

Jesús T. Piñero

1897–1952

RESIDENT COMMISSIONER 1945–1946
POPULAR DEMOCRAT FROM PUERTO RICO

A prominent landowner-turned-politician, Jesús Piñero parlayed his concern for the poor and his desire to perpetuate his family vocation into a political career. After an apprenticeship in local politics, Piñero allied himself with Luis Muñoz Marín at a pivotal time in Puerto Rican politics. Piñero's fortuitous associations and hard work enabled him to serve in Puerto Rico's senate and ultimately in the U.S. Congress. During his short tenure as Resident Commissioner, Piñero sought economic aid for Puerto Rico. His congressional career ended when President Harry S. Truman tapped him to serve as the first native-born governor of Puerto Rico in the island's 500-year history. On the eve of his winning the Resident Commissioner's seat, Piñero said, "By representing you in Washington, I will fulfill the mission that the people assigned me.... I did not ask for the assignment ... but I accept it because it is my duty ... and because I love the opportunity to serve the people."¹

One of six siblings, Jesús Toribio Piñero was born in Carolina, Puerto Rico, on April 16, 1897, to Emilio and Josefa Jiménez Sicardo Piñero. The Piñeros were wealthy and owned a sugar plantation. After Piñero's mother died in 1905, the family moved to Rio Piedras, a suburb of San Juan, Puerto Rico's capital. Piñero studied at Xavier Preparatory School in Baltimore, Maryland, and graduated from Central High School in San Juan in 1914. He attended the University of Puerto Rico for two years and the University of Pennsylvania's School of Engineering until 1918. After returning to Puerto Rico, Piñero prepared to serve in the U.S. Army, but World War I ended before he arrived at the front. From 1918 to 1926, Piñero devoted himself to the family business, sugar cultivation. In 1931 Piñero married Aurelia Bou Ledesma. The couple raised two children, Haydee, and José Emilio.²

In 1926 Piñero began participating in various political groups. He was elected chair of Carolina's municipal assembly in 1928, where he served until 1933. While serving as chair, Piñero took a particular interest in improving educational opportunities for the poor and for peasant laborers. Piñero's accomplishments included opening a vocational school and teaching the poor about improving their lives, using motion picture technology.³ Piñero's political activities took a significant turn when he became president of the Puerto Rico Sugar Cane Farmers Association. It was in this capacity that he traveled to Washington, D.C., to contest the Jones–Costigan Act (48 Stat. 670; 1928–1934), which established limits on the amount of sugar the United States could import from its territories. During this trip, Piñero worked with Luis Muñoz Marín, a member of the Puerto Rican senate and the son of former Resident Commissioner Luis Muñoz Rivera. The two men participated in a mission to obtain financial aid for Puerto Rico from the U.S. government to mitigate the destruction inflicted by a pair of hurricanes in 1928 and 1932 and the economic crisis resulting from the Great Depression. Their efforts helped obtain for the island a relief package worth more than \$70 million and led to the eventual creation of the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration. Piñero became a member of its board in 1935. In 1936 he ran, unsuccessfully, for a Puerto Rican senate seat from the district of Humacao on the Partido Liberal (Liberal Party) ticket. After his defeat, Piñero joined Muñoz Marín's newly formed Partido Popular Democrático (Popular Democratic Party, or PPD) in 1938.⁴

The emergence of the PPD changed Puerto Rico's electoral landscape and signaled a significant change in thinking about the island's relationship with the United States. Formed out of the remains of the Partido Liberal in





1938, the PPD promoted gradual political autonomy for Puerto Rico during the 1940 elections. Appealing to an emerging middle class and rural constituents, the PPD promised land and labor reforms that would benefit both. Muñoz Marín asserted that support for the PPD would be a vote for immediate social reforms instead of a vote to resolve Puerto Rico's political status. The PPD also sought support from the labor movement. One of the main differences between the Partido Liberal and the PPD concerned the issue of Puerto Rico's status. Whereas the Partido Liberal focused on Puerto Rico's eventual status as a state or an independent nation, the PPD focused on industrializing the island to improve its social and economic welfare. With the rise of the PPD, Piñero's association with the party, and his close ties to Muñoz Marín, contributed to his rapid political ascent. The PPD eventually gained power in the 1940 elections and remained as the island's dominant political party until 1968.⁵

