

The Final Word? Star - Nov. 24/60

The Popular Democratic Party issued a statement yesterday on the religious controversy that could be interpreted as the party's final word on the subject. It left no hint that it would change a word of the controversial plank in its platform which the Catholic bishops have called immoral.

The Central Council of the Popular Democratic Party, composed of leaders from the entire island, said in a statement that the platform approved by the party's assembly "does not contain nor was it the intention of the assembly or of this council that it should contain any concept in contradiction of Christian doctrine on which the civilization of our people is based."

The Council added in the statement that it is "profoundly proud" that the people of Puerto Rico understand the platform as such and that the people gave a "great demonstration of democratic maturity" in the recent elections.

This statement does not contribute much to this bitter debate, nor does it indicate that there is possibility of further discussion on the subject from the party's side. The Catholic Church has, through its highest voice in Puerto Rico, Archbishop James P. Davis, told all priests in the island that they should not impose punishment on Catholics who voted for the Popular Party. That seems to indicate as clearly as the Council's statement that while there is no punishment attached to voting for the Popular Party, the sin remains.

Thus we are deadlocked, with the Popular Party Council going to the trouble of meeting and issuing a statement which reiterated that its platform was not immoral, and the Church still insisting that it is. Take it from there, politicians and bishops. We've had just about enough of it.