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THE SAN JUAN STAR — Saturday, November 12, 1960

# University Chancellor Commends U. S.-P. R. On Election Decisions

Jaime Benitez, chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico, has released a statement congratulating the American people for electing a Catholic president.

His statement also congratulated the Puerto Rican people for not heeding the Catholic Church's admonishments not to vote for the Popular Party.

"The people of Puerto Rico and the United States," the chancellor said, "have given by their votes overwhelming support to the articles of the Constitution providing for the separation of Church and State.

"With the election of John F. Kennedy, the American people have purged themselves of an "unhealthy element from the normal functioning of its collective existence," Benitez said.

Citing the outcome of the elections in Puerto Rico as "decisive proof of the religious political and social maturity of its people," he likened the action here to the refusal of Protestants in the U. S. to be guided by "irrational prejudices which have operated in their political life for centuries."

The statement went on to say that the Catholics of Puerto Rico have "not disobeyed any dogma of the church; what they did was to rectify a serious error of judgement on the part of the bishops.

"The fact that there was no problem of dogma involved," continued Benitez, "was clearly demonstrated as soon as the governor clarified his party's platform. "The archbishopric" Benitez said, "chose to uphold its ecclesiastical sanction in spite of accepting the governor's statement in principle. The proscription remained in force because his clarifications had not reach-

ed the archbishop "through official channels."

"We can all take satisfaction and reassurance from the collective decision on the part of the people of the United States and Puerto Rico. And especially the Catholics themselves in both countries," he said.

"The verdict of the ballot box should be accepted in good faith

in all its implications," Benitez said.

"In this way we can once more devote all energies to the urgent problems of every kind which confront us, and continue without interruption the effort to serve our country with a full measure of devotion, civic responsibility and generosity."