The 1940 elections became a three-way race between the PPD and two other parties: the *Coalición* (the Coalition), a merger of the Republicans and Socialists; and *La Unificación Puertorriqueña Tripartita* (the Tripartite Puerto Rican Unification), which consisted of the remnants of Republican, Socialist, and Liberal Party insurgents. The results of the election split political power between the *Coalición*, which selected the Resident Commissioner, and the PPD, which controlled the Puerto Rican senate. Both groups shared power in the Puerto Rican house of representatives.⁶ Piñero was elected to the Puerto Rican house of representatives by promoting the PPD platform in 1940.⁷ During his tenure, Piñero served on four committees: treasury; agriculture; police, civil service and elections; and industry and commerce, which he chaired. He submitted bills for public works projects such as roads and buildings as well as bills for other public resources. He also submitted plans for special funds to combat diseases, such as malaria, and to provide aid for insolvent mothers.⁸

Piñero was one of a number of candidates for Resident Commissioner in the summer of 1944. Although Piñero received mixed reviews, he was fully endorsed by PPD

leader Muñoz Marín.⁹ After Piñero won the nomination, he faced three challengers. His main opponent was Manuel Font, a U.S. Army officer and a nominee of *El Partido Union* (the Union Party). During the campaign, *La democracia*, a party newspaper founded by Muñoz Marín's father, Luis Muñoz Rivera, described Piñero's political background and his relationship with Muñoz Marín. The newspaper commended Piñero's nomination, touting his "intimate knowledge of the procedures, manners, and methods that could be employed with the greatest success in Washington in benefit of the people of Puerto Rico" and dismissed Font as a "man of frankly conservative tendencies."¹⁰ Piñero, the editors continued, "is not a flashy figure ... he does his work quietly, with plausible honor, natural in a man that feels a duty [to] his party and his people and serves with marked devotion."¹¹ In a radio interview during the campaign, Piñero said the "federal government supplies certain economic and financial aid to the people of Puerto Rico ... [as] a principle of responsibility and of justice, instead of mere charity or of a simple gift or of favors that you want to do what you can." Piñero observed that many in Congress did not feel an obligation to assist Puerto Ricans and said that the Resident Commissioner's task was to educate policymakers "that, while the people of Puerto Rico need help for things beyond their control ... that help must be considered as a right, not as a right that is strictly demanded with the risk of creating prejudice against it, but as [a] right which is achieved by agreements within a friendly process of ... understanding and mutual good faith."¹² Piñero garnered a comfortable 65 percent majority on Election Day.¹³

As the incoming Resident Commissioner, Piñero faced an immediate public relations challenge. His predecessor, Bolívar Pagán, a Socialist who had opposed the PPD, attacked the policies of controversial governor Rexford Guy Tugwell, Muñoz Marín, and the actions of the PPD. Piñero sought to dispel the negative perceptions of the Puerto Rican government that had been cultivated by Pagán and to regain the trust of alienated Members of Congress. Muñoz Marín sent Piñero a 10-page



memorandum regarding his goals and the assignments he was expected to complete. Piñero was to “be Muñoz’s presence in Washington; create a positive image of the Popular Party and its work on the island; and avoid at all cost ... any controversy regarding the topic of the political situation in Puerto Rico.”¹⁴ Piñero served on the following House committees: Agriculture, Insular Affairs, Labor, Military Affairs, Mines and Mining, Naval Affairs, and Territories. Some of the committees were highly desirable assignments for shaping broad policy (e.g., Naval Affairs and Agriculture), whereas others were valuable assignments for addressing local needs (e.g., Territories and Labor).¹⁵

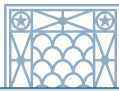
When Piñero arrived in Washington in late December 1945, he met with a number of his political counterparts in executive branch agencies like the Department of the Interior, along with Senator Dennis Chavez and Representative Antonio Fernández of New Mexico, the other Hispanic-Americans Members of the 79th Congress (1945–1947).¹⁶ One of Piñero’s early initiatives was to procure aid for Puerto Rican veterans of World War II, with the help of the Puerto Rico Department of the American Legion in Washington.¹⁷

