of people that one cannot detect any pattern in marriage—the more successful marrying lighter; darker men marrying lighter women; or what not.

Indeed, the mixture of races in Puerto Rico has been proceeding on a level that is almost without example in history. One effect of this mixture is that in every census there are less and less people who are definably Negro. In 1860 almost half the Puerto Ricans were listed in a census as Negro. By the end of the century only two-fifths, in 1950 only one-fifth.[62] Presumably this has happened only as a result of the fact that the traits which define a Negro are now distributed more widely through the population, because physical anthropologists take it as gospel that the hereditary genes do not change their proportions in a population unless the people carrying them reproduce less rapidly, and there is no evidence that Negroes reproduce less rapidly than whites in Puerto Rico. Perhaps, owing to poverty, they survive less. Another peculiar feature of the Puerto Rican racial distribution is that there seem to be less colored women than men, according to the best study of the physical anthropology of Puerto Rico. Why this should be so was as mysterious to the physical anthropologist making the study as it is to the lay observer.[63] It is also interesting that the proportion of colored Puerto Ricans in New York drops from census to census. Do the colored return to Puerto Rico? Or are the census takers' reactions to color changing?

There is color discrimination on the island, but it often reflects the attitude to the poor, the worker, the miserable. Father Joseph Fitzpatrick, the author of many subtle and insightful studies of the Puerto Ricans in New York, describes the matter as follows:

> The traditional upper class always prided itself on being white and has always been very sensitive to the matter of color or racial characteristics. They became important factors in anyone's attempt to claim identity with a pure Spanish lineage. [In the 1940's, for example,

the fraternities at the University of Puerto Rico and exclusive clubs in San Juan did not admit anyone who was clearly colored.] . . . The same attitude is found also among some of the poorer people who apparently seek distinction by identifying themselves as pure white. The author has been frequently surprised by the preoccupation with color of people in some of the poor mountain sections. "Look, Father, do you notice how white everyone is here!" is mentioned with a spontaneity and candor that is quite striking. These same people, however, will deny that there is racial prejudice or discrimination in Puerto Rico. They insist that the distinction is one of class, not color. People are excluded from social participation not because they are colored, but because they are lower class. . . .[64]

American color attitudes must have influenced some upper-middle-class Puerto Ricans. And yet the all-white social clubs of San Juan preceded the American occupation, because for them whiteness was a sign of pure (and legitimate) descent, and the all-white fraternities of the University reflected the same attitudes.

But what happens in New York? Here now only 4 per cent of the Puerto Ricans are clearly colored. In the forties, it seemed possible to look forward to a time when the Puerto Rican group would split, and the darker ones would be absorbed into the over-all American Negro community, just as West Indians and other colored immigrants of backgrounds very different from those of American Negroes were absorbed. And it was often pointed out that perhaps the Puerto Ricans clung to Spanish so strongly because this differentiated the colored among them from the lower caste in American life.

Mills and his colleagues argued in 1950 that the intermediate in color were least assimilated, most passionately attached to whatever identified them as Puerto Rican because they were not unambiguously white or colored.[65] Clearly, color was a problem for Puerto Ricans in New York, as it was for upwardly mobile ones of the island. And its psychological impact on individuals, the anxiety it created, was perhaps greater than any objective difference of treatment on the basis of it would warrant. For we think that the brown-skinned in New York are not

subject to the kind of prejudice that Negroes are; indeed Puerto Ricans believe that they have opened up and can open up areas of the city in which Negroes have never lived. But personal problems are not only a reflection of reality but also of what one thinks reality is, and Puerto Ricans may feel their degree of color is more of a problem than it really is. It is perhaps suggestive of this problem that Dr. Berle reports a social worker's comment that every Puerto Rican drug addict he had dealt with was the darkest in his family.[66]

Father Fitzpatrick's study reveals that despite these problems and this anxiety, the newcomers still maintain the pattern of a single Puerto Rican community in which people mingle in social events of all kinds in disregard of the color marks that so affect American social behavior. Indeed, since we are without a Puerto Rican upper class or Puerto Rican upper-class institutions here, one could say that there is even less race prejudice among Puerto Ricans in New York than on the island.

Even more interesting: Father Fitzpatrick's study of marriages in the city shows a sizable proportion between persons of different color, and it would appear that at least a sixth of Puerto Rican marriages are what to American eyes would be "intermarriages."

There is unfortunately some evidence that when there are Americans at mixed social gatherings the Puerto Ricans present may be embarrassed at the mixture of color. As they mix more with Americans and become more middle class, this embarrassment may grow. But after fifteen years the break between colored and white Puerto Ricans has not occurred; the community is maintained; and if it continues as a single community in which color consciousness is not the cancer it is in American life, the Puerto Ricans may bring a greater gift to New York than any special cultural product.

The pressures of the attitudes of one-quarter of the population (Negroes and Puerto Ricans), who will soon be one-third of the population, will combine with the presence of the U.N. and the impact of the colored nations on American politics, and New York may be very different in ten years. Visitors from the Midwest are already startled

by the numbers of social groups and couples of different colors to be seen on the streets; in some sections of New York, as on the West Side, the native white population is no longer even startled.

But all this is sheer speculation, as is the prediction of some expansive leaders of the Puerto Rican community that New York will become a bilingual city. (Indeed, it may soon be possible for Puerto Ricans to vote without being literate in English; and perhaps the school system may be tempted soon to take the radical step of seeing whether instruction in Spanish, for some grades, may not help solve some of its problems.) The Puerto Ricans are adapting to a city very different from the one to which earlier immigrant groups adapted, and they are being modified by the new process of adaptation in new and hardly predictable ways. In 1961 an Italian was replaced by a Puerto Rican as Democratic political leader in a district in East Harlem, and many saw Puerto Ricans entering the same path that Italians took forty years before. But it is a different city, and a different group, and one can barely imagine what kind of human community will emerge from the process of adaptation.

the Jews

A LEADING figure in Jewish community affairs relates that a Jew always eagerly asks, in any situation, "How many are Jews?" And when he gets an answer, he asks suspiciously, "How do you know?"

Self-consciousness, curiosity, pride—all these are Jewish traits; caution, timidity, fear—these are Jewish traits, too. But our interest for the moment is in the more mundane subject of figures.

The U.S. Census does not ask about religion. But sociologists, planners, journalists, and people in general are so interested in this question that it might have done so a long time ago except for, among other reasons, the strong opposition of certain Jewish organizations. At the same time, the Jewish community demands that such figures exist; so Jewish organizations have developed techniques for estimating the Jewish population. In 1957 the census did ask a question about religion, as a pretest for a possible