Your Feedback

December 1, 2008

LEFT BEHIND

Nicole Joseph's feature "The Castaways" (September 2008) hit a serious nerve. The article exposed the alleged mismanagement of federal funds for the AIDS epidemic in Puerto Rico, a U.S. commonwealth. Due to overwhelming response, we dedicated the entire "Your Feedback" page to your comments on this article.

The theft of funds slated to treat AIDS in Puerto Rico has been a travesty. I take my hat off to all of the advocates on the island for their laborious commitment to inform the public there, as well as on the mainland. I am a 20-year survivor on the mainland, and even here (in the United States) HIV is looked upon like leprosy. Please continue to educate our Puerto Rican people and help our brothers and sisters overcome their obstacles. Un fuerte abrazo, mis hermanos.

J.R.
New York

It is very clear that every social, economical and moral problem Puerto Rico is currently facing has been dumped on it by the United States. America's pretense that it cares where HIV funding is being allocated heightens a level of hypocrisy that is beyond astonishing. And to add insult to injury, its choosing to impose a modern-day form of slavery on Puerto Rico is appalling.

Therefore, the next time you choose to write about issues concerning today's Puerto Rico, please keep in mind how the United States can come to the rescue of the problems it created. Also, with thorough research of the topic, you will acquire the proof that all of Puerto Rico's current problems come as a direct result of the United States' propagandistic bombardment.

This is one reason we scream with reverence, "Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre!"

Raquel Ortiz
Brooklyn

I am Puerto Rican and left in 1973 as a second lieutenant of the Air Force—I never moved back. Also, I have been positive since 1984 and have survived (not taking meds since fall of 2005) by following my own instinct and not believing in superstition or relying on magical thinking. I am appalled at the ignorance and cruelty described in the article. Homophobia is so prevalent, and I am very saddened by it.

Hugo

Los Angeles

I am a Puerto Rican and a medical case manager working with HIV-positive people. I find this story most disturbing, but I know this has been true for so many years. More needs to be done to reach out and mobilize our communities, our people and our land. I hope that more will take an active roll for National Latino AIDS Awareness Day on October 15. [Instead of] just talking about it and pointing the finger, we can do so much more for ourselves, rather than depending on the government to do it for us.

Jose Mariani Rosa
Minneapolis

The article fails to mention the responsibility of the Catholic and Pentecostal churches for this crisis. We have no real sex education or condom distribution by the government, thanks to the constant threat by church leaders to direct their flocks to vote against any government that dares to promote those lifesaving strategies.

Right now, the main strategy of the government is a hateful television campaign that depicts HIV-positive people as predatory monsters seeking out young people to destroy their lives.

Antonio
San Juan, Puerto Rico

As a Puerto Rican, I am heartbroken to hear about the island's AIDS situation. In my opinion, it is all political, and I don't think it will change unless Puerto Rico's new generation (the youth) becomes more progressive and sees that the United States is our only hope to be treated as equals. After all, Puerto Ricans are considered U.S. citizens.

Private funds (God bless them!) are not enough to resolve and/or stabilize this situation.

Rican Guy
San Antonio, Puerto Rico

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