Piñero pursued a variety of legislative interests. His main goals were to secure economic aid for the island and to pursue Muñoz Marín’s initiative of gaining greater autonomy by advocating for a plebiscite that would determine whether Puerto Rico would become an independent country or part of the United States. Like his political patron, Piñero tried to enact immediate reforms that would aid the Puerto Rican people.¹⁸ Most of Piñero’s legislation consisted of private relief bills submitted on behalf of his constituents. Among his other duties, Piñero served as an economic advocate for Puerto Rico, meeting with officials about agricultural matters, securing airline routes between the continental United States and Puerto Rico, and protecting Puerto Ricans’ citizenship rights.¹⁹ He was particularly interested in defending agricultural interests and in ensuring that Puerto Ricans were treated as U.S. citizens instead of U.S. nationals.²⁰ Piñero was also interested in making sure the territories received some kind of

representation. He submitted H.R. 7172, a bill to amend the Organic Act of the Virgin Islands, to provide the Virgin Islands with a Resident Commissioner, and lobbied for representation in Congress.²¹

The question of Puerto Rico’s political status in relation to the United States came to a head when Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland, who chaired the Senate Committee on Territories and Insular Possessions, began to push new legislation in 1945. Tydings’s bill, which called for Puerto Rico’s immediate independence and for a plebiscite to convene a constitutional convention, illustrated the split between Muñoz Marín, who promoted Puerto Rico’s gradual movement away from its current government structure, and opposition figures within the PPD, who favored Puerto Rico’s immediate independence. Muñoz Marín and Piñero wanted Puerto Ricans to choose between independence, statehood, and a form of government called “dominion status.” After receiving the approval from the Puerto Rican legislature, Piñero submitted a House version of his bill (H.R. 3237), and Tydings submitted a companion bill in the Senate (S. 1002) in May 1945.²² During a speech on the House Floor, Piñero said the “people in Puerto Rico [should] decide democratically what they want and what course they wish to take.”²³ However, C. Jasper Bell of Missouri, the chair of the House Committee on Insular Affairs, said his committee would not act on the bill unless the Senate disposed of the Tydings Bill in July 1945.²⁴ In an op-ed to the *Washington Post*, Piñero described the bills as “a reminder to Congress as well as to the people of the United States that two million Puerto Ricans ... ardently desire something better than the status of a subject, colonial people.” He also reiterated Muñoz Marín’s desire that “no particular form of political status should be forced upon Puerto Rico, that Congress should define the possibilities and permit the people to choose” their desired form of government.²⁵

On behalf of the Puerto Rican legislature, Piñero met with President Truman on August 21, 1945, to ask for support for the Tydings–Piñero bill.²⁶ Truman took a middle course, encouraging Congress to reach a solution that



would be acceptable to the majority of Puerto Ricans while taking care not to yield its constitutional authority over unincorporated territories. To the three types of government outlined in the Tydings–Piñero bill Truman added a fourth option that enabled the people to elect their own governor. “It is now time ... to ascertain from the people of Puerto Rico their wishes as to the ultimate status which they prefer, and, within such limits as may be determined by the Congress, to grant them the kind of government which they desire,” Truman declared in October.²⁷

Piñero contrasted the wave of postwar immigration with Puerto Rico’s dependent status. After observing, “One half of the world’s population is made up of dependent peoples under some form of colonial rule,” Piñero noted that colonial powers such as France and Great Britain had relinquished some control to their colonies. Piñero judged the United States’ relationship with Puerto Rico to be ironic. “In view of our own origin as a free nation, we today hold sovereignty over dependent peoples, all of them American citizens, but denied the rights that American citizenship symbolizes to the rest of the world,” he said. Piñero characterized U.S. sovereignty over the territories as benevolent, but noted, “Benign rule does not excuse our failure to live up to our American principles of granting the fullest enjoyment of ... democracy to all citizens under the Stars and Stripes.”²⁸ Although the Tydings–Piñero bill died in committee, the idea of a plebiscite to determine the structure of Puerto Rico’s government persisted, culminating in the passage of the Elective Governor Act in 1947.

