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Here we go again, Congressman Luis Gutiérrez (D-Illinois) with his rants. It is incomprehensible that a United States Representative from the floor of the People's House would declare his support for a group of students who are illegally seeking to obstruct the education of fellow students at a state university (the University of Puerto Rico). In so doing, Gutiérrez is joining the likes of Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez, who are also actively supporting the anarchical, far left political agenda of the student protestors. In addition, Mr. Gutiérrez is also calling for independence of Puerto Rico, a United States territory, and requesting that the American citizens residing in Puerto Rico relinquish their U.S. citizenship. Clearly, Mr. Gutiérrez does not believe that Puerto Rico's U.S. citizens deserve to enjoy equality with U.S. citizens in the other 50 states. It is truly baffling that while Congressman Gutiérrez tirelessly advocates for the rights of illegal aliens, he does not advocate for the equal rights of his fellow citizens residing in Puerto Rico.

Congressman Gutiérrez, however, was correct when he stated that in Puerto Rico there is a "dictatorship." There is in fact a dictatorship in Puerto Rico. The true dictatorship controlling Puerto Rico is the U.S. Congress and Senate which enact and impose laws and taxes on Puerto Rico and dispose of Social Security and Medicaid benefits to Puerto Ricans as they see fit without any vote from any representative of Puerto Rico in the U.S. Congress or Senate. That is a true dictatorship! It is called oligarchic dictatorship. Congressman Gutiérrez should focus on eliminating this true dictatorship from Puerto Rico by helping the statehood movement, instead of making remarks to Congress that are false and damaging to Puerto Rico.

Congressman Gutiérrez is a paradoxical obstructionist who stands, in effect, against the equality of fellow U.S. citizens. On the House floor he exhorts the Government of Puerto Rico not to stand in the way of democracy, when that is exactly what he is doing when he opposes the right of the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico to full equality and the process to achieve it. It is said or assumed that he is a representative of influence within the Puerto Rican community. Well, he is a representative of a minor constituency in Illinois' 4th district with a minimal amount of Puerto Ricans; he is a U.S. mainland born citizen of Puerto Rican parents who enjoys total citizenship equality and privileges. It is the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, Congressman Pedro Pierluisi, who is the sole elected Congressman who legally represents – to the extent possible under territorial status – the 3.8 million U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico.

Congressman Gutiérrez, and perhaps other Hispanic leaders who oppose equality and statehood for Puerto Rico, do so because they fear losing influence in the Hispanic Congressional Caucus. Mr. Gutiérrez has a perfect right to speak his mind, however, a fine line must be drawn. We who believe in equality must take a stand against such rants and say we've had more than enough of this 21<sup>st</sup> century form of apartheid. The chains of colonialism must be broken. The U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico should be given a true and equal representation in the U.S. Congress and Senate. The time has come to stand for dignity, justice, and equality.