



# The San Juan Star

Today's Weather



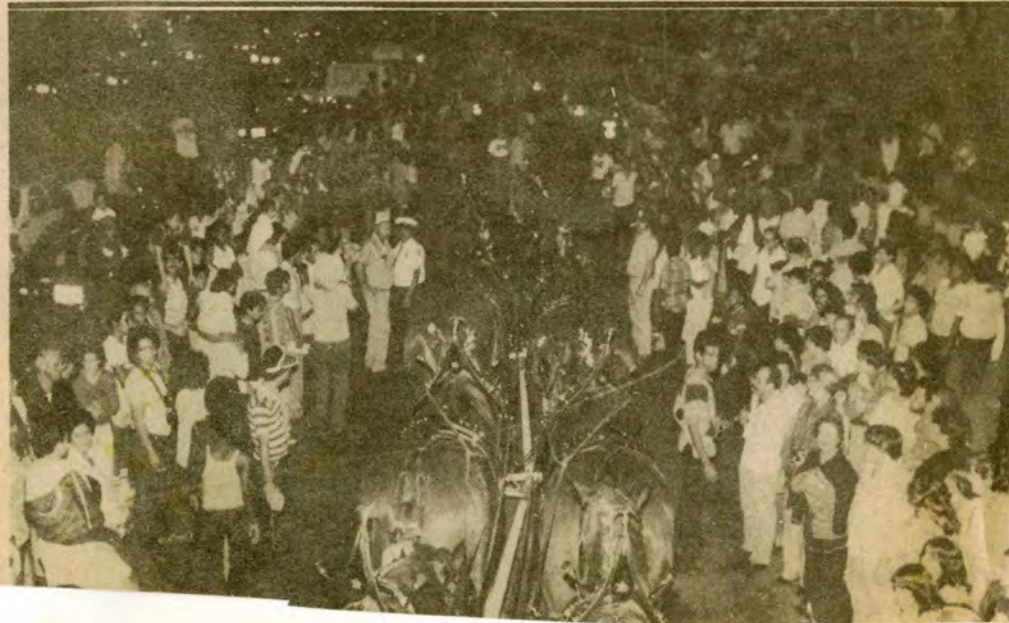
Details, Page 4

21st. Year Vol. No. 70

San Juan, Puerto Rico, Saturday, January 12, 1980.

Home Del. 20¢ Newsstand 25¢ **F**

# Carter gives Lopez boot, receives backing of NDP



By **TOMAS STELLA**  
Of The STAR Staff

The New Democratic Party threw its full support Friday behind President Carter's bid for renomination in exchange for the appointment of House Speaker Angel Viera Martinez to replace Franklin Delano Lopez as Carter's campaign coordinator.

The NDP, which spent all day airing charges against Lopez, adjourned its convention at Clemente Coliseum without taking the expected vote to oust him as party chairman, presumably to give him time to request a leave of absence from the post until the end of the year.

As the convention adjourned after a seven-hour meeting, only the decision to support Carter was announced. More than 160 delegates rose to applaud and chant in unison and later lined up to sign a statement supporting the president.

Viera's appointment will be announced Monday, along with the designation of a campaign executive committee of which Lopez will be part, but which will be controlled by the NDP

faction controlled by the New Progressive Party.

Sources close to Gov. Romero said Monday's announcement will also include Lopez's leave of absence from the NDP chairmanship, but there still appeared to be some doubt as to whether he would be forced to give up both posts.

Lopez, who did not attend the convention, would not comment, saying only that reports of his ouster as campaign coordinator were "speculative."

Gov. Romeo is expected to remain publicly neutral in the March 16 Democratic primary without even announcing if he is a Democrat or a Republican.

The NPP machine, however, is now solidly behind Carter. With the Popular Democratic Party squarely behind Sen. Edward Kennedy, D.-Mass., NPP leaders see the primary as a preview of the November election and are predicting an easy victory over the PDP.

Romero appeared to be the big winner in Friday's events after challenging the White (See DEMOCRATS, Page 14)

House directly on Lopez's role as campaign coordinator and apparently forcing Lopez's friends in Washington to back down.