During the second session of the 79th Congress, Piñero continued to perform his duties as Resident Commissioner, and he also became involved in the selection of a new governor for Puerto Rico. Governor Tugwell’s tenure was scheduled to end in June 1946, and Secretary of the Interior Julius Krug suggested Piñero as his successor. Krug’s recommendation was seconded by the Puerto Rican legislature in July 1946.²⁹ Upon receiving the news of his appointment by President Truman, Piñero responded, “I feel deeply honored.... If this appointment is confirmed by the United States Senate, I will recommend myself to Divine Providence to guide me and I will ask for the

cooperation of all of the people of Puerto Rico so that I may serve better both the interest of the federal government as well as the people of my island.”³⁰ An editorial in *El mundo*, Puerto Rico’s largest daily newspaper, advised readers to “interpret the appointment of Mr. Jesús T. Piñero ... as a demonstration of faith in our ability to govern our own affairs. In that sense, the event merits the distinction of figuring among the most important milestones in our history and ... [is a possible] precursor of other definitive measures in relation to the political status of Puerto Rico,” the editorial continued.³¹ The Senate confirmed Piñero’s nomination on July 27, 1946. From his confirmation until his swearing-in as governor, Piñero was both Resident Commissioner and governor-elect. During that time, Piñero visited New York City, where he was greeted by the Mayor William O’Dwyer and the New York city council. He was honored with a reception after he visited Spanish Harlem.³²

Piñero was sworn in as governor on September 3, 1946. A contemporary observer noted that Piñero was “considered by most Puerto Ricans as an interim governor, holding office only until the people achieve their long-cherished ambition to determine their permanent political status by ... plebiscite.”³³ One of Piñero’s major legislative achievements was the passage of the Elective Governor Act (61 Stat. 770) in August 1947. The statute enabled Puerto Ricans to elect a governor by popular vote in the 1948 election cycle. Submitted by Fred Crawford of Michigan, H.R. 3309 met with little opposition in Congress. President Truman called the bill “a great step toward complete self-government,” saying, “I sincerely hope that the action of the Congress will meet with the approval of the people of Puerto Rico.”³⁴ Piñero and his successor, Antonio Fernós-Isern, attended the signing ceremony along with Crawford and a number of other government officials.³⁵ The act enabled Luis Muñoz Marín to run successfully for a four-year term as Puerto Rico’s first elected governor.

Piñero also pursued legislative interests such as social services for the poor, land reform, and infrastructure improvements, including the purchase of a public utilities company and its oversight by a public service commission.³⁶



He continued to serve as the island's ambassador by praising the island's successes in the media and advocating more opportunities for business and travel between Puerto Rico and the mainland.³⁷ After Muñoz Marín's election, Piñero retired from politics and returned to his business interests. At age 55, he died of a heart attack in his sleep in Canovanas, Puerto Rico, on November 19, 1952. Piñero was buried in Carolina Cemetery in Carolina, Puerto Rico.³⁸

FOR FURTHER READING

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, "Jesús T. Piñero," <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.

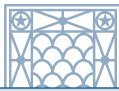
Partsch, Jaime. *Jesús T. Piñero: El exiliado en su patria* (Rio Piedras, PR: Ediciones Huracán, 2006).

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

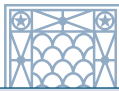
Universidad del Este (Carolina, PR). *Papers*: 1897–1952, Collection includes audio and video of oral histories, photographs, films, and documents.

