

Puerto Ricans Parade To Celebrate State Day

They did a big business in Puerto Rican flags on Main Street Monday.

Little boys and girls bought them, and so did adults. They bought them, and then they waved them as the parade went by.

It was a parade of Puerto Ricans from all parts of the state, and it was the highlight of Connecticut Puerto Rican Day.

It was designed to honor the state's Puerto Rican population and to encourage voter registration and participation in the coming election.

20,000 Watch

Some 20,000 persons lined the parade route—which began at the intersection of Main and Ely streets and wound through the city to Dillon Stadium—and an estimated 3,000 of them came to Dillon Stadium to hear political oratory after the marching and the music was over.

The marchers included boy scout troops, drum and bugle corps, floats with pretty girls, and other pretty girls wearing

costumes patterned after the Cuban flag.

Some of the marchers carried signs reading "registrate y vota." (register and vote).

Many of the watchers carried Puerto Rican flags too.

One of them wore a sombrero, and a lot of them spoke in Spanish accents.

Shortly before the hour-long parade began, a vendor at the corner of Main and Buckingham streets said he had sold all his miniature Puerto Rican flags. He had American and Confederate ones left, along with a number of Beatle buttons. (Their messages — like "I'm Bugs About the Beatles" — were in English.)

John Davis Lodge, Republican candidate for the Senate, and Thomas J. Dodd Jr., son of the Democratic senator, were among those speaking at Dillon Stadium.

Speaks In Spanish

Lodge, a former U.S. ambassador to Spain who delivered his address in Spanish told the crowd: "Let us stop feeling sorry for Puerto Rico and start feeling proud and grateful that she is part of our country."

The Republican candidate said "it is high time we citizens on the mainland stop thinking of how much we have done for Puerto Rico, and start thinking of how much Puerto Rico has done for herself and for us."

Lodge defended Puerto Ricans from the charge that they fail to vote when they come to this country. "The fault," he said, "lies not with the Puerto Ricans but with the state of Connecticut . . . which demands that every elector be able to read any portion of the state constitution in English." He called for a "more flexible approach" in election laws.

Dodd, speaking for his father, who had been scheduled to appear, urged the crowd to register and vote. "Democracy is not just a form of government," he said. "It is also a form of responsibility. It is not something we can take for granted. It is something we, all of us, must work to preserve and strengthen."

The day was climaxed with a banquet at the Hotel America.