Everything except Lopez's party post was settled with the arrival here early Friday of Terry O'Connell, a top trouble-shooter for the Democratic National Committee, who came with full authorization from campaign manager Robert Strauss to settle the dispute between Lopez and the governor.

O'Connell spent the day shuttling around San Juan, meeting with both Romero and Lopez separately before arriving at Clemente Coliseum around noon.

As the hearing against Lopez continued in a second-floor conference room, O'Connell conferred in a first-floor office with the top pro-Romero NDP leaders: Viera, Resident Commissioner Baltasar Corrada del Rio, Secretary of State Pedro Vazquez, former La Fortaleza Chief of Staff Virgilio Ramos and La Fortaleza aide Domingo Garcia.

O'Connell then left the coliseum for a second meeting with Lopez, returning after an hour for another conference with a bigger NDP group.

The meeting finally broke up around 7 p.m. and the group headed upstairs to talk to the delegates, who were grumbling about a convention which had started at noon and had already been interrupted by two recesses.

The delegates, who had applauded earlier when Carter's name was mentioned and had booed references to Kennedy, were plainly relieved that the final showdown with the White House had been avoided and they could finally campaign for their man.

According to sources, Viera's appointment as campaign coordinator had already been decided when O'Connell arrived and the meetings involved only the NDP chairmanship.

Sources said that Tim Kraft, Carter's campaign director and a close friend and ally of Lopez's told the NDP chief in Washington Monday that he would not be heading the president's primary campaign in Puerto Rico.

According to the source, Lopez went ahead and called a news conference Thursday in which he announced, among other things, that the Carter organization would offer the Rom-



Terry O'Connell — described as the "enforcer" of the decision to oust Franklin Delano Lopez as Carter's campaign coordinator on the island — talks with National Committeewoman Nivea Herenandez de McClintock at Clemente Coliseum hallway Friday. (STAR photo by Jose Garcia)

ero faction a compromise under which Lopez would retain the post of coordinator.

Present at the news conference and posing as reporters were two employees of La Fortaleza's Press and Communications Office, who taped the entire news conference.

The tape was either sent to Kraft or played to him over the phone and Kraft reportedly "blew his top." He then decided to send O'Connell, known as "the enforcer," to settle the feud in Puerto Rico once and for all, the sources said.

O'Connell, who has mediated party disputes in New York and California, refused to issue any comment, except to confirm that he will remain in Puerto Rico over the weekend. Presumably he will be on hand at the news conference Monday where the final loose ends will be tied.

Negotiations with Lopez will continue over the weekend, but it was not clear exactly what they will involve beyond Lopez's fate as party chairman.

One possible point of negotiation is the exact proportion of Lopez and Romero followers who will appear in the March 16 slate as possible Carter delegates.

With the Carter campaign now firmly in the hands of the NPP leadership, Lopez is expected to seek assurances that he and some of his followers will be among those competing for the 41 delegate slots.

The composition of the campaign executive committee was not entirely clear either, but the committee is expected to be made up of the pro-statehood Carter delegates to the 1976 Democratic convention in New York and of Viera as campaign coordinator.

If this is the case, it will be an 11-person committee, with four supporting Lopez and seven the NPP.

Besides Viera, Romero loyalists on the committee would include Sen. Frank Rodriguez, NPP-Ponce; Nivea Hernandez de McClintock, the NDP secretary; Ramon Ruiz Roche, the secretary of the Electoral Commission, and Rafael Hernandez, an NPP leader in Humacao.

The other two pro-Romero members would be Israel Roldan, a candidate for the Senate from the Mayaguez-Aguadilla district, and Francisco Gonzalez, an aide to Senate President Luis A. Ferre and a Senate candidate from Guayama.

Besides Lopez, the embers loyal to the NDP chairman would be Drs. Charles Lafont and Fernando Iturrino, and builder Daniel Shelley.

If the committee is only made up to 10, as some sources said, Ruiz Roche may be eliminated because of a conflict of interest involving his role as an Electoral Commission official. The Romero faction, however, would still have a 6-4 edge.

Romero is expected to outline the agreement, or the parts which have already been completed, when he meets with the NPP executive committee in Barranquitas today.

The final announcement, however, will not be made until Monday's news conference, which both Lopez and his opponents might attend as a final gesture of reconciliation.