NOTES

- 1 "Yo quiero hacer claro ante ustedes ... que al representarlos a ustedes en Washington cumpliré la misión que el pueblo me encomienda... Yo no he solicitado la encomienda ... La acepto porque es deber mío ... y porque amo la oportunidad de servir al pueblo." "Jesús T. Piñero, candidato Popular para Comisionado Residente," 5 November 1944, *El mundo* (San Juan, PR): 7. Translated as "Jesús T. Piñero, Popular Candidate for Resident Commissioner" by Translations International, Inc. (July 2011).
- 2 Olga Jiménez Wagenheim, "Piñero, Jesús Toribio," *American National Biography* 17 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 542–543 (hereinafter referred to as *ANB*); Teofilo Maldonado, "Piñero dice su labor primordial sera hacer que el pueblo Americano comprenda bien al nuestro," 3 December 1944, *El mundo*: 7. For an extensive history of the Piñero family, see Jaime Partsch, *Jesús T. Piñero: El exiliado en su patria* (Rio Piedras, PR: Ediciones Huracán, 2006): 14–18.
- 3 Wagenheim, "Piñero, Jesús Toribio," *ANB*.
- 4 Wagenheim, "Piñero, Jesús Toribio," *ANB*; César J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History since 1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010): 100–101. For more information about Muñoz Marín, see Olga Jiménez Wagenheim, "Muñoz Marín, Luis," *ANB* 16 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 99–100. For a more extensive biography, see A. W. Maldonado, *Luis Muñoz Marín: Puerto Rico's Democratic Revolution* (San Juan: Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2006).
- 5 Wagenheim, "Piñero, Jesús Toribio," *ANB*.
- 6 Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*: 136–138, 142–144. For a detailed explanation of the 1940 election, see Fernando Bayron Toro, *Elecciones y partidos políticos de Puerto Rico, 1809–2000* (Mayagüez, PR: Editorial Isla, 2003): 191–197.
- 7 Wagenheim, "Piñero, Jesús Toribio," *ANB*; Partsch, *Jesús T. Piñero: El exiliado en su patria*: 66.
- 8 Partsch, *Jesús T. Piñero: El exiliado en su patria*, 66–70.
- 9 For a description of Piñero's nomination in English, see Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*: 153–154; and Rexford G. Tugwell, *The Stricken Land: The Story of Puerto Rico* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968): 664. For detailed descriptions of Piñero's nomination in Spanish, see Partsch, *Jesús T. Piñero: El exiliado en su patria*, 70–75; and "Populares postulan a Piñero para comisaria," 21 August 1944, *El mundo*: 1, 4, 21.
- 10 "Tiene un conocimiento íntimo de los procedimientos, las maneras, los metodos que con mayor exito pueden emplearse en Washington en beneficio del pueblo de Puerto Rico ... merece la entera confianza del pueblo de Puerto Rico; saben que no violará ningún compromiso contraído por su partido con el pueblo de Puerto Rico, tanto el mandato económico que ha de dar." "El candidato a Washington, Jesús T. Piñero," 2 September 1944, *El mundo*: 1. Translated as "The Candidate to Washington, Jesús T. Piñero," by Translations International, Inc. (July 2011).
- 11 "Es hombre de tendencias francamente conservadoras. Unionista y luego liberal, su actitud corresponde en términos generales a la de un conservador del republicanismo a ultranza.... No es Piñero figura de relumbrón. Modesto y desinteresado, su obra la hace en silencio, con probidad plausible, propia de un hombre que se debe a su partido y a su pueblo y le sirve con marcada devoción." Wilfredo Braschi, "Dos candidatos," 13 September 1944, *El mundo*: 2. Translated as "Two Candidates," by Translations International, Inc. (July 2011).
- 12 "El principio de que el Gobierno Federal suministre cierta ayuda económica y financiera al pueblo de Puerto Rico es un principio de responsabilidad y de justicia, en vez de ser un principio de mera caridad o sencilla dádiva o de favores que se quiere buenamente hacer.... Muchos de nuestros amigos en Washington ... no comparten este criterio ... su actitud, con toda sinceridad y con toda buena fe. Pero hay que irles demostrando que, mientras el pueblo de Puerto Rico necesite ayuda, por ... esa ayuda se debe considerar como un derecho; no como un derecho que se reclama a rajatabla con riesgo de crear prejuicio contra él, sino como un derecho sobre el cual se llega a acuerdos dentro de un procedimiento de amistad, de convencimiento, de comprensión y de mútua buena



