

Munoz Meets Family Whose Father Was Denied Last Rites

By A. W. MALDONADO

Gov. Muñoz yesterday read the statement by the Most Rev. James P. Davis that the Church will not punish Catholics voting for the Popular Party to the Vega Alta family of a Catholic who was buried without the last rites of the church, allegedly because he had voted Popular.

The Governor, however, maintained his public silence on the entire Church-Popular Party conflict yesterday. Immediately after the Archbishop's statement reached Puerto Rico, La Fortaleza was stormed with requests from the press, radio, and television for a reaction from the Governor. But Muñoz made no comment. A meeting of the Central Committee of the Popular Party will be held today and a statement might result.

Early yesterday morning, without announcing it to the press, Muñoz slipped out of La Fortaleza to express his condolences to a family in the Santa Rosa section of the north coast town.

Father Denied Rites

The family had publicly charged that their Catholic priest, Father Jorge Figueroa, had allegedly refused to administer the last rites to family head Felix Melendez Rosado, 60, who died of a heart attack last week.

As Muñoz approached the humble but comfortable Melendez home

repeated Muñoz the charges she had made publicly, the governor read the Archbishop's statement and assured her that her husband had done nothing wrong.

Mrs. Melendez asked Muñoz to visit her eldest son who was teaching elementary school in a rural area near Vega Baja. The governor complied and also read the Archbishop's statement to him. Mrs. Melendez told Muñoz that of her late husband's eight children, the eldest had been most affected by his burial without last rites.

Denies Charge

Father Figueroa has denied that he refused to give Melendez last rites stating that on the day he was scheduled to be buried, he (Father Figueroa) had to come to San Juan. Father Figueroa also said that he did not know that Melendez was a Popular.

Melendez' family has described him as a very devout Catholic all his life. Melendez was member of the Holy Name Society. He had, his family told the governor, refused to support the Christian Action Party and had remained a Popular.

Engineers To Hold Convention Saturday

The Institute of Chemical Engineers of Puerto Rico will hold its second annual convention Saturday starting at 2 p.m. at La Concha Hotel.