- fe.” Piñero expone la labor hará en Washington,” 31 October 1944, *La democracia* (San Juan, PR): 1, 5. Translated as “Piñero Explains What Work Will Do in Washington,” by Translations International, Inc. (July 2011).
- 13 “Election Statistics, 1920 to Present,” <http://history.house.gov/institution/election-statistics/election-statistics>.
- 14 “Ser la presencia de Muñoz en Washington; crear una imagen positiva del Partido Popular y su labor en la isla; y evitar a toda costa que se desarrolle ninguna polémica sobre el tema de la situación política de Puerto Rico.” Partsch, *Jesús T. Piñero: El exiliado en su patria*: 78. Translated as “The Commissioner’s Agenda,” by Translations International, Inc. (July 2011).
- 15 David T. Canon et al., eds., *Committees in the U.S. Congress, 1789–1946*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2002): 830; Charles Stewart III, “Committee Hierarchies in the Modernizing House, 1875–1947,” *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (1992): 845–846. Piñero’s committee assignments varied widely in terms of their attractiveness to Members. According to Stewart’s ranking of the desirability of 69 committees from this time period, Piñero’s assignments to the House Committees on Naval Affairs and Agriculture ranked highest (7th and 8th, respectively). Military Affairs ranked 13th, Labor ranked 19th, Insular Affairs ranked 23rd, Mines and Mining ranked 25th, and Territories ranked 29th.
- 16 “Piñero prestara hoy juramento come comisionado en Washington,” 3 January 1945, *El mundo*: 6.
- 17 “La cooperacion de Piñero para los veteranos,” 2 January 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 16.
- 18 One of Piñero’s early initiatives was the creation of an insular office that would plead Puerto Rico’s case beyond the halls of Congress. For more information about this, see “Piñero hacia Washington en mes diciembre,” 14 November 1944, *El mundo*; Charles McCabe, “Emilio Colon designado para la oficina insular en Washington,” 17 September 1945, *El mundo*; “Oficina en Washington estará establecida en mes diciembre,” 16 November 1945, *El mundo*.
- 19 For an example of Piñero’s interest in protecting the Puerto Rican sugar market, see “Piñero escribe a la OAP y CCA sobre el azúcar,” 31 January 1945, *El mundo*: 14. For examples of Piñero’s securing airline routes between Puerto Rico and the United States, see “Lanzaran un ataque contra las tarifas de la Pan American,” 2 April 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 15; Ruth Broom, “Piñero procura contactos con la Cia. Grace,” 4 November 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 3. Piñero also sought money for Puerto Rican farmers. For example, see Jean Van Vranken, “Piñero urge aprobacion de los fondos para extension agricola,” 16 February 1946, *El mundo*: 1, 24. For information about Piñero’s investigation of Puerto Rican soldiers’ forced labor alongside Japanese prisoners of war in Hawaii, see Charles McCabe, “Piñero urge se investigue el caso de puertorriqueños en el Hawaii,” 11 December 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 14.
- 20 *Congressional Record*, Index, 79th Cong., 2nd sess.: 640, 657. Piñero submitted H.R. 5975, a bill to amend the Nationality Act of 1940 to preserve the citizenship of a Puerto Rican born outside of the United States, and H.R. 6701, a bill to preserve the nationality of citizens residing abroad. Both bills died in committee.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 668. Piñero also advocated for voting representation for the Virgin Islands. See J. T. Piñero, “Virgin Islands,” 27 March 1946, *Washington Post*: 8.
- 22 Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*: 156; *Congressional Record* Index, 79th Congress, 1st sess.: 757, 777, 886. For information about the deliberation and submission of H.R. 3237, see “Pedira el plebiscite la Comision Legislativa,” 5 May 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 16. For a contemporary analysis of the bill, see Luis Muñoz Morales, “El Bill Tydings–Piñero; Alternativas–Plebiscito,” 3 June 1945, *El mundo*: 9. The bill was popularly known as the Tydings–Piñero Bill.
- 23 *Congressional Record*, House, 79th Cong., 1st sess. (16 May 1945): 4660.
- 24 Charles McCabe, “No habra audiencias por ahora sobre el Bill Tydings–Piñero,” 6 June 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 18. Congress considered three bills that called for greater political autonomy for Puerto Ricans: the Tydings plebiscite bill; the Tydings–Piñero Bill, advocating three solutions (H.R. 3237); and a bill authored by Vito Marcantonio of New York (H.R. 2781), advocating full independence. Marcantonio’s bill died in committee. For a description of the bill, see *Congressional Record*, Index, 79th Cong., 1st sess.: 875; Ruth Broom, “Bill de Piñero detenido en el Comite Camara,” 18 July 1945, *El mundo*: 2, 3.
- 25 J. T. Piñero, “Puerto Rico to Test U.S. Policy,” 20 May 1945, *Washington Post*: B3.
- 26 “Piñero visito ayer al Pres. Truman,” 22 August 1945, *El mundo*: 1, 6. During a 15-minute meeting, Piñero told Truman that the Puerto Rican legislature had voted on two occasions to dissolve the current form of government and that its intention was to decide how the government would be run in the future. Piñero said Truman was sympathetic to Puerto Ricans’ point of view.
- 27 Harry S. Truman, “Special Message to the Congress on Puerto Rico,” October 16, 1945, in John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12314> (accessed 19 July 2012).
- 28 *Congressional Record*, House, 79th Cong., 2nd sess. (19 March 1946): 2424. Piñero submitted an editorial about Puerto Rico’s status and, one week earlier, a critique of U.S. rule as an editorial in the *New York Times*. See *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 79th Cong., 2nd sess.: A1490–A1491.
- 29 For more information about Krug, see “Ex-Interior Secretary Dies,” 28 March 1970, *Washington Post*: B6; and “J. A. Krug, 62, Dies; Was Truman Aide,” 28 March 1970, *New York Times*: B6; “For Piñero as Governor,” 10 July 1946, *New York Times*: 44.



- 30 “Me siento profundamente honrado, y acepto con la mayor humildad la designación que me han otorgado hoy el Presidente de los Estados Unidos.... Si el nombramiento es confirmado por el Senado de Estados Unidos, me encomendaré a la Divina providencia pare que me guíe y pediré la cooperación de todo el pueblo de Puerto Rico para así servir mejor tanto los intereses del Gobierno Federal como los del pueblo de mi Isla.” Jean Van Vracken, “Piñero recibió el nombramiento con su característica modestia,” 27 July 1946, *El mundo*: 1. Translated as “Piñero Received the Appointment with His Characteristic Modesty,” by Translations International, Inc. (August 2011). For a positive contemporary reaction to Piñero’s nomination, see E. L. Bartlett, “Piñero ‘Appointment,’” 1 August 1946, *Washington Post*: 6. Bartlett, a House colleague of Piñero’s, served as Territorial Delegate to Alaska.
- 31 The editors also hoped Piñero’s “public management can result in a new era of civil achievements for the community” while eschewing political partisanship from the PPD. The editors warned, “It is necessary to think not only of the great responsibility that the party that is in power will assume.... By claiming partisan loyalties, the Popular Democratic Party will push Mr. Piñero toward partiality, privilege and favoritism ... then its failure of the recognition that has been given to Puerto Rico would not come as a surprise.” However, if the PPD “is willing to provide facilities for a better government ... and positions itself in a generous and honest position of Puerto Ricanism, then it must contribute powerfully to the triumph of Mr. Piñero in this difficult mission.” “Debemos interpretarlo como un inicio del reconocimiento de nuestro derecho al gobierno propio y una demostración de fe en nuestra habilidad para regir nuestros propios asuntos. En tal sentido, el acontecimiento merece la distinción de figurar entre los principales jalones de nuestra historia ... ser precursor de otras medidas definitivas en relación con el status político de Puerto Rico ... a la esperanza de que su gestión pública pueda resultar en una nueva era de realizaciones cívicas para la comunidad ... hay que pensar no solo en la gran responsabilidad que en ello tendrá el gobernador Piñero, sino también en la gran responsabilidad que asumirá el partido que está en el poder.... Si reclamando lealtades partidaristas, el Partido Popular Democrático empujara al señor Piñero a la parcialidad, al privilegio y al favoritismo ... entonces no habrían de extrañar su fracaso y el fracaso del reconocimiento que se le ha hecho a Puerto Rico ... el partido en el poder se dispone a brindar facilidades para una mejor obra de gobierno, y condena y destruye las malas prácticas y se sitúa en generosa e íntegra posición de portorriqueñismo, entonces habrá de contribuir poderosamente al triunfo del señor Piñero en su difícil encomienda.” “El nombramiento de Piñero,” 26 July 1946, *El mundo*: 6. Translated as “Piñero’s appointment” by Translations International, Inc. (August 2011).
- 32 “Mayor to Greet Piñero,” 26 July 1946, *New York Times*: 47; “Piñero Is Honored at City Ceremony,” 26 August 1946, *New York Times*: 23.
- 33 “Puerto Rico Hails Governor Piñero,” 4 September 1946, *New York Times*: 35; Paul Blanshard, “Puerto Rico Moves a Step Ahead,” 4 August 1946, *New York Times*: 92.
- 34 Harry S. Truman, “Letter to Governor Piñero of Puerto Rico upon the Signing Bill Providing for an Elected Governor,” in John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, The American Presidency Project [online]. Santa Barbara, CA, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=12725> (accessed 18 April 2011).
- 35 C. P. Trussell, “President Enacts Puerto Rico Poll,” 6 August 1947, *New York Times*: 20.
- 36 Wagenheim, “Piñero, Jesús Toribio,” *ANB*.
- 37 For examples, see “Piñero Cites Gains by Puerto Ricans,” 23 July 1948, *New York Times*: 7; “Puerto Rico ‘Letter’ Seeks New Industry,” 3 August 1948, *New York Times*.
- 38 Wagenheim, “Piñero, Jesús Toribio,” *ANB*; “Jesús T. Piñero falleció a los 55 mientras dormía,” 20 November 1952, *El mundo*: 1, 12; *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, “Jesús T. Piñero,” <http://bioguide.congress.gov>.